

# Cork City Development Plan 2022–2028

Stage 1: Pre-plan consultation  
**ISSUES PAPER**

26 June 2020 – 21 August 2020



Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí  
Cork City Council



We are Cork.



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# 01. Introduction





## 1.1 Introduction

Cork City has the people and the ambition to achieve its full potential: to continue to grow and develop as a great place to live and work. Cork City Council is preparing a new City Development Plan that will set out the priorities for the city for a 6-year period from 2022 to 2028. As part of the process, we want to hear your insights on the key issues facing the city.

An extensive period of consultation is getting underway which will culminate in the adoption by Cork City Council of a plan that will provide a framework for how Cork will develop in a sustainable way. This will be evidence based and informed by a suite of international, national and regional policies, robust research and importantly by the consultation process. The publication of this Issues Paper sets out some of the key factors that will influence the development of Cork City.

While comprehensive, it is not exhaustive. The purpose of this Issues Paper is to support and inform the consultation process.

At the time of preparation of this Issues Paper, there is uncertainty of the scale of impact that the COVID-19 virus will have on the global, European or Irish economy, but the consensus is that it will be substantial. It is also likely to impact on society in a wide variety of ways and may change the way we go about our daily lives. The preparation of the City Plan will have to take account of these changing circumstances, which may impact on the form of public consultation we can engage in, and indeed on the Plan that finally emerges.

## 1.2 Context of the Cork City Development Plan

As the State's second city, Cork plays a key role in driving the economic, social and cultural fabric of Ireland, in particular the southern region. Did you know that:

- According to the 2016 census<sup>1</sup> the population of Cork City is almost 211,000 and the City serves a metropolitan population of over 305,000 people.
- The Cork region contributes 19% to the national economic output in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In The Financial Times, Cork is ranked 2nd small city in Europe for economic potential.
- Cork is home to significant national level health, educational and cultural institutions serving the southern region of Ireland. These include Cork University Hospital (CUH), University College, Cork (UCC), Munster Technological University (MTU), and the Crawford Gallery to name a few.
- Cork City boasts a strong heritage, with well-loved local heritage and cultural amenities such as the English Market, Shandon, the Cork Opera House, the Everyman Theatre, the Triskel Arts Centre, Elizabeth Fort, the Cork City Museum, the Glucksman Gallery, Ballincollig Powder Mills and the internationally iconic Blarney Castle. The streetscape and the channels of the River Lee provide Corkonians and visitors alike with a unique experience.

<sup>1</sup>. The most recent census data.



## INTRODUCTION

- Access to Cork is continuously improving. Cork is home to the fastest growing airport in Ireland. Investment is being rolled out to improve public transport, walking, cycling, road and rail access. The National Transport Authority recently adopted a €3.5 billion twenty-year transport plan for Cork.
- Cork is recognised by the World Health Organisation as a Healthy City.
- 'Cork City is one of the first globally to receive the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Learning City award.

### 1.3 National and Regional Policies and Objectives

Considering these facts, it is not surprising that to read what the National Planning Framework (NPF) says about Cork:

**'Cork already performs well as a major urban centre in Ireland and the city has positioned itself as an emerging medium sized European centre of growth and innovation. Building on this potential is critical to further enhancing Ireland's metropolitan profile. This requires an ambitious vision for Cork at the heart of which must be an internationally competitive, sustainable urban environment. This means providing housing, transport, amenities and energy systems in a best practice European context'**



## INTRODUCTION

Importantly, the NPF sets a target for Cork City to grown by an additional 125,000 people by 2040 This means housing on average an additional 6,250 people and creating over 3,750 jobs per annum over the next 20 years<sup>2</sup>. This can only be done if Cork continues to be a great place to live, with a mix of urban and suburban housing, a resilient economy, top-class educational institutions, good quality health and social services and an appropriate mix of cultural, sports and recreational amenities. To achieve this it will be necessary to enable, stimulate and sustain significant private and public sector investment.

### 1.4 The Preparation of the City Development Plan

Cork City Council has commenced the 2 year process of producing the next City Development Plan 2022-2028 that will ensure that these ambitions can be achieved in a sustainable way. The preparation of the City Development Plan will consider key international and national policies such as the *UN Sustainable Development Goals*<sup>3</sup>, the *National Planning Framework*, the *Climate Action Plan*<sup>4</sup> and the *Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy*<sup>5</sup>. Importantly, it will be informed by the public. Cork City Council is publishing this Issues Paper to start the discussion on the future of Cork City.

<sup>2</sup> The National Planning Framework was adopted by the Government in 2018. It sets out the ambitions and targets for Ireland's sustainable growth to the period 2040

<sup>3</sup> There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN General Assembly in 2015 as a blueprint to achieve better and more sustainable development for all.

<sup>4</sup> The Climate Action Plan was adopted by the Government in 2019.

<sup>5</sup> The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy was adopted by the Southern Regional Assembly in 2019 and came into effect in January 2020. This provides a framework for the development of the south of Ireland, and in particular sets out a plan for Cork Metropolitan Area.





## INTRODUCTION

**This Issues Paper raises key questions that need to be considered in the preparation of the City Development Plan including:**

- How do we create and develop as a city that people have a good quality and healthy life or a liveable city?
- What factors will guide the shape of our city, in which people live, work and enjoy leisure time?
- How do we provide for new homes, neighbourhoods and communities?
- How do we ensure that our economy can recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and is resilient through economic cycles?
- What will the city look like, respecting the past and building the future? How do we sustain a distinctive built heritage?
- What will the city of the future look like? What factors will influence urban development?
- How do we ensure we continue to be connected locally, regionally, nationally and internationally? How easy will it be to travel around Cork by foot, bicycle, bus, tram, suburban rail and car?
- How do we make sure Cork develops with the proper mix of recreational amenities, green spaces and support the valuable biodiversity and natural assets of the City?
- How is all of this done in a sustainable way that will reduce the impact on and protect the environment?



## 1.5 Next Steps

Following the publication of this Issues Paper, Cork City Council will commence an extensive consultation process designed to inform the City Development Plan. The stages of the Development Plan preparation and consultation process are illustrated below. As part of this consultation, Cork City Council will engage widely and will consult with community groups, business representative organisations and the voluntary sector, through the Public Participation Network [www.corkcityppn.ie](http://www.corkcityppn.ie). We look forward to having a meaningful conversation on the future of our city and encourage everybody to take part in the process.

Details of events taking place during the consultation process will be available at [www.corkcitydevelopmentplan.ie](http://www.corkcitydevelopmentplan.ie)

Submissions or observations are invited from all and can be made by the following means:

- Using the on-line submission portal at [www.corkcitydevelopmentplan.ie](http://www.corkcitydevelopmentplan.ie)
- By posting your submission to **Development Plan Submissions, Strategic and Economic Development, City Hall, Anglesea Street, Cork T12 T997**

The deadline for submissions is **21st August 2020**.



## Development Plan Stages



# 02. Strategic Context





## 2.1. Introduction

The City Development Plan is required to set out a strategy for the growth and development of the city which is consistent with national and regional policy. Since the adoption of the current City Development Plan significant changes have occurred in the policy and regulatory environment for land use planning in Ireland. Of particular note was the adoption of Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework (NPF) in 2018 and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) in 2020, which also contains the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP).

These statutory plans are aligned in setting out unprecedented and ambitious growth targets for Cork City

which seek to harness its potential to achieve balanced regional development that counterbalances the growth in the Greater Dublin Area. The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) will also be highly influential in planning the future of Cork.

There is significant alignment between the NPF and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and these Goals will also act as a foundation for the Cork City Development Plan.

Regard will also be had to national plans and policies such as the National Climate Action Plan and the series of Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

## 2.2. UN Sustainable Development Goals

There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the UN General Assembly in 2015 as a blueprint to achieve better and more sustainable development for all. As the NPF states: “sustainability is at the heart of long-term planning and the NPF seeks to ensure that decisions we take today meet our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”<sup>1</sup>. Development Plan polices can have a direct impact on achieving some SDGs, such as Sustainable Cities and Communities and Climate Action, and they can also have an indirect impact on the achievement of many other SDGs. Key goals and objectives in the new Development Plan will therefore be proofed against the SDGs.



<sup>1</sup> National Planning Framework, Section 1.5

### 2.3. National Hierarchy of Plans

A national hierarchy of plans is now in place with the NPF being the overarching document. The NPF influences all spatial plans from national to local levels. The RSES sets out the mechanism for delivering the NPF at a regional level. The City Development Plan will provide an overall strategy for development for Cork City, whilst local area plans may be prepared giving more detailed planning guidance where required.

The diagram from the NPF, illustrates the hierarchy of plans and shows how EU and national legislation and policy, as well as local inputs, will feed into the preparation of the City Development Plan.

### 2.4. The National Planning Framework (NPF)

The NPF is a 20-year high level strategy to guide development and investment in Ireland. The vision, as set out in the NPF, is the delivery of a regional focused strategy for managing growth and providing a counterbalance to the established concentration of growth in the Greater Dublin Area. To achieve this the NPF targets a level of growth for the other regions which combined will at least match the growth of Dublin and the East and Midlands Region. It also supports ambitious growth targets to enable the cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway



Source: Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework

## 02. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

and Waterford to grow by at least 50% by 2040 and sees them as drivers of regional growth.

The NPF identifies ten National Strategic Outcomes which will be a central consideration in shaping the new City Development Plan. The outcomes will be realised a series of National Policy Objectives (NPOs) which the City Development Plan will have to be consistent with. The NPF is underpinned by the National Development Plan which is a 10-year strategy for public capital investment.

Compact Growth is the first National Strategic Outcome (NSO) and it has particular significance for spatial planning policy, requiring at least 50% of growth in Cork City to be located within and close to the existing 'built-up' area. This will allow better use of underutilised land and buildings including infill and brownfield land, with higher housing and employment densities. Higher densities and compact development will need to be accompanied by improved employment opportunities, amenities, health, education and environmental services, supported by sustainable mobility, reflecting NSOs 4,5, and10. NSO 7 promotes enhancement of our natural and built heritage will help retain the unique character of our city.

The National Strategic Outcomes also emphasise that regional and international connectivity will contribute to development of a strong economy. The climate resilience and management of environmental resources outcomes will underlie the city development strategy

Meeting the ambitious targets whilst adhering to a 'Compact Growth' model will be a challenge and opportunity for Cork City that will need to be addressed in the City Development Plan and subsequent plans.

The NPF identifies a number of key growth enablers for Cork City which include:

- Delivering large scale regeneration projects for provision of new employment, housing and supporting infrastructure in Cork Docklands;
- Identifying opportunities to intensify housing development in inner city and suburban areas, supported by public realm and amenities, and in 'greenfield' areas with good transport links;
- Enhanced opportunities for existing communities through employment, learning and education support;
- Continued expansion of academic institutions;
- Creating the conditions to attract and retain talented innovators and entrepreneurs in order to grow and diversify Cork's employment base;
- Development of a much-enhanced citywide public transport system, improved regional connectivity and improved rail journey times to Dublin and other centres in Ireland; and
- Ensuring that water supply and wastewater needs are met.

The City Development Plan will focus on delivery of many of these enablers and it is recognised that significant support from the public and private sector and investment in infrastructure and services will be required to make them happen.



02. STRATEGIC CONTEXT



Source: Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework

## 2.5. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES)

The RSES is a strategic regional development framework supporting the programme for change set out in Project Ireland 2040. As the regional tier of the national planning process it ensures coordination between the National Planning Framework and the City Development Plan. The central themes of the RSES are place making, climate action and sustainable economic opportunity and growth. It states: 'Our cities are the pillars on which to base the RSES settlement and economic strategy'.

The RSES sets out a settlement hierarchy for the region and population targets for Cork and the other cities to 2026 and 2031. It contains a large number of Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) which the City Development Plan will aim to achieve. The RSES also identifies key enablers, similar to those in the NPF, that are designed to underpin Cork City as the primary urban centre of the region. Importantly RSES supports Cork City's ambition to develop as a city of international scale.

The RSES reinforces the National Strategic Outcome of high quality international connectivity through supporting investment and increased capacity in the regions ports and



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airports and provision of high quality digital connectivity. It supports the TEN-T network and the continued capital investment proposed in the and Port of Cork's Strategic Development Plan including redevelopment of existing facilities in Ringaskiddy and preparing City Docks and Tivoli Docks for regeneration. It also supports Cork airport as one the regions two international airports and a driver of growth in the region.

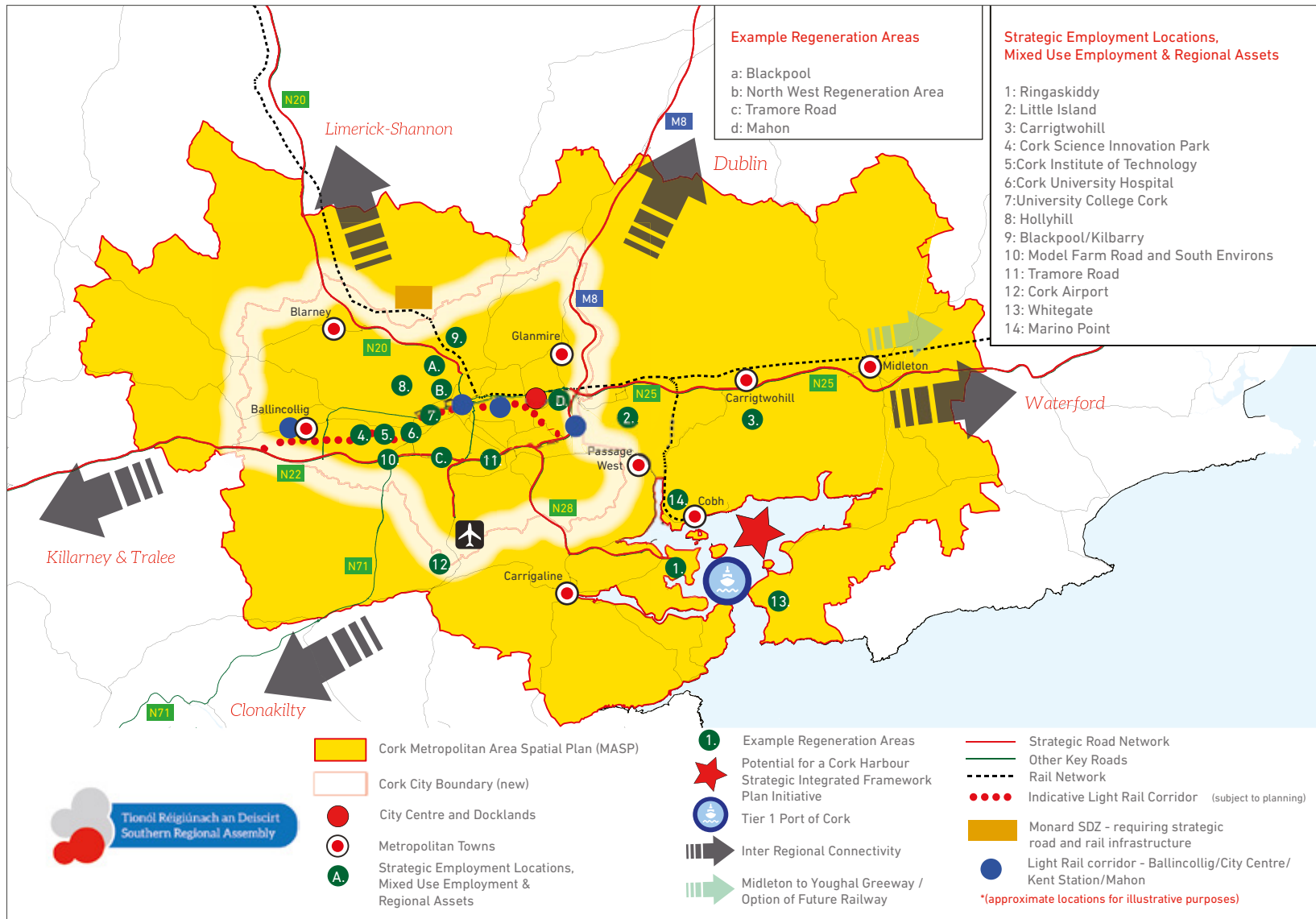
### 2.6. Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)

Volume 2 of the RSES contains the Cork MASP which sets out principles and policy objectives to guide investment and sustainable development across the entire metropolitan area. The NPF states that Cork requires significantly accelerated and urban focused growth to more fully achieve its role as an international centre of scale to complement Dublin. The MASP reinforces this and states that the level of growth envisaged for Cork (Cork City to grow 50-60% by 2040 to 336,000 people) uniquely positions the Cork Metropolitan Area as:

- A principal complementary location to Dublin with a strong international role;
- A primary driver of economic and population growth in the region;
- A compact region with increased regional connectivity; and
- A city region focusing growth on the delivery of sustainable transport patterns.



02. STRATEGIC CONTEXT



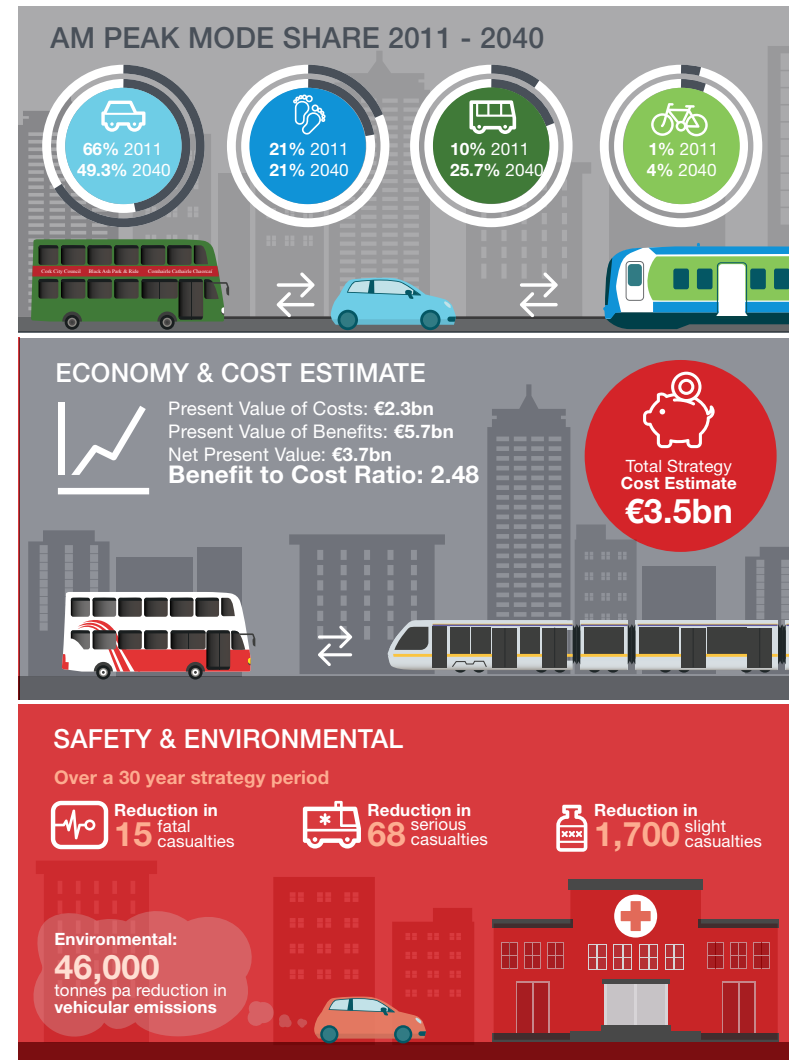
## 02. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The MASP population targets for the overall Cork Metropolitan Area envisage a growth of 104,657 people by 2031. Most of this growth will occur in Cork City, which would see an uplift in population of up to 75,000 people, to give a total of 289,000 people in Cork City by 2031. This will require commensurate growth in employment with close to 65,000 extra jobs needed in the Cork Metropolitan Area.

The MASP recognises that the concentration of this level of growth in Cork will require significant and concentrated investment in supporting infrastructure to deliver the houses, jobs and services required to meet the role and targets set out for Cork. It includes a range of specific objectives to deliver transport, environmental services, energy, flood protection, cultural, and amenity infrastructure, among others, which will be incorporated into the Development Plan.

### 2.7. Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)

CMATS, adopted by the National Transport Authority (NTA) in February 2020, sets out a transport strategy for the Cork Metropolitan Area up to 2040, which is in keeping with the National Planning Framework and envisages a €3.5billion investment in transport infrastructure and mobility in Cork. CMATS assumes a close integration between land-use and transportation plans and aims to prioritise sustainable transport and reduce car dependency. It seeks to provide



Source: Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)

## 02. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

a high level of public transport connectivity to key destinations, increasing modal share of public transport from 10% in 2011 to 26% by 2040.

It proposes a new Light Rail System (LRT) from Ballincollig to Mahon, via the city centre and docklands, which will be a gamechanger for Cork and will serve a catchment reaching 32% of the Cork Metropolitan Areas population and 60% of jobs. Major upgrades to the capacity and frequency of the citywide bus services and to the commuter rail service (serving 19% of population and 30% of jobs) are also planned. CMATS also aims to see a 63% increase in walking trips by 2040 and an sees potential for an additional 56,000 car trips transferring to cycling by provision of appropriate infrastructure and facilities. Whilst taking its lead at national level from the NPF and the National Development Plan, CMATS builds upon previous transport studies for the region including Cork City Centre Movement Strategy, Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) and the Cork Metropolitan Cycle Network Plan.

CMATS also aims to protect key strategic routes for the transfer of freight and services including the provision of a high-level freight access to the Port of Cork. It includes 50km of National Road network improvements and 70km of Regional Road improvements, including the Dunkettle Interchange, the M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Road, the Cork North Ring Road and distributor roads to the north and south of the city.

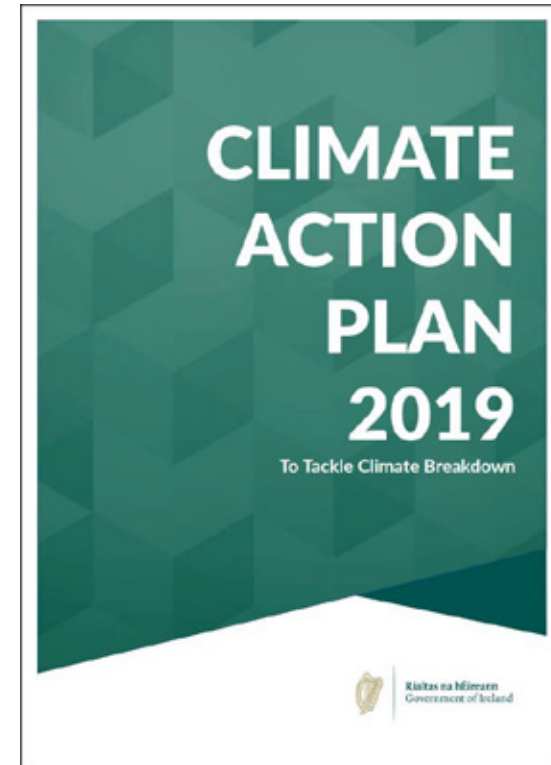
The strategy provides a coherent transport framework and implementation plan around which other agencies involved in land use planning, environmental protection, and delivery of other infrastructure such as housing and water can align their investment priorities. More details on CMATS are outlined in the Connected City section of this document.



## 2.8. Climate Action Plan 2019

Climate Change impacts are currently experienced worldwide and coastal areas in western parts of Europe such as Ireland can expect more heavy rain, higher risk of flooding from rivers and higher risk of storms in winter. Cork City is particularly vulnerable to river and tidal flooding, drought, colder winters as well as surface water flooding arising from heavy rain.

The national Climate Action Plan sets out a course of action to address the impacts of climate change on Ireland's environment, society, economic and natural resources. The Plan identifies the scale of the challenge and examines impacts on a range of key sectors including Electricity, Transport, Built Environment, Industry and Agriculture and charts a course towards ambitious emission reduction targets. Cork City Council adopted and is implementing a Climate Adaptation Strategy for the city and will also be undertaking a Climate Action Plan. Climate change will be a cross-cutting theme with implications for all parts of the new City Development Plan and is addressed further in section 5 of this document.



## 2.9. Statutory Planning Guidelines

The Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government issues statutory guidelines from time to time to planning authorities. who must have regard to them in carrying out their functions, including in the preparation of the City Development Plan. They cover a wide range of issues including architectural heritage, childcare facilities, landscape, residential density and design, environmental assessment and development management.

New Guidelines on Development Plan preparation and Housing Needs Demand Assessment are awaited from Government and may coincide with preparation of the City Development Plan.





# 03. **Your City:** Cork City in Profile

### 3.1 Introduction

This Issues Paper is accompanied by a Cork City Socio-Economic Profile. The profile is based on census data and provides a series of detailed maps and graphics illustrating different social and economic indicators for the city. Some of the most interesting findings from the profile and their implications for the future planning of the city are set out below. The full Cork City Socio-Economic Profile is available on our website<sup>1</sup>.

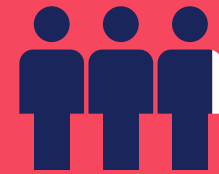
### 3.2. City Growth Targets

As mentioned in section 2, the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) are aligned in setting out unprecedented and ambitious population, housing and job growth targets for Cork City.

The growth targets set out for Cork City up to 2031 are seeking to increase the existing population and housing base by over one third and the existing jobs base by over 50%<sup>5</sup>. The housing unit targets would require an average annual delivery of over 2,000 new units to be sustained during this 15-year period to 2031 as required to meet the NPF population target for growth over the 2016 census population.

1 [www.corkcitydevelopmentplan.ie](http://www.corkcitydevelopmentplan.ie) All information presented is based on census data  
 2 Figures derived from Census 2016, NPF 2040 and Southern RSES 2031  
 3 Estimate figure based on an average household size for Cork City of 2.4 persons  
 4 This is a minimum jobs target for Cork City, calculated using a national population to jobs ratio of 1.6 persons, as set out in the NPF. As a city, Cork City will have a higher concentration of employment than the national average.  
 5 In 2016, there were an estimated 92,274 jobs within the new city boundary.

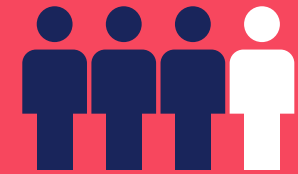
### Growth Targets for Cork City <sup>2</sup>



**2016 POPULATION  
OF CORK CITY**

**210,853**

**POPULATION  
INCREASE FROM  
2011 CENSUS  
+5.1%**



**POPULATION TARGET  
UP TO 2031**

**286,178**

**POPULATION  
INCREASE FROM  
2016 CENSUS  
+36%**



**JOB GROWTH <sup>4</sup>  
TARGET UP TO 2031**

**+47,100**

**+51%**



**HOUSING UNIT <sup>3</sup>  
TARGET UP TO 2031**

**+31,250**

**+36%**

While these targets are ambitious and will require investment in critical infrastructure over the short, medium and long terms, they are in place to help the city and the Southern Region create more compact urban growth, more balanced regional growth and act as a counterbalance to Dublin.

### 3.3. City Growth Trends

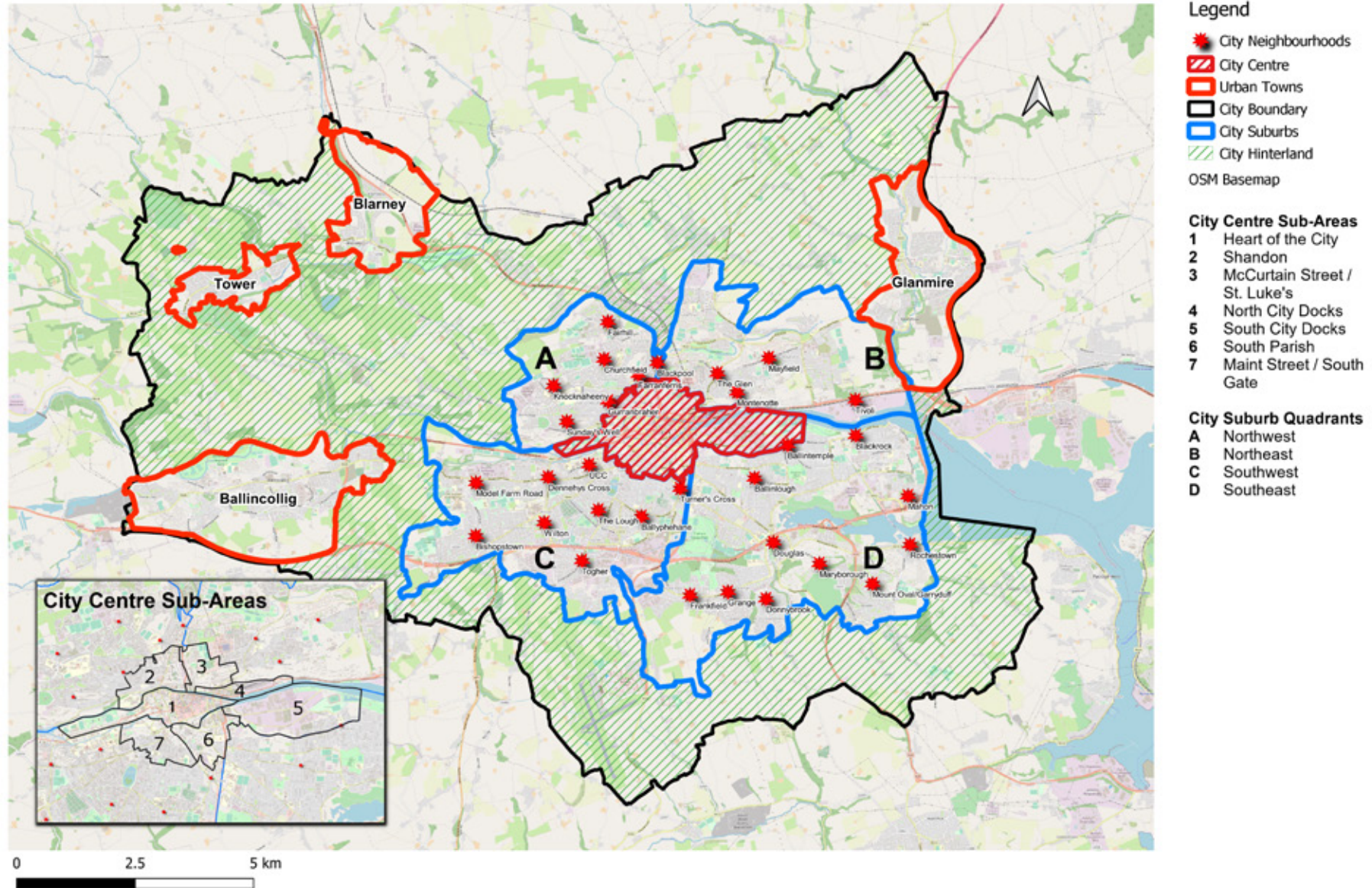
The Cork City Socio-Economic Profile provides a comprehensive analysis of census data for the city, covering a variety of indicators. The profile analyses the characteristics of the city by dividing it into the following five areas<sup>1</sup>:

1. The City Centre and it's collection of sub- areas;
2. The City Suburbs with it's collection of city neighbourhoods;
3. The five designated RAPID Areas located within the City Suburbs;
4. The four Urban Towns within the city; and
5. The City Hinterland, being the remainder of the city, including smaller settlements and other land uses adjacent to the city.

<sup>1</sup> For more detail please refer to the "Shaping the Structure of the City" section of this issues paper



### Structure of the City



### (i) Population Change

Between 2011 and 2016, different neighbourhoods within the city experienced very different rates of population change. Significant growth occurred within the City Centre and some surrounding neighbourhoods, such as Blackpool, Turners Cross and Bishopstown. With limited new residential development, this is largely the result of an intensification of use of existing buildings for apartments/flats and increases in student numbers living in the City Centre.

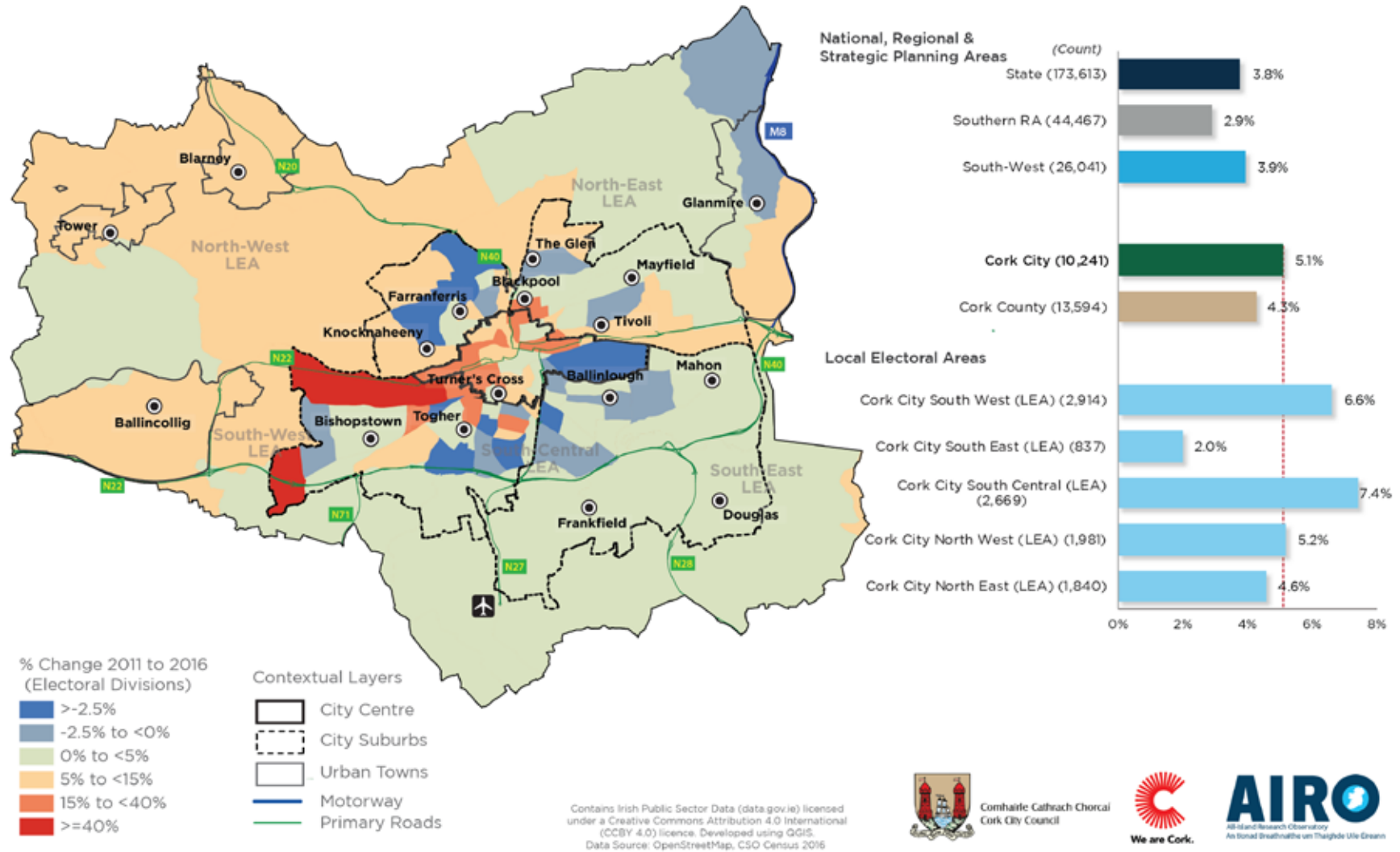
In contrast, the City Suburbs experienced minimum or negative population change. There were small levels of population growth in Mahon, Douglas and Frankfield, while the Glen, Ballinlough and Farranferris experienced a population decline. These patterns are a result of existing family households maturing and limited new house construction in those areas.

The city's Urban Towns largely experienced population growth, with Ballincollig, Tower and Blarney seeing increases in population. This growth results from greater numbers of new house construction and increasing numbers of young growing families. In contrast, Glanmire experienced a slight population decline. The City Hinterland generally experienced increased growth with the northwest area seeing higher than average levels of population change. This was largely the result of small scale and one-off residential developments.



# Population Change 2011 to 2016

Cork City - Electoral Divisions (EDs)



## (ii) Housing Type

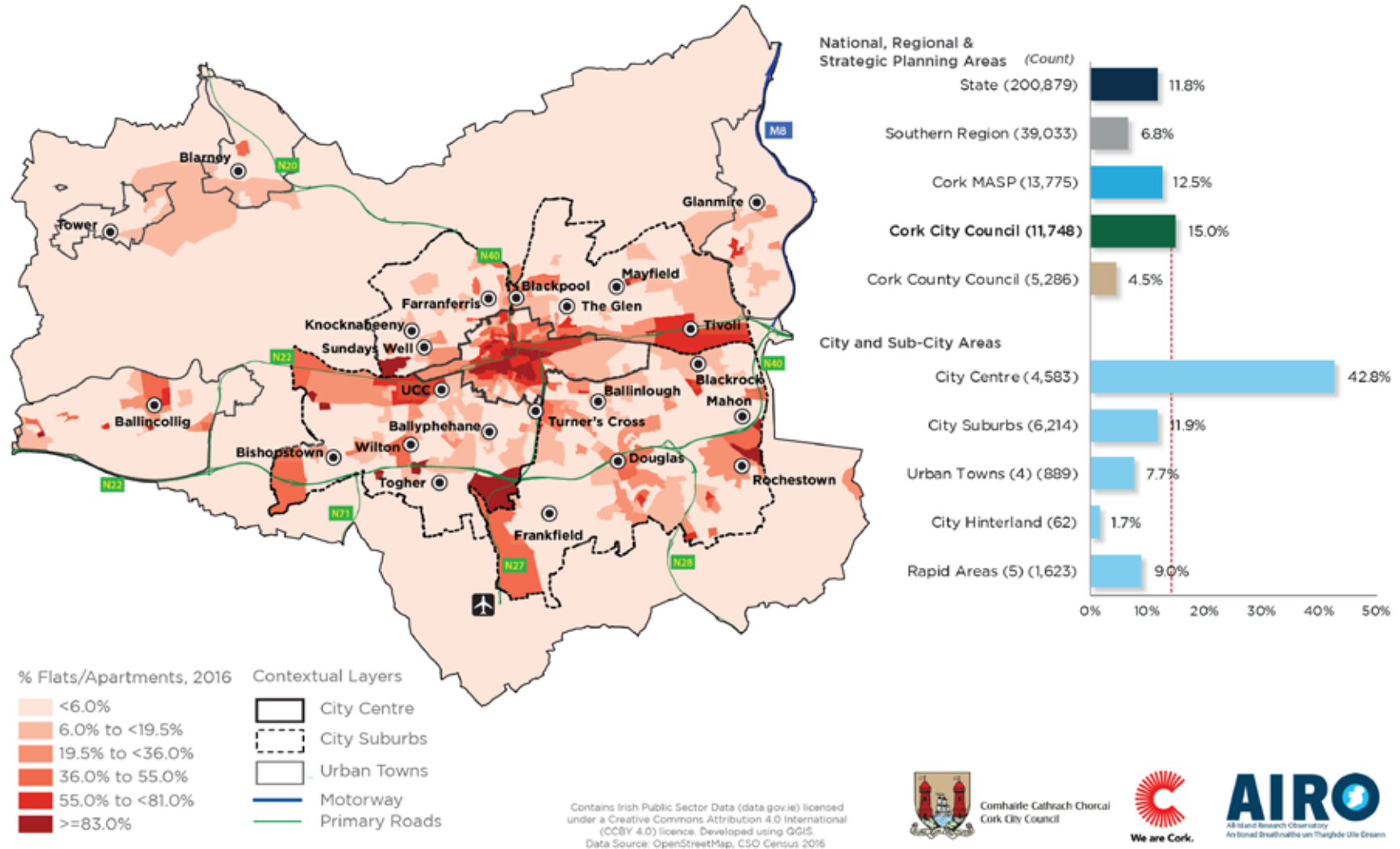
The predominant house type in Cork City remains the detached, semi-detached or terraced house, accounting for over 85% of the city's housing stock in 2016. Apartments or flats accounted for 15% of Cork City's total housing stock in 2016.

Apartments are predominantly found within the City Centre, accounting for over 50% of the total housing stock in the majority of City Centre neighbourhoods. Pockets within the City Suburbs and the four Urban Towns also had higher than average rates, including Mahon, Douglas and Ballincollig. The majority of the City Suburbs and the City Hinterland have few or no apartments or flats, being typically less than 6% of the housing stock in these areas.



# House Type: Flat/Apartment, 2016

Cork City - Small Areas (SAs)





### (iii) Housing Tenure

Housing tenure in Ireland can be broken down into three main categories; owner occupied, private rental and social housing. The total housing stock in Cork City in 2016 is predominantly made up of owner occupied housing (58%), with the combination of private rental (24%) and social housing (14%) accounting for less of the overall share.

Owner occupied housing is the dominant tenure found in the four Urban Towns (72%) and in the City Hinterland (84%). While in contrast, less than one in four residential units in the City Centre are owner occupied (25%).

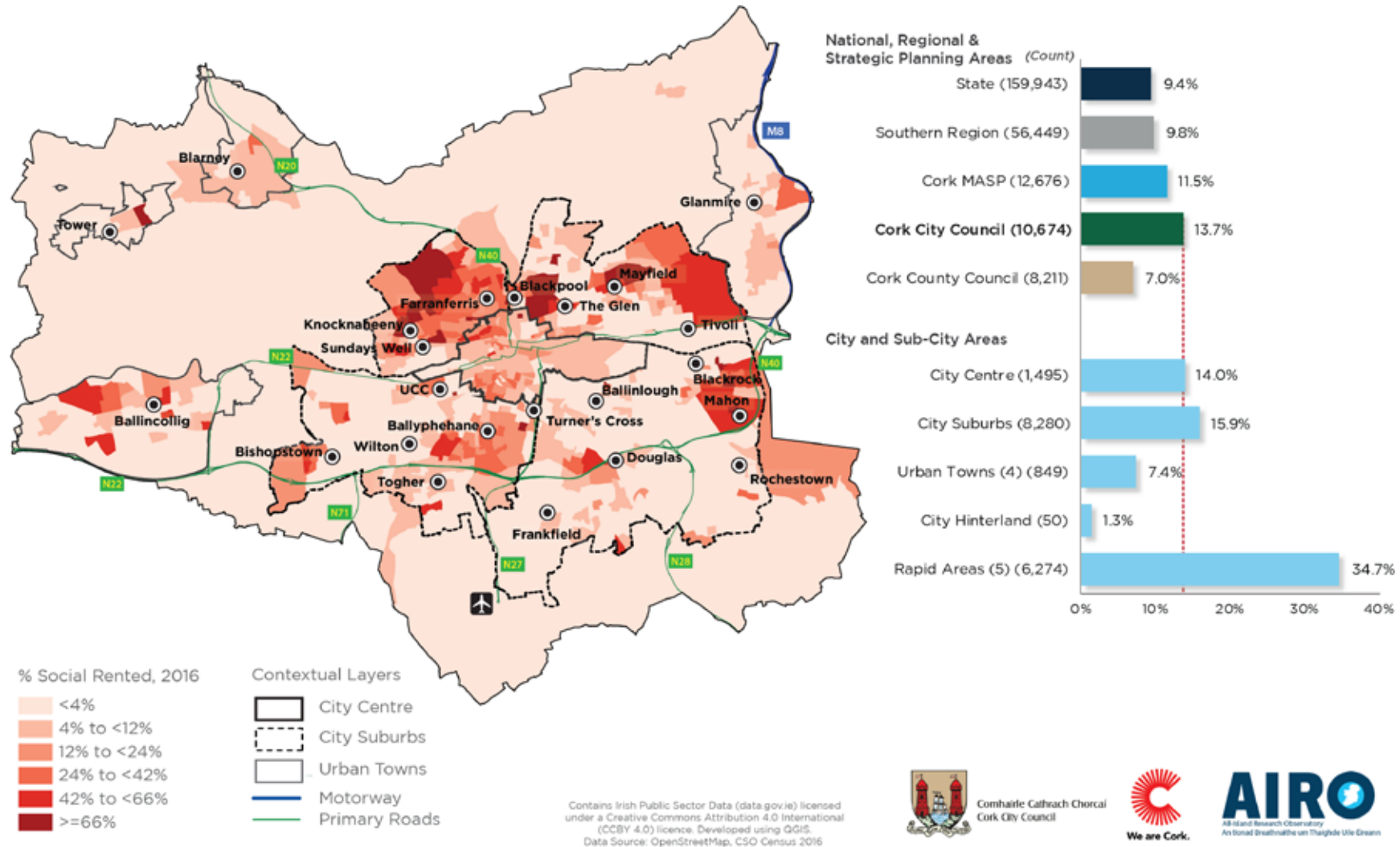
Private rental housing accounts for 24% of the city's overall housing stock. There's a notably higher number of private rentals in the City Centre (52%), with a much lower percentage in the City Suburbs (20%), the four Urban Towns (17%) and the Rapid Areas (10%).

Just under 14% of Cork City's total housing stock is social housing. Blackpool, Mahon, Mayfield and parts of Ballincollig and Tower have higher levels, being above 40% of their totals. Blarney, Frankfield and Douglas have lower levels, generally below 4% of their totals.



# Housing Tenure: Social Rented, 2016

Cork City - Small Areas (SAs)



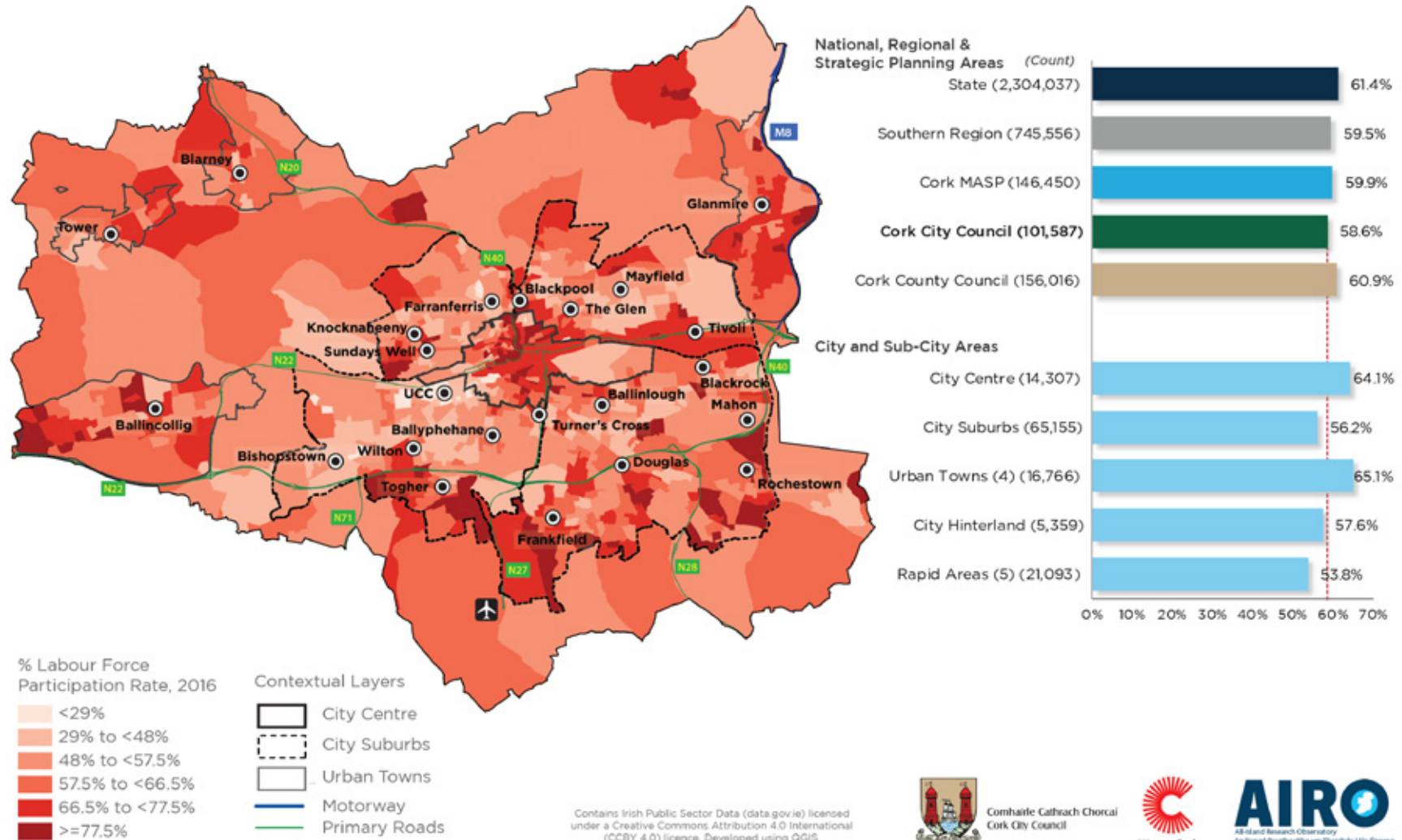
#### **(iv) Labour Force Participation Rate**

The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is calculated as the labour force divided by the total working population. In 2016, Cork City's LFPR was 59%, being slightly below the national average. The City Centre and adjoining neighbourhoods generally have a higher LFPR, while the city suburbs generally have been lower than average. These patterns are influenced by the location of both the student and older age populations within the city. The Urban Towns of Ballincollig, Tower, Blarney and Glanmire have a higher than average LFPR, reflecting higher concentrations of young working families.



# Labour Force Participation Rate, 2016

Cork City - Small Areas (SAs)



### (iv) Transport Modes

The mode of transportation used by those living in Cork City to travel to work/education in 2016 varied greatly. Over 22% of the city's population used green modes<sup>1</sup>, with only 9% using public transport and 63% using private modes<sup>2</sup>.

More than one in five Cork City residents walk or cycle to work or education. With 47% of residents of the City Centre using green modes there is a relatively high use of walking and cycling by residents of the City Centre. However, there are lower levels of cycling and walking to work or education by people living further out. The use of public transport by Cork City residents to travel to work/education is lower than the national average. Less than one in ten Cork City residents travel to work/education by public transport, with significantly higher levels occurring within the City Centre. That stated, there is evidence of a significant increase in the use of public transport in Cork City since the publication of the 2016 Census.

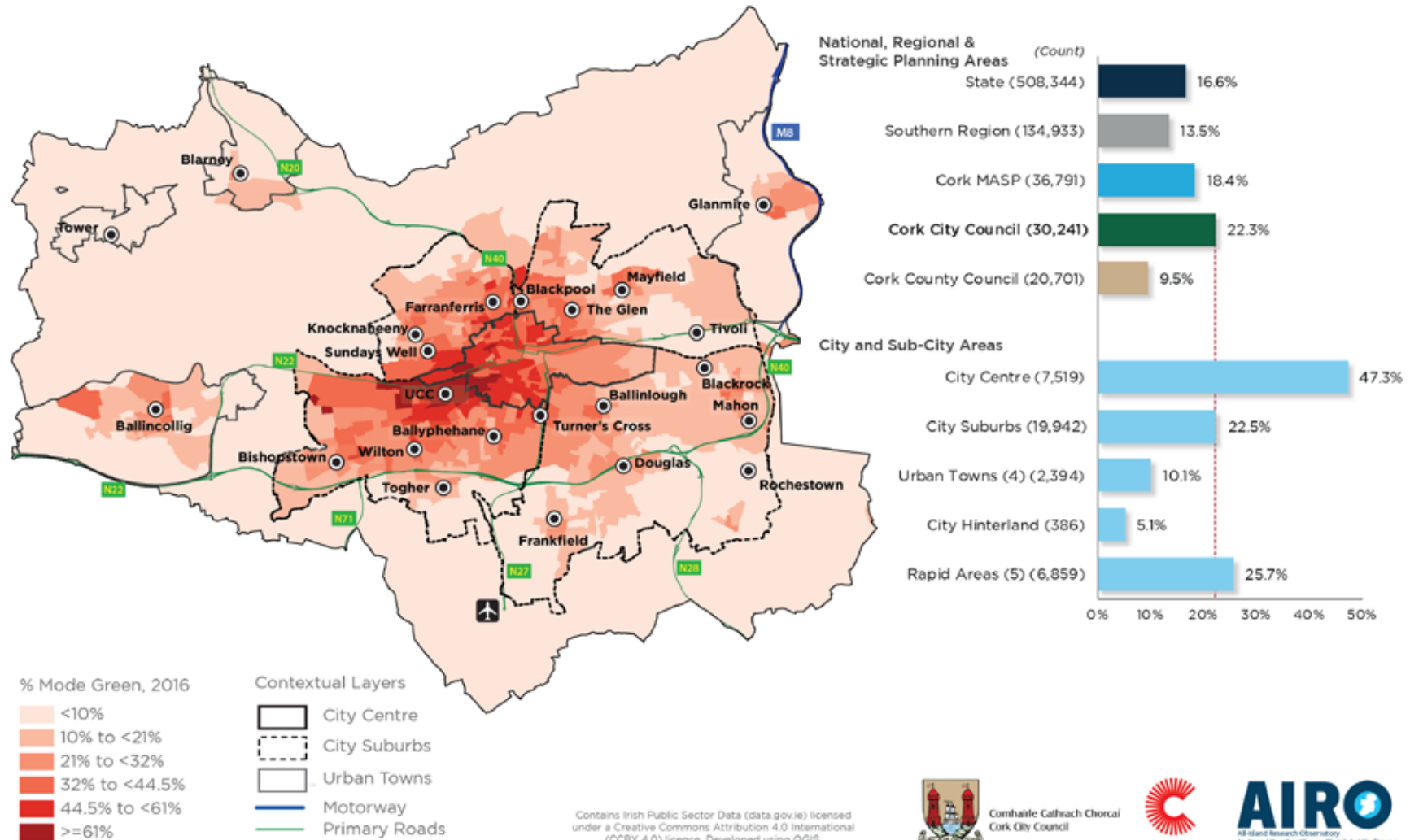
The dominant choice for Cork City residents is to travel to work/ education by private car, van, lorry, etc. The use of private modes accounts for nearly two thirds of the total for these journeys in the city and matches the national average. The pattern within the city is a reverse of that for green modes, with significantly higher usage of private modes (over 80%) taken by those living outside the City Centre and the City Suburbs.

<sup>1</sup> Green Modes are defined as Walking or Cycling (also known as active travel)  
<sup>2</sup> Private Modes are predominantly by private car, van, lorry but include others (e.g. car-pooling)



# Transport to Work/Education: Green Modes, 2016

Cork City - Small Areas (SAs)

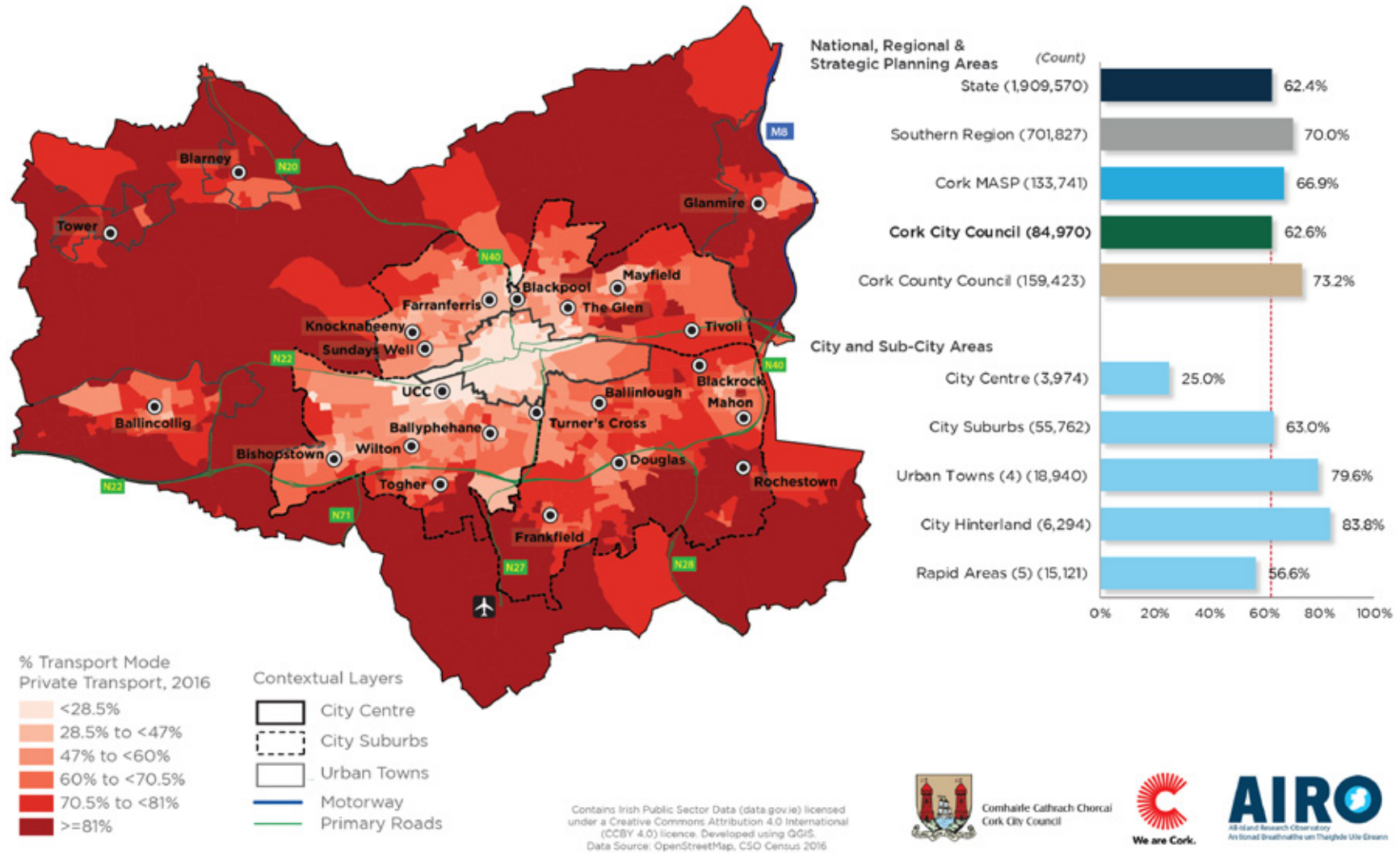


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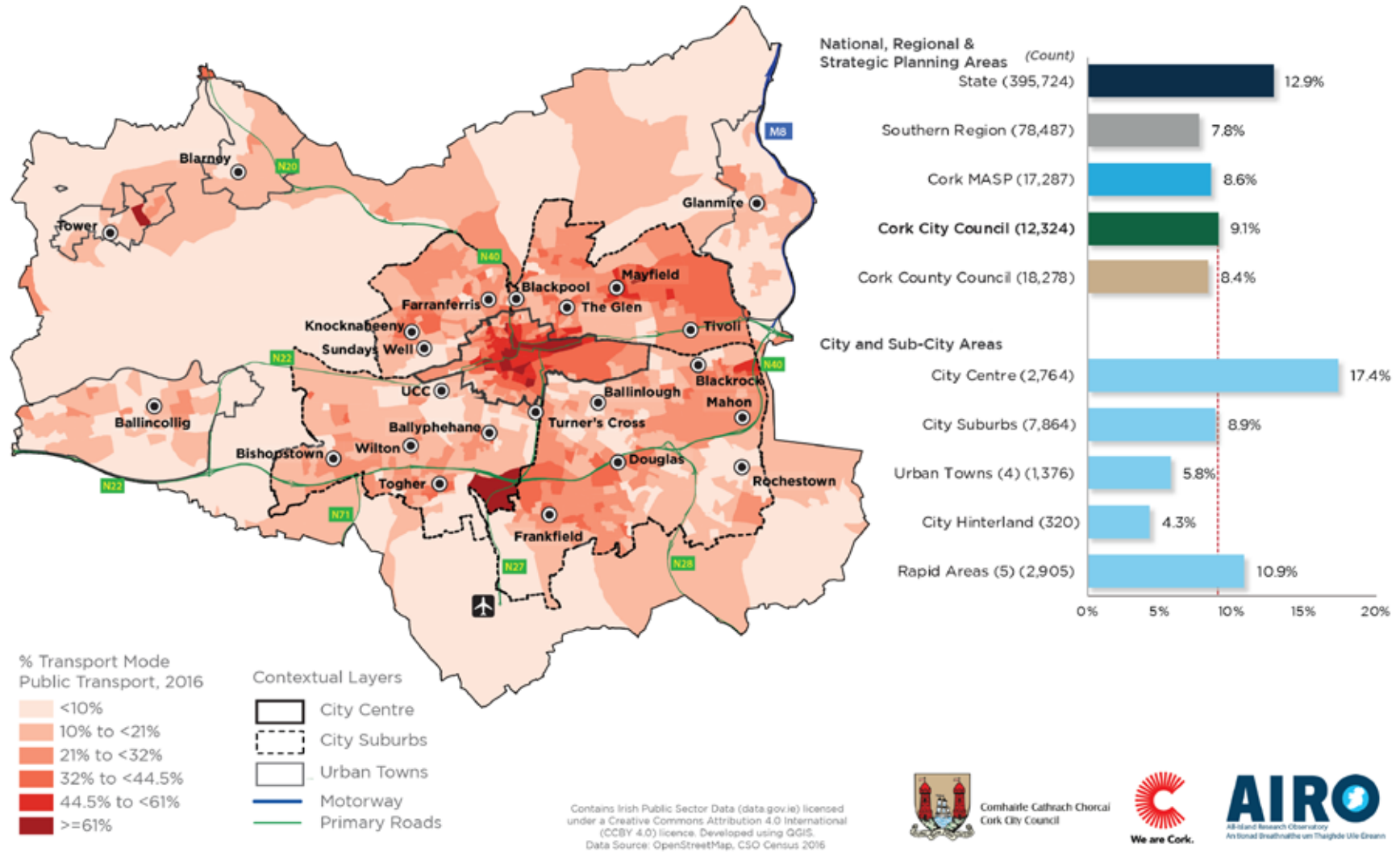
# Transport to Work/Education: Private Modes, 2016

Cork City - Small Areas (SAs)



# Transport to Work/Education: Public Transport, 2016

Cork City - Small Areas (SAs)





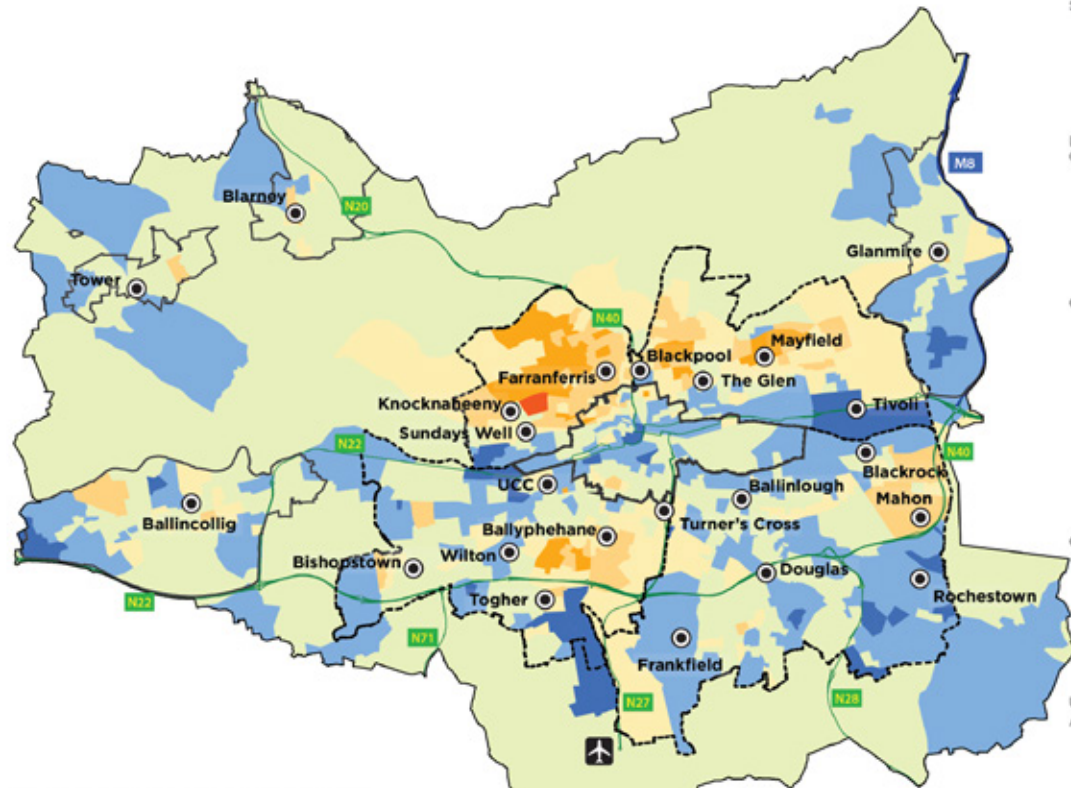
#### (iv) Social Profile

The Pobal HP Deprivation Index provides a method of measuring the relative affluence or disadvantage of particular geographical areas using data compiled from various census categories, such as unemployment, educational attainment and population change. Cork City's deprivation rate is classified as marginally above average, with its index rating (3.01) notably higher than the national average (0.56) but comparable to the wider Cork county area (2.95). Within the city there is a significant range, with the five Rapid Areas being classified as disadvantaged. Pockets of the City Suburbs, Ballincollig, Glanmire, Tower and Blarney are classified as being marginally below average. Areas within the City Centre, the City Suburbs and peripheral areas of the city are designated as affluent.

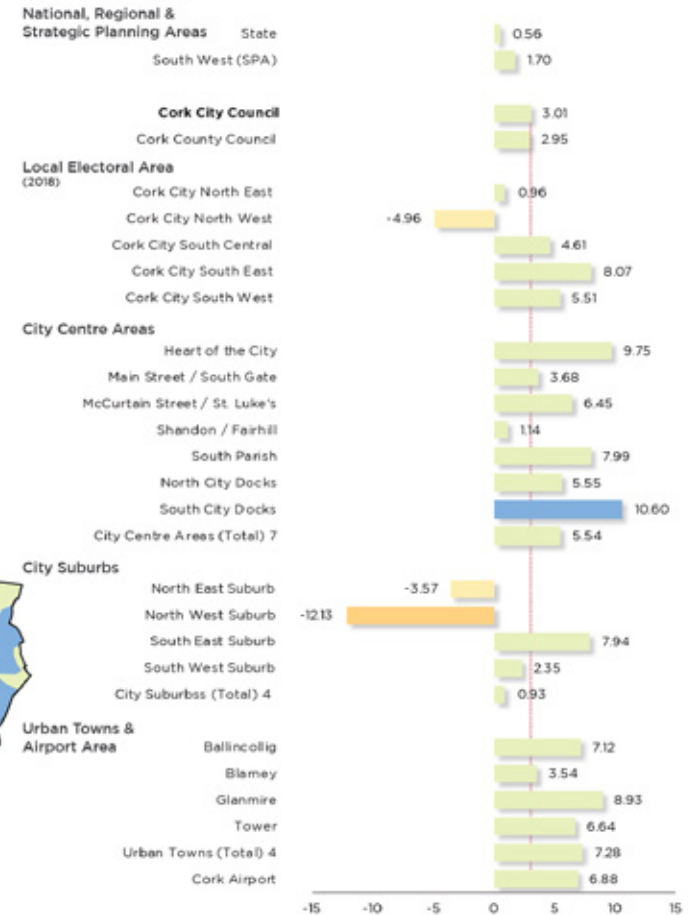


# Pobal HP Deprivation Index, Relative Score 2016

## Cork City - Small Areas (SAs)



Pobal HP - Relative Deprivation '16



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Comhairle Galtrach Chorcaí  
Cork City Council



### 3.4 Key Questions

- ▶ **Should future population growth be allocated in line with recent population trends within the city, or should specific parts of the city be considered for concentrated growth? If so, where?**
- ▶ **What types of housing (e.g. houses, apartments) and tenures (e.g. owner occupied, private rental, social) should be provided to meet population growth targets for Cork City? Where and how should they be planned for?**
- ▶ **How can the next City Development Plan help to increase participation in the labour force throughout the city?**
- ▶ **How best can we increase the percentage of people using active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport in the city?**
- ▶ **How can the next City Development Plan help increase access to jobs throughout the city, but especially in disadvantaged areas?**

# 04. Shaping the Structure of the City



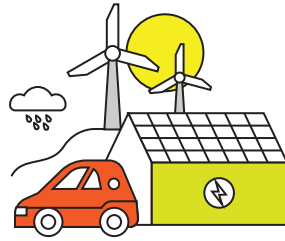
## 4.1. Introduction

The Cork City Development Plan will provide the framework for shaping the future structure of the city for 2022 - 2028. To do this, the plan will need to be driven by a very clear set of principles, including those illustrated below.

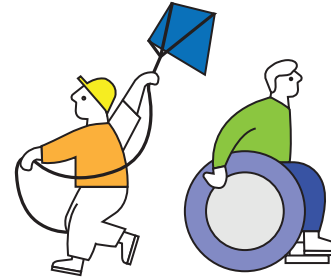
#### 04. SHAPING THE STRUCTURE OF THE CITY



A city of strong communities, with liveable neighbourhoods and an excellent quality of life



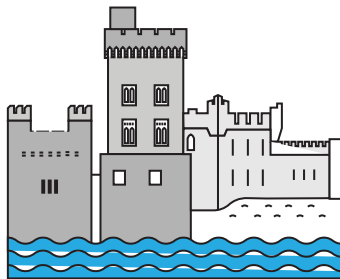
A resilient city that addresses challenges and risks posed by climate change and pandemics



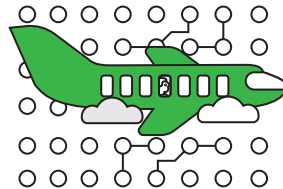
A diverse city offering equality for all



A healthy city offering a vibrant and interactive environment for all



An architecturally rich and beautiful city by the River Lee



A highly connected city, providing local, regional, national and international connectivity



A city of learning, using knowledge as a key enabler for city growth



A city of culture and heritage, creatively embracing its past, present and ambitious for its future

## 4.2. The Core Strategy

The Core Strategy is the heart of the plan, setting out a framework for spatial growth of the city. It will be based on population, housing and job targets and other guiding policies set out in higher level planning documents, like the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The delivery of compact growth that aligns with national and regional planning policy, alongside sustainable mobility and climate resilience will be key components of the next Core Strategy for Cork City.

The strategy will set out key locations for future developments that provide the right mix of uses for an area, including housing, employment, community, amenities, education, health and social services, cultural facilities, sports and recreation facilities and other infrastructure. It also seeks to ensure that the right amount of land is zoned, serviced and available in the right locations so that homes, community services, places of employment and other supporting uses are provided at the right scale and balance, in line with the carrying capacity of the local environment.

The successful delivery of the next Core Strategy will also be heavily dependent on other factors including critical investment in key infrastructure and services and the collective ambitions and abilities of the public, private and community sectors. A wide range of government departments,

### Growth Targets for Cork City to 2031 and 2040<sup>1</sup>

		Population	House Units <sup>2</sup>	Jobs
<b>Cork City's existing Pop/ Housing/ Jobs (2016 Census)</b>		210,853	86,974 <sup>3</sup>	92,274
<b>Growth Targets</b>	<b>National (2040)</b>	+1,000,000	+500,000	+500,000
	<b>Southern Region (2031)</b>	+343,500	+143,125	+225,000
	<b>Cork Metro Area (2031)</b>	+104,657	+43,607	+65,000
	<b>Cork City (2031)</b>	+75,325	+31,250	+47,100 <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Figures derived from Census 2016, NPF 2040 and Southern RSES 2031, except where otherwise noted

<sup>2</sup> Estimate figure based on an average household size for Cork City of 2.4 persons

<sup>3</sup> Of this total 78,613 units were found to be occupied and 8,361 units were found to be vacant

<sup>4</sup> This is a minimum jobs target for Cork City, calculated using the national population to jobs ratio of 1.6 persons, as set out in the NPF. As a city, Cork City will have a higher concentration of employment than the national average.

state and local agencies, community groups and bodies and other stakeholders will need to come together to inform, embrace and implement the next Core Strategy.

### 4.3. The Current Structure of Cork City

The current structure of Cork City provides the urban and social fabric within which the present city functions. It is also the starting point from where the future city will grow. Cork City's characteristics and form are key determinants for future growth and can be better understood by dividing the city into the following five areas, which are illustrated in the map below:

- **City Centre:** The City Centre is a collection of sub areas including; the City Centre island, McCurtain Street, Shandon, South Parish and North and South City Docks.
- **City Suburbs:** The City Suburbs is a collection of city neighbourhoods, including; Ballinlough, Turners Cross, Sundays Well, Bishopstown, Douglas and also includes Tivoli Docks.
- **RAPID Areas:** The RAPID Areas<sup>1</sup> are; Fairhill/ Gurranaברהer/Farranree, Blackpool/The Glen/Mayfield, Knocknaheeney/Holyhill/Churchfield, Mahon and Togher/ Ballypnehane.

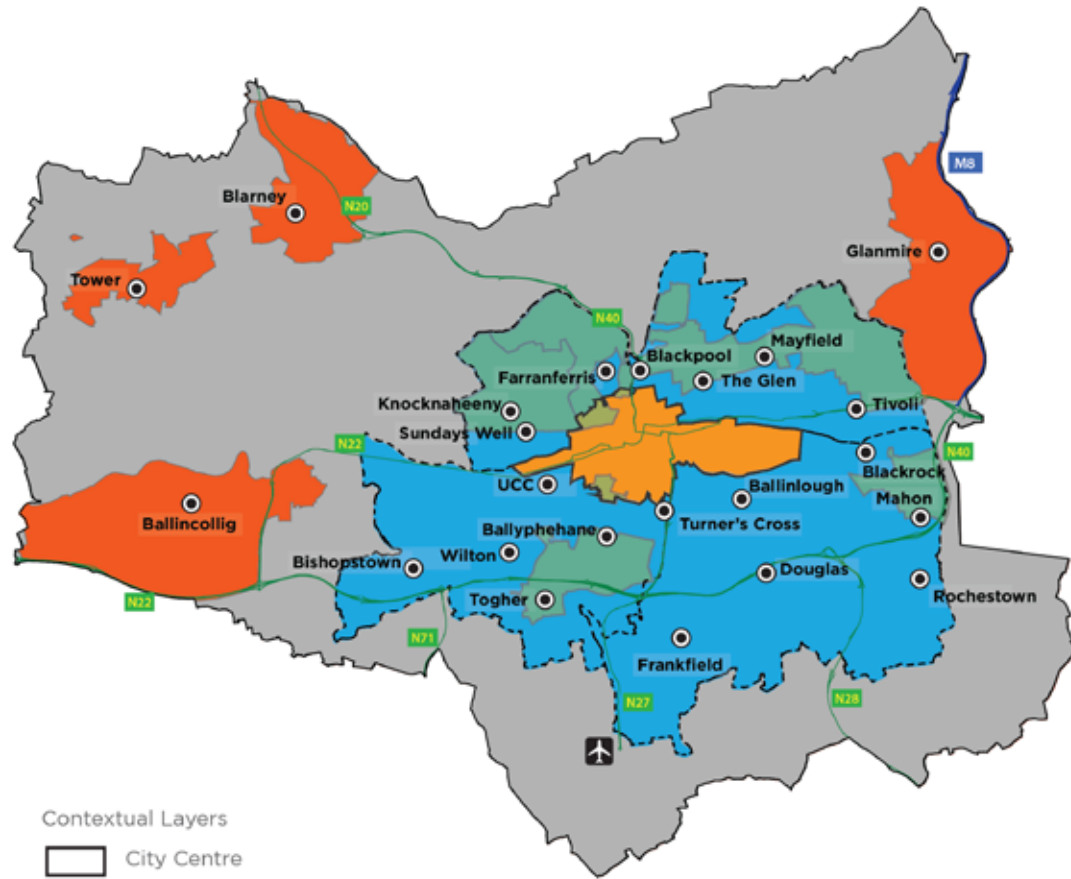
- **Urban Towns:** The Urban Towns within the city consist of the those with a population of 2,000+ persons, being; Ballincollig (18,159), Glanmire (9,903), Tower (3,274) and Blarney (2,550)
- **City Hinterland:** The City Hinterland is the remainder of the city, including smaller settlements like Kerry Pike and White's Cross. It contains a mix of uses, including agricultural and industrial, that are adjacent to the city.

The population living in these five areas of the city varies considerably. The City Centre accounts for nearly 12% of the city's overall population with significant capacity for future growth, most notably in City Docks. The surrounding City Suburbs are a dense collection of neighbourhoods collectively accounting for two-thirds of Cork City's population total. The five RAPID areas all form part of the City Suburbs, and together account for nearly a quarter of the city's total population. The four Urban Towns account for 16% of the city's population, with Ballincollig accounting for over half of this. The City Hinterland is the largest area by land mass but accounts for only 5% of the overall population living in Cork City.

<sup>1</sup> Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID) works with communities across Cork City focusing on areas designated as disadvantaged.

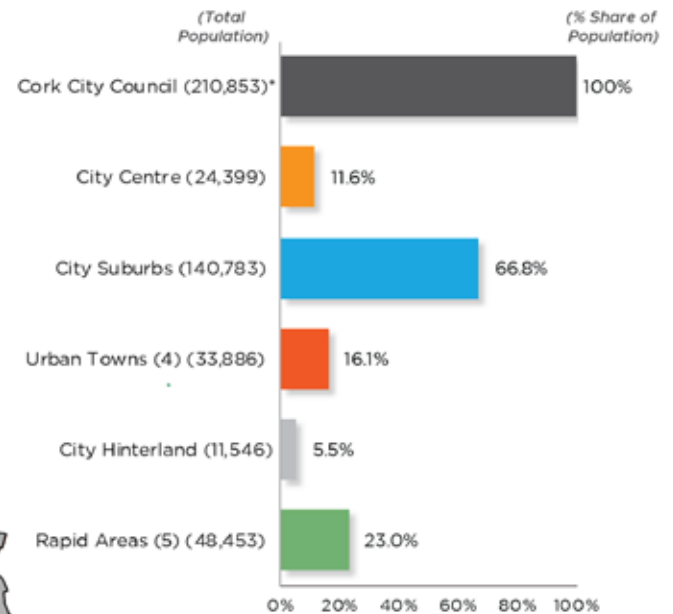


# Total Population by Cork City Areas, 2016



- Contextual Layers
- City Centre
  - City Suburbs
  - Urban Towns
  - Motorway
  - Primary Roads

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Data Source: OpenStreetMap, CSO Census 2016



\*Note: Cork City total population figure provided by CSO. Sub-county figures derived by AIRO. Methodology based on the sub-division and aggregation of CSO Small Area geographies. Sub-division of Small Areas based on the distribution of households within each Small Area. Due to rounding and household size assumptions, small margin of error exists

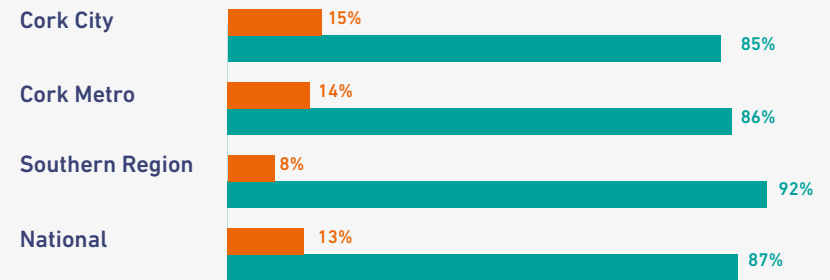
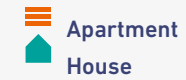


### 4.4. Delivering Sustainable City Growth through Liveable Neighbourhoods

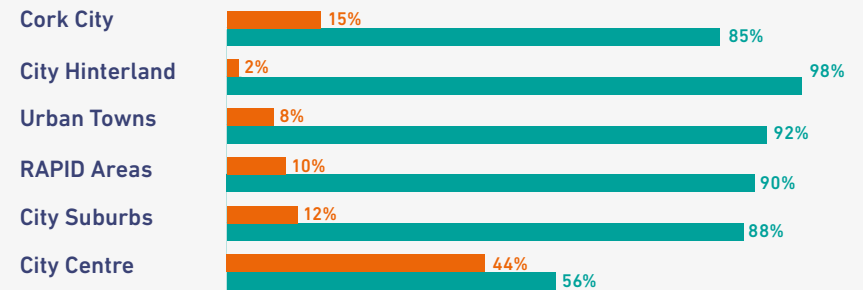
City neighbourhoods are the building blocks of all cities, being a combination of local places, spaces and homes that collectively form and inform the connection between a city and its people. 'Liveable City Neighbourhoods' are places where these elements combine to enable positive social connections. They are based on a combination of factors that have repeatedly proven to create a happy place to live. Some examples of these factors include;

- An attractive built environment at a human scale;
- A child friendly and age friendly environment with a mix of household types;
- A safe neighbourhood enabling access for all;
- A healthy neighbourhood with direct access to high quality parks and public spaces; and
- A well-connected neighbourhood with easy access to good public transport and active travel.

### Housing Type Comparison (% of total housing stock)



### Breakdown of Housing Type in Cork City (% of total housing stock)



#### 04. SHAPING THE STRUCTURE OF THE CITY

A key objective of the Cork City Development Plan is to ensure that each neighbourhood, which collectively form Cork City, are attractive places to live, work and interact. The recent 19% increase in population living in Cork City Centre, being four times the growth rate for the overall city<sup>2</sup>, reflects the demand for living in urban neighbourhoods that are highly accessible to employment, culture, recreation and other city attractions and events. The planning and development of 'Liveable City Neighbourhoods' will be a primary ingredient in achieving a more sustainable and resilient Cork City.

Housing is an essential element in creating 'Liveable City Neighbourhoods'. Cork City currently has a diverse range of housing types and tenures that differ greatly by location across the city. Understanding the nature and mix of households<sup>3</sup> that form these neighbourhoods is an important starting point in planning for the future development of more liveable neighbourhoods.

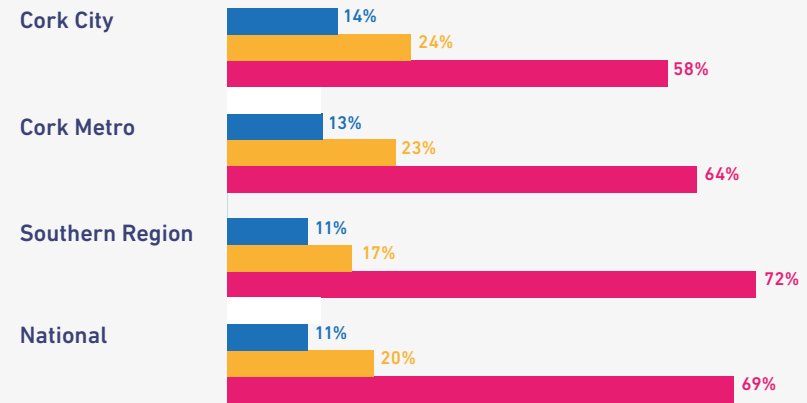
As the 2016 census shows detached, semi-detached or terraced housing collectively account for the large majority of Cork City's housing stock (85%), closely matching the national (87%) and Cork Metropolitan Area (86%) rates. Apartments or flats accounted for a low proportion of Cork City's total housing stock (15%). However a breakdown of house types within the city shows that flats and apartments make up close to half the housing stock in the City Centre (44%), with a much lower share of the housing stock within the City Suburbs (12%), the Urban Towns (8%) and the City Hinterland (2%). In terms of housing tenure, owner occupied housing accounts for the majority of the housing stock in

<sup>2</sup> The population of Cork City Centre increased by 19.2% from 2011-2016 versus a 5.4% increase in the overall city

#### Housing Tenure Comparison

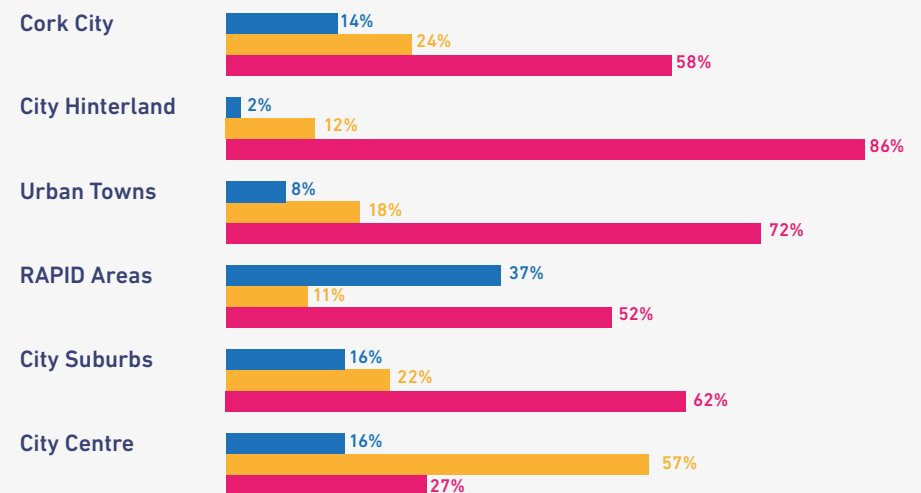
(% of total housing stock)

- Social
- Private Rental
- Owner Occupier



#### Housing Tenure in Cork City

(% of total housing stock)



#### 04. SHAPING THE STRUCTURE OF THE CITY

Cork City (58%), being a lower rate than that for the Cork Metropolitan Area (64%), the Southern Region (72%) and the national average (69%). One in four of Cork City's housing stock is private rental (24%), being a higher rate than in Cork Metropolitan Area (23%), the Southern Region (17%) and the national average (17%). Social housing in Cork City accounts for 14% of the total housing stock, a higher rate than in Cork Metropolitan Area (13%), the Southern Region (11%) and the national average (11%).

The housing tenure within Cork City differs greatly by location. The City Centre is largely made up of private rental (57%). Nearly two thirds of the housing stock in the City Suburbs are owner occupied (62%). The RAPID Areas are predominately made up of owner occupied housing (52%) and social housing (37%). The Urban Towns and the City Hinterland both have high levels of owner occupied housing (72% and 86% respectively) and low levels of social housing (8% and 2% respectively)

#### 4.5. The City Capacity Study – Challenges & Opportunities

Cork City Council is currently undertaking a City Capacity Study<sup>4</sup> to help identify parcels of lands currently zoned, both within the built-up area and 'greenfield' land, that have development potential. To date, this study has identified over 1,200 Ha. of zoned lands throughout the city which are

considered underutilised or undeveloped. In addition to these lands, further sites have been identified which have development potential, but the delivery timeframe is difficult to ascertain given the nature of existing uses (e.g. low order industrial parks, older institutional uses, etc.).

Much of the land identified is serviced or serviceable and developable in the short and medium term, including many infill sites and brownfield sites in the built-up area. Other lands require servicing upgrades and the next step in the City Capacity Study will be to complete the assessment of infrastructural and other constraints to gain a more comprehensive understanding of both the viability and potential time constraints in delivering future development on these sites.

The study's findings show that Cork City has considerable land capacity to deliver the housing and employment targets set out in both the Southern RSES (up to 2031) and the NPF (up to 2040), during the next City Development Plan period and beyond<sup>5</sup>. Investment in infrastructure will be critical in realising these targets, as will an integrated planning approach involving multi-stakeholder engagement, from a national to local level.

The sites identified in the study to date are spread across the city. Collectively the four urban towns of Ballincollig, Glanmire, Blarney and Tower have the largest total area of underutilised and undeveloped land identified. However, the higher density future developments planned for in

<sup>4</sup> The City Capacity Study is assessing lands with capacity for future development, consolidation, intensification, etc. and covers a range of sites including brownfield, underutilised industrial, infill and others. As the study is a work in process, all figures given are estimates and are subject to change.

<sup>5</sup> A high level assessment of the lands identified to date within the study show a yield of c. 60,000 residential units /c. 140,000 persons (using an averages density of 50 units per Ha. and an average household size of 2.4 persons)

#### 04. SHAPING THE STRUCTURE OF THE CITY

strategically important brownfield sites identified in the City Centre, including City Docks<sup>6</sup>, will result in the delivery of much higher yields of residential units and employment floorspace within these central and highly serviced areas. Regenerating brownfield lands identified in the City Suburbs, including Tivoli Docks<sup>7</sup>, will further help to realise the objective of more compact urban growth. A number of zoned expansion areas are also identified within the City Hinterland, being located alongside serviced and accessible locations.

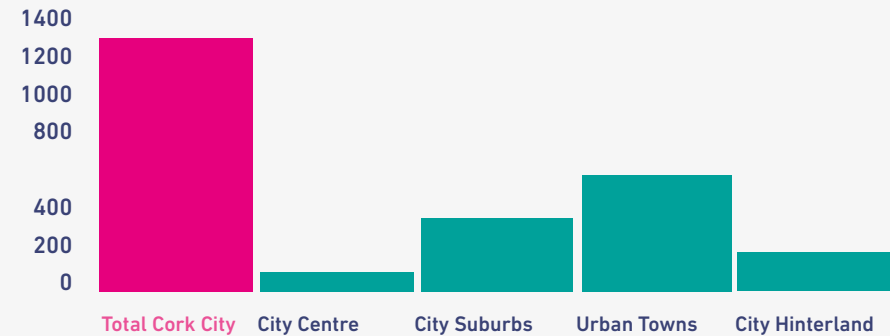
There is a wide range of site sizes identified in the City Capacity Study to date. The majority are under 1 Ha. in size, with this category accounting for over two thirds of the overall total. Smaller sites are predominately located in the City Centre and City Suburbs. Over 12% of sites identified to date are 5 ha. or greater, with 7% being over 10 ha. Most large sites are located in the Urban Towns and the City Hinterland, apart from the strategically important regeneration areas of City Docks and Tivoli Docks.

The City Capacity Study will provide an additional evidence base to inform the delivery of the new Core Strategy. This work can also be integrated into Cork City Council's Active Land Management processes, helping to implement the Core Strategy. In doing this, Cork City Council is seeking to embrace new ways of actively progressing the ambitious growth targets, thereby enhancing Cork City's role as the heart of both the Cork Metropolitan Area and the Southern Region.

<sup>6</sup> There are a total of c.90 Ha brownfield lands available for regeneration within City Docklands  
<sup>7</sup> There are a total of c.60 Ha brownfield lands available for regeneration within Tivoli Docklands

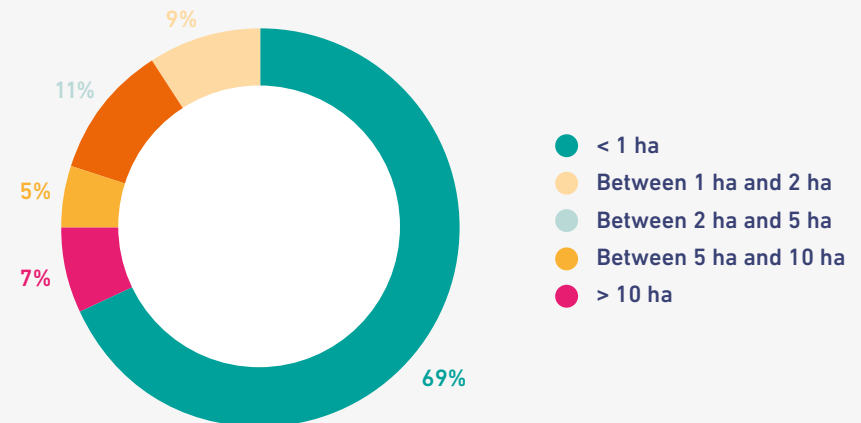
#### City Capacity Study

Locational Spread of Underutilised and Undeveloped Sites



#### City Capacity Study

Range of Sites by Size



### 4.6. Shaping the Structure of the City

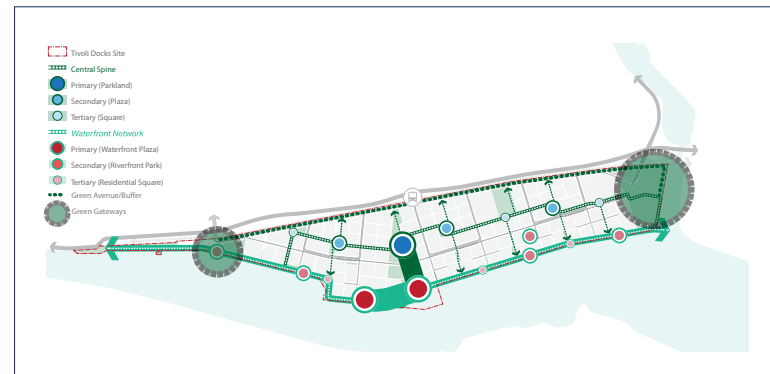
The City Capacity Study and the Core Strategy will directly inform the wider land use strategy to be delivered within the plan, helping to deliver more 'Liveable City Neighbourhoods', both within the plan period (2028) and beyond (up to 2040). In doing this, the plan needs to reconsider the structure of the city and how best to build on the pattern of existing neighbourhoods and communities. The plan will aim to enhance their ability to act as 'Liveable City Neighbourhoods' through the delivery of mixed-use developments that are appropriate to their location in terms of type, scale, form and density. The plan will also need to fully consider how best to allocate ambitious population growth targets, based on the existing spread of population across the city.

The findings from the City Capacity Study show the wide range of brownfield infill and regeneration opportunities in Cork City, as well as some opportunities for phased greenfield development in sustainable locations. The plan will consider appropriate land use policies, objectives and actions to help regenerate and develop these sites, including:

- Delivering regeneration of sites of national strategic importance (e.g. City Docklands and Tivoli Docklands)



City Docklands – South Docks Local Area Plan (2008)



Indicative Tivoli Urban Design and Landscape Framework Plan (2019)

#### 04. SHAPING THE STRUCTURE OF THE CITY

- Regenerating underutilised sites (e.g. vacant and underutilised industrial/ institutional lands)
- Intensifying uses within existing City Neighbourhoods (e.g. Blackpool, Douglas and Mahon)
- Expanding and consolidating growth within the four Urban Towns (Ballincollig, Glanmire, Blarney and Tower)
- Reinforcing well serviced urban areas through appropriately scaled and located urban expansion (e.g. Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area).

In doing this, the plan will require new thinking. Cork Docklands (City Docks and Tivoli Docks) comprise a nationally significant urban regeneration and development opportunity that is key to the future of Cork City and Metropolitan Area, as well as to the realisation of the NPF. The development of the Cork Docklands is therefore inextricably linked to Ireland's success and to the development of Cork City and its ability to achieve the ambitious growth targets set out for it in the NPF, as well as aiding Cork to become a city of international significance by virtue of its scale and quality. Cork Docklands is key to delivering the proposed tram (LRT) system for Cork (set out in CMATS 2020), will be a strategic employment and residential location for Cork City, as well as

reducing Cork's carbon impact. Cork City aims for the Cork Docklands to achieve the implementation of innovative design and development responses to the environmental, housing, transport and placemaking challenges facing Irish cities. This ambition will require Cork City Council to work collaboratively with all of its partners, including the Government of Ireland, to frame development strategies and progress the delivery of projects that will be of a quality that Cork can be proud of, including the provision of enabling infrastructure and the provision of new public spaces to benefit the wider city.

Other strategically important brownfield sites will be identified and planned for to help achieve targets for compact growth and sustainable mobility. City Neighbourhoods and Urban Towns with capacity for increased compact growth will be identified. Innovative policies will be needed that focus on city regeneration that increase densities while respecting the city form. The significant potential that exists in bringing vacant upper floors back into use must be prioritised, most notably within the City Centre Island. Serviceable expansion areas within the city that can be accessed by sustainable mobility will also need to be considered for strategically phased development.

## 4.7. Key Questions

- ▶ **How do we make our city more compact to avoid undesirable sprawl and increase the delivery of walkable city neighbourhoods and urban towns that are highly accessible by public transport?**
- ▶ **How do we make the most of lands that are underutilised and undeveloped in the city centre, city suburbs and the urban towns, while retaining the character and environmental importance of the city's hinterland?**
- ▶ **How do we ensure the most effective use of land, infrastructure and resources, while balancing the need to retain the character, landscape, urban form and environmental qualities of Cork City?**
- ▶ **Do you think there are specific locations within the city that should be strategically identified for development to achieve balanced sustainable growth, if so, where and how?**
- ▶ **How do we achieve the regeneration of City Docks and Tivoli Docks to enable the sustainable growth for Cork City, Cork Metropolitan Area and the Southern Region?**



# 05. Tackling Climate Change

## 5.1. Introduction

Climate Change impacts are currently being experienced worldwide, by all people, across all sectors and particularly in urban areas, where over half of the world's population now live<sup>1</sup>. With over 70% of all greenhouse gas emissions being generated in urban areas<sup>2</sup>, cities are now the principle source of and solution to climate concerns. If left unchecked, global warming will continue to influence and change weather patterns and put entire nations at risk in terms of food security, the loss of biodiversity, and the ability to provide shelter for their population.

The Atlantic Region of Europe can now expect more heavy rain; higher river flow; higher risk of flooding from rivers; and higher risk of flooding due to storms in winter. A central issue for the upcoming City Development Plan will be how to tackle climate change and address the wide range of impacts it is having on the environment, society, economy and natural resources of Cork City, Cork Metropolitan Area and the wider region.

<sup>1</sup> 55% of the world's population now live in urban areas, with an expected rise to 66% by 2030 (UN, 2019)

<sup>2</sup> UN – "Cities: a cause of and solution to climate change" (September, 2019)



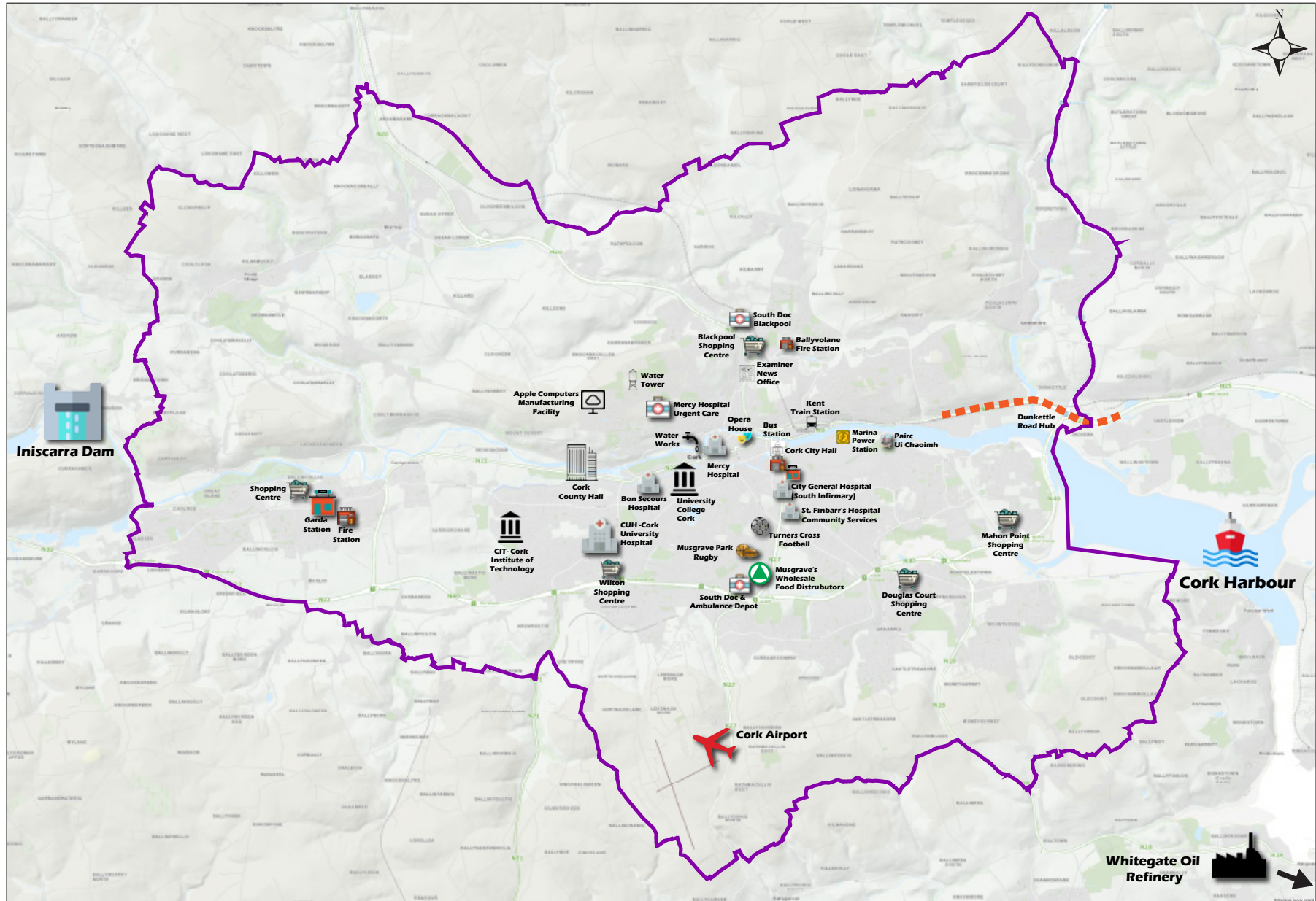
## 5.2. Climate Change in Cork

Over the last decade, Cork has experienced severe flooding events<sup>1</sup>, heavy snowfall, drought, heatwaves, and more frequent and intense storms, which have caused significant disruption to the city’s society and the economy. This is representative of a wider global trend of more severe and frequent weather events, an increasing annual global average temperature and rising sea levels. These events are expected to intensify in the coming decades.

Cork is also home to key elements of strategic infrastructure that serve an extensive regional catchment and need to be protected from the impacts of climate change. Some examples of these important pieces of health, transport, education, social, and cultural infrastructure and services that need to develop resilience to climate change are illustrated in the diagram overleaf.

<sup>1</sup> Cork City Climate Adaption Strategy, September 2019

Extreme Weather Events	Description
<b>Coastal flooding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>February 2002: Cork City flooding</li> </ul>
<b>Coastal storms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 1993: severe gusts and heavy rainfall</li> <li>February 1990: severe gusts and heavy rainfall</li> </ul>
<b>Extreme heat and drought</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summer 2018: warmest weather since 2006</li> <li>Summer 2018: warmest weather since 2006</li> <li>Summer 1995: warmest weather since 1955</li> </ul>
<b>Extreme rainfall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 2012: 1-day total recorded in Bandon (58mm)</li> <li>November 2009: 1-day total recorded in Ballyvourney (55mm)</li> </ul>
<b>Fluvial flooding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 2015: River Bandon</li> <li>February 2014: River Lee</li> <li>November 2009: River Lee; major flooding in Cork City</li> <li>August 2008: River Blackwater</li> <li>November 2000: River Lee</li> </ul>
<b>Freezing conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 2019: Cork airport recorded - 8.6 degrees (coldest ground temperature on record)</li> <li>December 2010: Cork recorded -7.2 degrees</li> </ul>
<b>Groundwater flooding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 2016: N25 flooded between Killeagh and Castlemartyr</li> </ul>
<b>Heavy Snowfall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>February/March 2018: Storm Emma</li> <li>January 1987: 12cm of snow at Roche’s Point</li> </ul>
<b>Pluvial flooding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 2012: Douglas</li> <li>August 1997: Freemount</li> </ul>
<b>Storm force winds/ windstorms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 2017: Storm Ophelia, with gusts up to 84 knots recorded at Roche’s point</li> </ul>



Cork City - Climate Change Workshop Map

Vulnerability & Resilience

0 2.5 5 Kilometres

September 2019

### 5.3. Energy Use and Greenhouse Gas emissions in Cork

Energy Cork, with SEAI grant funding, prepared an Energy Master Plan (EMP) for Cork City and County, in 2019. The Cork EMP establishes a 2016 baseline for energy use and energy related greenhouse gas emissions. While the plan uses previous administrative boundaries, an updated calculation estimates the current population of Cork City uses approx. 5,000 GWh of energy per year. The resulting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions amounts to approx 1.452 MtCO<sub>2</sub>, which is 2.4% of Ireland's total GHG emissions <sup>1</sup>. This total is based on energy use only, and does not include other emission (e.g. emissions from agriculture).

Globally, Ireland accounts for 0.12% of global GHG emissions (approx 53,000 MtCO<sub>2</sub>). While Cork City's emissions are a very small share of global emissions, a halving of these emissions can make a recognised contribution at a global level. This fact alone demonstrates how Cork City is part of a global community that must now play a leading role in reducing and reworking our energy consumption to properly tackle climate change.

<sup>1</sup> This calculation is based on the EPA's 2016 estimated total of 61.55 MtCO<sub>2</sub> of GHG emissions for Ireland



## 5.4. Climate Change Agreements and Actions

The Paris Climate Agreement, adopted in 2015 by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is the global agreement setting out measures to reduce the risk of climate change up to 2030. The Paris Agreement’s main goal is to keep the increase in global average temperatures to below 2°C by using actions that implement specific mitigation, adaptation, and finance measures for all countries.

As part of the Paris Climate Agreement, over 9,000 cities and local governments, including Cork City, have now signed up to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate Change<sup>1</sup>. In doing so, Cork City Council had to prepare and submitted a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) in 2018 and has also committed to reporting every two years on the implementation of its mitigation and adaptation measures. The Covenant of Mayors commitment has the potential to play a key enabling role towards the long-term commitment of Cork City Council to transition to a low carbon society and economy.



Overview of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as COP 21

<sup>1</sup> The GCoM is the largest global alliance for city climate leadership, represent more than 800 million people from over 10,000 cities in 138 countries. <https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/about/>

## 05. TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

The Government's National Climate Action Plan (2019) identifies the nature and scale of climate change. The plan examines several key sectors, such as transportation, industry and agriculture and the built environment, and points to areas within each that need to be tackled to address climate change. There are a total of 183 actions in the plan, 20 which are specifically related to local authorities. The plan also sets out new governance arrangements including carbon-proofing policies, the establishment of carbon budgets, a strengthened Climate Change Advisory Council and greater accountability to the Oireachtas.

In October 2019, the Dept. of Communications, Climate Action and Environment signed a Climate Action Charter committing every local authority to drive forward meaningful climate action in their communities. The Charter commits to several local authorities actions, including:

- Put in place processes for carbon proofing major decisions, programmes and projects, including investments in transport and energy infrastructure;
- Deliver a 50% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030;
- Ensure all suppliers provide information on their carbon footprint and steps to reduce same;
- Build local citizen engagement, particularly with young people;
- Partner & collaborate on climate action initiatives with local community groups, enterprises, schools and higher level institutions and
- Monitor, evaluate and report annually on the implementation of activities.

The 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) set out in the National Planning Framework 2040 will also play a significant role in directly or indirectly tackling climate change. The most important and challenging of these will be the delivery of NSO 8: Transitioning to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society, and its related objectives, including:

- Support the circular and bio economy, in particular through greater efficiency in land management, greater use of renewable resources and by reducing the rate of land use change from urban sprawl and new development. (NPO 53)
- Promote renewable energy use and generation at appropriate locations within the built and natural environment to meet national objectives towards achieving a low carbon economy by 2050. (NPO 55)
- Integrated planning for Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services will be incorporated into the preparation of statutory land use plans. (NPO 58)

At a regional level, the Southern Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) sets out the regional planning approach to tackle climate change in line with national policy. Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO) have recently been established to assist each local authority to prepare and implement climate change policies and actions. The role of the CARO is to assist and coordinate the preparation of all local authority climate change adaptation strategies in its region. Cork County Council was appointed as the lead local authority to manage the CARO for the Atlantic Seaboard South region <sup>2</sup>.

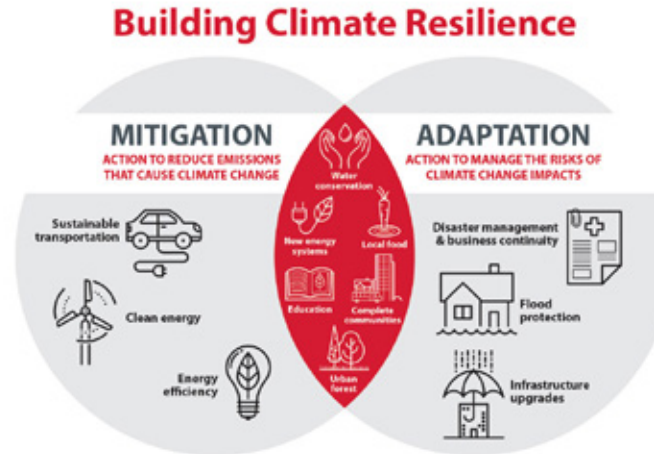
<sup>2</sup> The CARO for the Atlantic Seaboard South region is made up of: Cork City Council, Limerick City and County Council, Cork County Council, Kerry County Council and Clare County Council.

### 5.5. Cork City Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024

The Cork City Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 is a response to the impact climate change is already causing on the citizens and infrastructure of Cork City, and will continue to cause into the foreseeable future. The plan is the first in many steps needed to tackle local climate change issues, such as climate breakdown, the decarbonisation of our society and actions to increase climate resilience in the city.

The strategy outlines 66 actions, designed to address climate change and bio-diversity issues for the city. This constitutes a significant local step towards the national goal of transitioning to a low carbon society, with many adaptation actions now being initiated.

The governance structure of Cork City Council’s climate change effort includes the newly formed Climate Action Committee, which was established by the members of Cork City Council and will play a central role in driving the implementation of actions set out in the city’s adaption strategy.



Climate Resilience Measure in Cork City: Understanding Mitigation and Adaptation

As part of the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan, the public sector has also committed to a 33% improvement in energy efficiency by 2020. As of 2018, Cork City Council had achieved a 32% improvement in energy efficiency of its operations.



## 5.6. Key Climate Change Challenges and Opportunities facing Cork City

Climate change poses a serious threat to sustainable urban development, placing many of the world's cities at risk. Given its geographic setting, proclivity to flooding, and its increasingly urban based population and employment base, Cork City has some very specific challenges and opportunities, including the following:

- Realising the 10 National Strategic Outcomes outlined in the NPF, in particular achieving: Compact Growth (NSO 1), Sustainable Mobility (NSO 4) and Transitioning to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society (NSO 8).
- Facilitating a radical increase in more sustainable forms of transport that significantly reduce carbon emissions levels in the city;
- De-coupling economic growth and prosperity from increases in carbon emissions and environmental degradation at a city level;
- The promotion and where viable use of nature-based solutions to combat climate change, in the design and implementation of flood relief schemes and in addressing bio-diversity issues;
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions within the built environment, including the rethinking the materials, methods, operation and management procedures within the building sector and
- Taking appropriate action to ensure that strategic infrastructure such as health, transport, education and social services are resilient to climate change.

## 5.7. Key Questions:

- ▶ **How can land use zoning be used to help tackle climate change in Cork City?**
- ▶ **What actions are needed to protect strategic infrastructure from climate change?**
- ▶ **What role do green and blue infrastructure, sustainable agriculture and renewable energy have in helping to tackle climate change in Cork City?**
- ▶ **How can energy efficiency and effectiveness be improved within the next city development plan?**
- ▶ **How can Cork City's transport systems be improved to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the city and region? How important are the delivery of measures set out in Corks Metropolitan Area Transportation Strategy in achieving this?**
- ▶ **How can Cork City Council further increase its energy resilience as a local authority?**
- ▶ **What are the best means of increasing the greening throughout the city, including local, neighbourhood and city scale greening projects?**
- ▶ **What other actions and policy changes could be made to help mitigate and adapt to climate change?**

# 06. Creating a Liveable City

## 6.1. Introduction

Cork is a city that welcomes diversity, being home to a wide range of different nationalities, ages, sexual orientation, and traditions. The next City Development Plan must consider how best to plan for future growth while facilitating and enabling the wellbeing of all of its communities and citizens to grow and live together in harmony.

How we plan for and manage the development of Cork City will have direct and indirect consequences for all our communities. Key to this will be planning for a 'Liveable City' that is inclusive and built on mutual respect, cultural understanding and equality<sup>1</sup>, all driven by strong and enabled communities. Liveable Cities integrate a wide range of good planning principles including the integration of urban design, community development and place making principles that collectively create a socially sustainable city with a higher quality of life.

Supporting and improving Cork City's 'liveability' means taking action around several cross-cutting themes, each with their own challenges. These actions are often guided by national policies and principals. However, involvement, engagement and commitment from local communities, networks and citizens is critical to both kick starting and realising actions and outcomes that create a more liveable city for all.

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the 9 Grounds of Equality; Equality Act of 2010



## 6.2. A Changing City

Cork is a growing city with a changing population and community profile. The diversity of the city is significantly increasing, with 44% of the population living in the city centre born outside of Ireland. The city also has an increasingly ageing population with 13% of the total being aged 65 years or older. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of people aged 85+ living in the city increased by 17%<sup>1</sup>, being the biggest increase within all age groups during the last census period.

A recent report by the Cork City Public Participation Network (PPN)<sup>2</sup> shows the largest increase in new community groups are those meeting the needs of the different international communities living in the city. The city also has a wide range of inclusive communities, cultures and nationalities., with the city having the second largest population of Asians and third largest population of Travellers in Ireland. Between 2011 and 2016, there was also an estimated increase of 72% in same sex relationships in the city<sup>3</sup>. These statistics are indicative of a dynamic population and community base within the city. These changes also increase the needs and pressures on existing community groups who provide vital support to different communities within the city. These needs are best supported through good planning that makes provision for inclusive, accessible and well-designed neighbourhoods, with attractive areas to meet, live, learn, give, grow, work, and play in.

1 Cork City Profile 2018

2 Cork City Public Participation Network (PPN) Member Survey, 2017

3 CSO, Marriages and Civil Partnerships Report, 2016



### 6.3. Strategies at Work in the City

Cork City is currently implementing a wide range of different strategies that collectively seek to guide and influence the future development of Cork as a more liveable city. The Cork City Local Economic and Community Plan (2016-2021)<sup>1</sup> is an over arching plan setting out a series of actions to support and develop communities within the city. The plan highlights the need for inter-agency collaboration between stakeholders and the alignment of the city's many strategies in order to maximise beneficial impacts on communities living in the city.

The wide variety of plans and strategies currently in place for the city, shows the level of ambition Cork City has, to be a more liveable place. These strategies provide the framework for the many community focused collaborations and programmes currently in operation in the city, including:

- Cork City Council currently works in collaboration with HSE Cork-Kerry Community Healthcare , Cork ETB, Cork City Partnership, An Garda Síochaná, University College Cork, Cork Institute of Technology, Dept of Social protection, Cork City PPN, Cork Children and Young People Service Committee, TUSLA, and the CSO.

<sup>1</sup> The implementation of the Cork City LECP is overseen by the Cork City Local Community Development Committee



## 06. CREATING A LIVEABLE CITY

- Interagency collaborations that have formed include groups such as Cork Healthy Cities, Cork Learning City, Cork Cancer Action Network, Cork City of Sanctuary Movement, Playful Paradigm, Cork Food Policy Council, Africa Day Committee, Cork Age Friendly City Fora, the LGBTI Interagency Group and the Traveller Interagency Group.
- Community-based Non-Governmental Organisations in operation in the city include Ballyphehane Togher CDP, the NICHE Community Health Project, LINC (Learning inclusively network), The Gay Men's Project, Young Knocknaheeny ABC (Areas Based Childhood Programme), and NASC (Migrant and Refugee Rights organisation).
- The city hosted the 2nd International UNESCO Learning City Conference in 2017, receiving the UNESCO Learning City Award, and there is ongoing work to become Ireland's first Trauma Sensitive City.
- Cork is a World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy City. Practical projects include the Green Spaces for Health South Parish project which is piloting community greening and is led by Cork Food Policy Council supported by Cork City Council.
- Cork City Council has led a number of recent multi-stakeholder events, including the Cork Evolves project which sought to influence the city's future social housing through new thinking, collective consideration and a review of best practice models.





### 6.4. Challenges & Opportunities

With its expanding population, Cork City must increasingly plan for new and growing communities and a more diverse population. Defining community needs within neighbourhoods and assessing the levels of services and amenity provision within the city will therefore be an important task in delivering the next City Development Plan.

This will include considering provision of healthcare, education, community hubs, childcare services, public spaces, recreational facilities and green and blue spaces (among other areas),

in so far as land-use planning policies and Cork City Council can influence these issues. New policies and objectives are necessary to inform future requirements that match the needs in different city's neighbourhoods and the wide range of communities that live throughout the city.

Through effective planning and collaboration, the next Cork City Development Plan can promote and encourage proactive and healthier lifestyles and fostering a sense of community throughout its neighbourhoods, thereby achieving a more liveable city.



## 6.5. Key Questions

- ▶ **What can make your community more of a 'liveable' place?**
- ▶ **How can we accommodate the increasing diverse community needs within the City?**
- ▶ **Thinking about where you live, how would you suggest old and new places and spaces, be (re)designed and created to increase community engagement?**
- ▶ **Would your local community benefit by the provision of specialised community/social facilities, dedicated to certain uses only?**
- ▶ **How would you see the city facilitating growing needs of sporting, recreational and activity-based organisations?**
- ▶ **What policies could be implemented to improve access to education and lifelong learning at a neighbourhood and community level?**



# 07. A Diverse Economy





## 7.1. Introduction

As Ireland's second city, Cork plays an important and growing role in the economic success and prosperity of the State. Outside of Dublin, Cork has the highest levels of disposable household incomes and taxation contribution. These are key indicators of a thriving economy and city. For Ireland to be successful, Cork needs to be successful.

As Ireland is a small open economy that is strongly influenced by international trends. When the global economy is rising, Ireland prospers. Over the last 50 years, Ireland has witnessed its share of periods of economic growth and recession; however, the underlying narrative is of a very strong economic growth. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Ireland is now amongst the highest in the world. Cork has played a key role in Ireland's economic success and we strive to ensure that Cork City will continue to act as a driver of the regional and national economy.

While we do not and cannot know the full impact of COVID-19 on the economy, the forecasts and trends that have emerged

are stark. We also do not know the nature or speed of the recovery – whether there will be a steep bounce-back or a more prolonged downturn followed by a more gradual upturn. Whatever the case may be, it will be challenging and has recast the conditions in which the City's development plan will be formulated.

While Ireland, and Cork, is home to some of the top multi-national corporations, the SME sector accounts for between 98-99% of enterprises in Ireland<sup>1</sup>. The SME sector in Ireland and in Cork will be one of the most exposed to the fallout from COVID-19. Therefore, our collective efforts to support economic development and recovery must ensure that the enterprise and business environment and the support structures available in Cork City are geared towards these small and medium sized companies. We must also ensure that Cork remains one of the most attractive locations in Ireland for FDI and continue to provide the skills, talent and services that draw these vital employers to Cork.

## 7.2. Trends

### Did you know that:

- In Q4, 2019 unemployment in the South West was at an all-time low of 3.7%. This has significantly increased as a result of the COVID 19 virus;
- Cork is a key driver of the national and regional economy and contributes 19% of Ireland's GDP;
- The Financial Times ranked Cork 2nd small city in Europe for economic potential;
- In Q1, 2020 there were over 39,000 people working in 169 foreign owned companies based in the Cork region. These companies are supported by IDA Ireland;
- Over 2.7million domestic and overseas tourists spent €833million in the Cork region in 2017. Tourism has contracted significantly as a result of COVID 19;
- Over 36,000 students enrolled in third level academic institutions in Cork including University College, Cork (UCC) and Munster Technological University (MTU);
- Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) works with UCC and MTU to provide a broad range of supports for business start-ups in Cork. There are over 24,000 people working for businesses supported by Enterprise Ireland and the LEO in Cork.
- Retail is the second largest employment sector in Cork City, employing over 10,000 people before the COVID 19 pandemic. Retail is a key component of the vibrancy of the city centre, and a key employer throughout the city, in particular Mahon, Ballyvolane, Wilton, Douglas and Ballincollig.

### 7.3. Key Challenges for Cork City Development Plan

1. The level of footfall in Cork City Centre has been increasing prior to the COVID-19 health emergency. That said, retailers face the considerable challenge of competing with online retail. Plans are in place to improve the experience offered to shoppers in the City Centre, towns, villages and suburbs of Cork. This will involve improvement of the public realm, development of the cultural offering, and evolution of the retail, cafés, bars and restaurants offering in Cork, all of which should combine to enhance the vibrancy and viability of the city centre and our key centres. We must also continue to support our retailers so that they can be equipped and enabled to make the best use of emerging technology and to create a seamless combined store and online experience.
2. The success of Cork's economy in recent years is well documented as outlined above. However, we are in a time of unprecedented technological change. Businesses in the city must innovate to ensure that they can continue to compete globally. The research, development and innovation ecosystem of the city is being enhanced by



Tyndall National Institute

## 07. A DIVERSE ECONOMY

businesses, academia, cluster organisations, IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Office.

3. Cork's economic strategy must make sure that the benefits of economic development are spread to all areas across the city and that it translates into job opportunities for all sectors of society. We need to create a broad range of types of jobs with varying skills in areas throughout the City. Key sectors such as ICT, pharma, manufacturing, financial services, professional services, and international services are driving the city's economy. In addition many people are working in retail, tourism, arts and culture, catering and associated support services. It will be important to ensure that a broad range of employment opportunities are created and sustained in the city.
4. People work in a range of business types located throughout the city. This includes a mix of office, commercial and retail space along with sites that are suitable for light manufacturing and local services. Some of the sites that have acted as traditional employment zones throughout the city are in need of regeneration and improvement. It will be important to get the right mix of zoning and property solutions, the correct regeneration or reuse of existing industrial and employment zones, such as Cork Docklands, and a suitable spread of employment areas to enhance sustainable transport and provide job opportunities in local areas.

High intensity office uses are best located in areas with sustainable transport options. In the last decade office-based employment has been increasingly attracted to the



## 07. A DIVERSE ECONOMY

City Centre, which is the location with greatest transport choice available and with expansion potential into City Docklands. Other lower intensity employment uses with high space needs may be more suited to less central locations. The City Development Plan will aim to provide for the expansion in employment identified in RSES through designation of a range of suitable employment locations.

5. There will be new types of jobs that do not exist today. We are living in an era of accelerating technological change. Throughout history, technological advancement has made some skills redundant, while creating opportunities for new skills. Cork's labour force has proven to be agile in the past, and has moved from heavy manufacturing to services, and high value manufacturing sectors. This involved a period of improved education opportunities, continuous skills development, training, research and innovation. It is important that the city has a mix of primary and secondary schools throughout Cork. In addition we will need to accommodate the expansion of the Education and Training Board, University College Cork and Munster Technological University, along with other training, research and education institutions, to ensure that we have the infrastructure required to continue to build the skills and education capacity of the city.
6. The economic value of our culture and heritage is increasingly valued. It is an economic driver in itself, and helps to Cork win further investment by improving the attractiveness of the city as a place to live and visit. Cork enjoys a wealth of heritage assets and cultural

amenities, such as the Crawford Art Gallery, the Opera House, The Triskel, The Everyman, St Finbarr's Cathedral, The Glucksman Gallery, Shandon, Elizabeth Fort, the Medieval Spine of the City, Blarney Castle and Ballincollig Mills, combined with fine examples of top-class architectural and heritage assets. Cork's rich heritage further enhances quality of life and attractiveness of the city. These assets need to be protected and to evolve and develop.

7. Placemaking is increasingly seen as critical to successful economic development. This means provision of high-quality public services, community and social infrastructure, sustainable and active travel facilities, green spaces, cultural amenities and third level infrastructure is required in parallel with more conventional economic incentives. This will need to be taken account of the new City Development Plan.
8. Cork plays a key role in the South-West regional economy. Cork City Council, in partnership with Cork County Council and Kerry County Council is implementing the South-West Regional Enterprise Plan to achieve ambitious economic and enterprise development goals for the region. Capital investment plans including the improvement of the N22, the N20 and the Dunkettle Interchange will result in improved transport connectivity across the region. The establishment of the Munster Technological University will strengthen the academic, research and innovation links between Cork and Kerry. These are designed to enhance the economic competitiveness of the South-West region.

## 7.4. Key Questions

- ▶ **What are the short, medium and long term impacts of COVID 19 on Cork City's economy and how can we return to growth?**
- ▶ **How do we sustain jobs in the services sector with competition from online retail?**
- ▶ **How do we ensure that the city centre and suburbs, towns and villages are vibrant in light of changing retail trends?**
- ▶ **How do we build the resilience of our economy and ensure that there are jobs for people in Cork in the long term as technology changes?**
- ▶ **How do we spread the benefits of economic growth across all sectors of society?**
- ▶ **How can Cork provide the correct property solutions needed to create jobs across the city?**
- ▶ **Which parts of the city do you think would be suitable for designation for offices? For manufacturing?**
- ▶ **How do we plan for jobs that will be made redundant or that do not yet exist as technology changes?**
- ▶ **How do we realise the economic benefit of our rich cultural, heritage and arts assets and sectors?**
- ▶ **How do we ensure that Cork is a driver of the economy of the Southern Region?**



## Why Cork?



Cork is Ireland's **second city** and earmarked to be the **FASTEST GROWING CITY IN THE COUNTRY OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS** under Ireland 2040, the National Development Plan



UNPRECEDENTED DEVELOPMENT TAKING PLACE WITH UP TO **€1 BILLION** OF OFFICE, HOTEL & APARTMENT DEVELOPMENTS UNDERWAY

THE FINANCIAL TIMES RANKS CORK

**NO. 2** SMALL CITY IN EUROPE FOR ECONOMIC POTENTIAL



in its European Cities of the Future league table

**85%** of professionals who relocated to Cork are **SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED WITH THEIR MOVE** according to a survey of 27 different nationalities working in Cork





MORE THAN **36,000** ENROLLED IN THIRD LEVEL COLLEGES including international students from **+100 COUNTRIES**




### CORK WAS VOTED THE FRIENDLIEST CITY EUROPE

in a poll by Condé Nast Traveller's 2018 Friendliest Cities in the World



CORK CITY IS THE EUROPEAN BASE OF GLOBAL LEADERS



It's home to clusters in life sciences, ICT, financial and international services



Cork was ranked as one of Europe's **TOP 8 IDEAL CULTURAL & CREATIVE CITIES** by the European Commission in 2017, in its EU-wide 'Cultural & Creative Cities Monitor'



Office occupancy costs in Cork are approximately **50% LOWER** than Dublin



**€3.5 BILLION** TO BE INVESTED IN CORK'S TRANSPORT SYSTEM under the Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)

CORK CONTRIBUTES **19%** OF NATIONAL GDP



also generating the **highest revenue per person in Ireland (€105,000 per person)** ahead of both Dublin (€96,000) & London (€104,000)




CORK AIRPORT IS IRELAND'S **2ND BUSIEST AIRPORT** and the fastest growing airport on the island last year



CORK METROPOLITAN AREA IS HOME TO MORE THAN **169 FDI EMPLOYERS** employing almost **39,000**



CORK CITY IS RICH IN DIVERSITY with nearly **43%** of those living in the city centre born outside Ireland



Cork City is part of IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST and on the doorstep of IRELAND'S WILD ATLANTIC WAY



Cork offers **100 GBIT TIER 1 CONNECTIVITY** with the lowest telecoms latency between the EU & US

**UNESCO LEARNING CITY** **WHO HEALTHY CITY**




# 08. A Connected City



## 8.1. Introduction

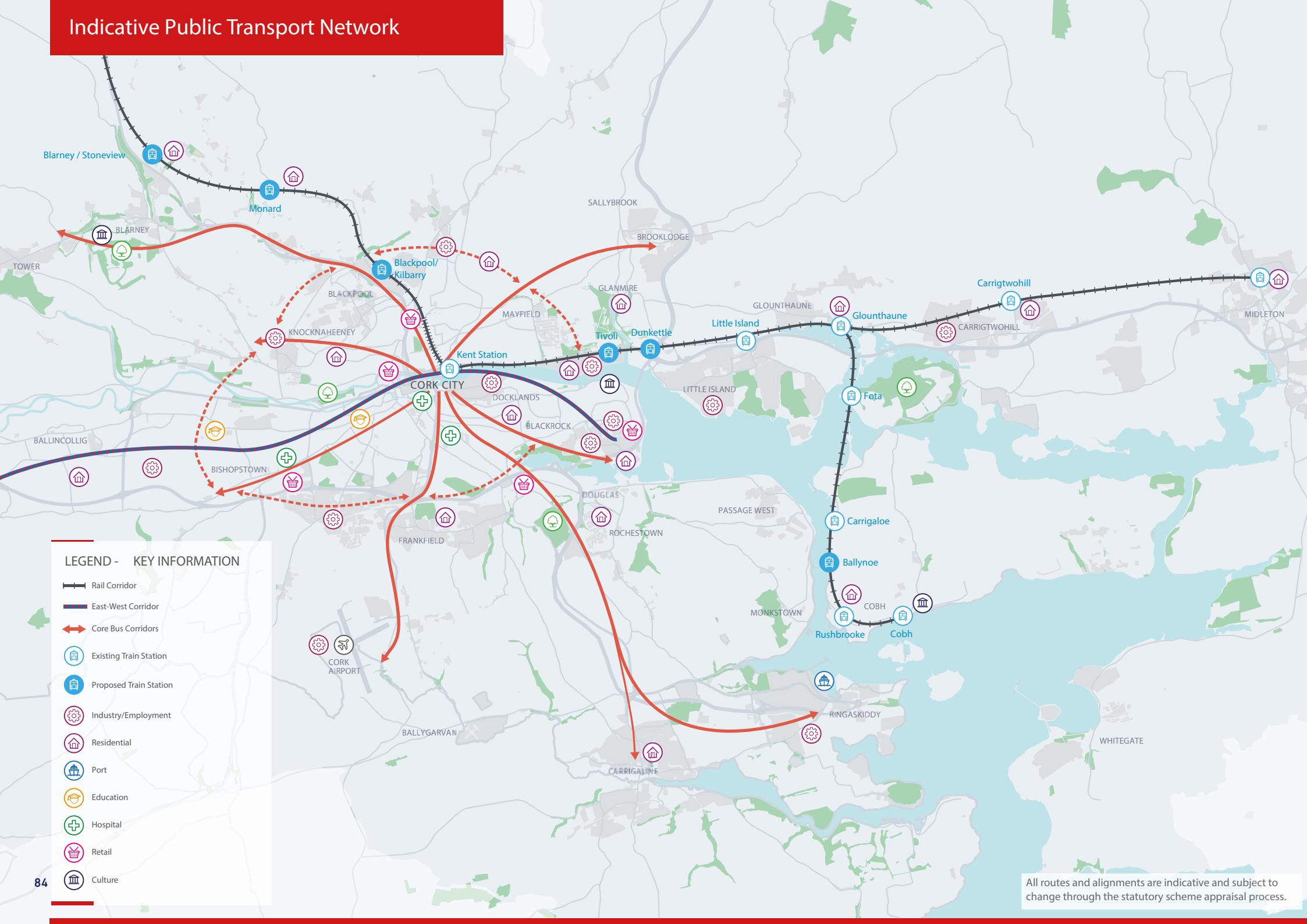
With the adoption of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) by the National Transport Authority (NTA), mobility in Cork is scheduled to fundamentally change over the next 20 years with a €3.5 billion investment in transport infrastructure envisaged. As outlined previously, Cork City is projected to grow significantly with at least an additional 125,000 people by 2040 to resulting in a total population of at least 335,000 within the City. CMATS aims to deliver an integrated transport network that addresses the needs of all modes of transport offering better transport choices. CMATS is supported in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and will inform the transport strategy in the City Development Plan.

The City Development Plan will seek to link sustainable transport provision with land use to provide a co-ordinated approach to facilitate compact growth. This will involve focusing new residential and employment development in areas with good access to the planned public transport network, and in locations where people can live close to work, making it easier to walk and cycle, with potential for big changes in the way people move around the city.













Cork's regional and international transport and digital connectivity are essential for the future of the city and region and the development of this infrastructure is supported in the National Development Plan and further detailed in the RSES and Cork MASP.

The implications of COVID -19 on transport and mobility, particularly public transport, are unclear at this time and it may result in changes in how we use public space in the city; such as the provision of increased capacity for walking and cycling. These emerging trends and opportunities will be taken into account in the preparation of the new City Development Plan.

# Indicative Public Transport Network



## LEGEND - KEY INFORMATION

-  Rail Corridor
-  East-West Corridor
-  Core Bus Corridors
-  Existing Train Station
-  Proposed Train Station
-  Industry/Employment
-  Residential
-  Port
-  Education
-  Hospital
-  Retail
-  Culture

All routes and alignments are indicative and subject to change through the statutory scheme appraisal process.

## Public transport

CMATS seeks to increase modal share of public transport from 10% in 2011 to 26% by 2040. This will be achieved by a combination of:

- major upgrades to the bus transport network by 2027, with investment of €200million in the BusConnects project;
- improved services and more stations on the suburban rail line and
- the development of a game-changing Light Rail Transit (LRT) system linking Ballincollig to Mahon, via the city centre and docklands (route selection to commence in 2020).

As CMATS says buses will continue to be the ‘workhorses’ of public transport in Cork and will provide an increasingly important interchange service between the inter-city, suburban rail, LRT and the park and ride network. In time the LRT catchment will reach 32% of the Cork Metropolitan Area population and 60% of jobs, while the suburban rail services will have a catchment of 19% of the population and 30% of jobs.

## Walking

CMATS points out that all journeys begin and end in walking regardless of other modes used and it aims for a 63% increase in walking trips by 2040. The overarching aim is ensure that the pedestrian environment is made more attractive, accessible and safer than at present.

### Key outcomes include:

- An increase in walking levels for work, education and leisure, especially for short journeys of 2-3km;
- Creation of an attractive safe and accessible environment for all ages and abilities;
- Facilitate walking’s role as part of linked trips, particularly with rail and bus journeys;
- Promote a high standard of urban design in new developments and in road design, to prioritise pedestrian movement and safety over the private car, and
- upgrade the pedestrian environment in tandem with BusConnects and Cycle Network upgrades.



## Cycling

Cycling is a low cost sustainable and growing mode of transport in Cork. CMATS sees potential for an additional 56,000 daily car trips transferring to cycling in the Cork Metropolitan Area by 2040, with mode share increasing from 1% in 2011 to 4% by 2040. This will require significant investment in cycling infrastructure as well as development and support for a cycling culture in Cork. The National Development Plan (NDP) commits to the delivery of walking and cycling networks for all of Ireland's cities.

### Key priorities for developing a cycling network for Cork are:

- Designating a coherent network of east-west and north-south cycle routes to provide access to all major trip generators;
- Improve access to key employment areas and third level education as a first priority, followed by schools;
- Provide the highest possible level of service on the identified high demand corridors;
- Identify and maximise opportunities for high quality greenways;

- Work with key stakeholders and the public in identifying and developing the priority routes.

The CMATS emphasis on public transport, walking and cycling will result in a net benefit to sustainability with a reduction in emissions to mitigate the effects of climate change.



## Parking

The NPF envisages that in general there should be minimal or no car parking requirement for new developments near city centres and reduced requirement in the inner suburbs with the focus instead on sustainable modes in these areas. Overtime, CMATS envisages a reduction in on-street parking in City Centre as greater provision is made for public transport, walking and cycling. The current Cork City Development Plan supports this approach in setting maximum parking requirements rather than seeking a set minimum level of parking for new developments.

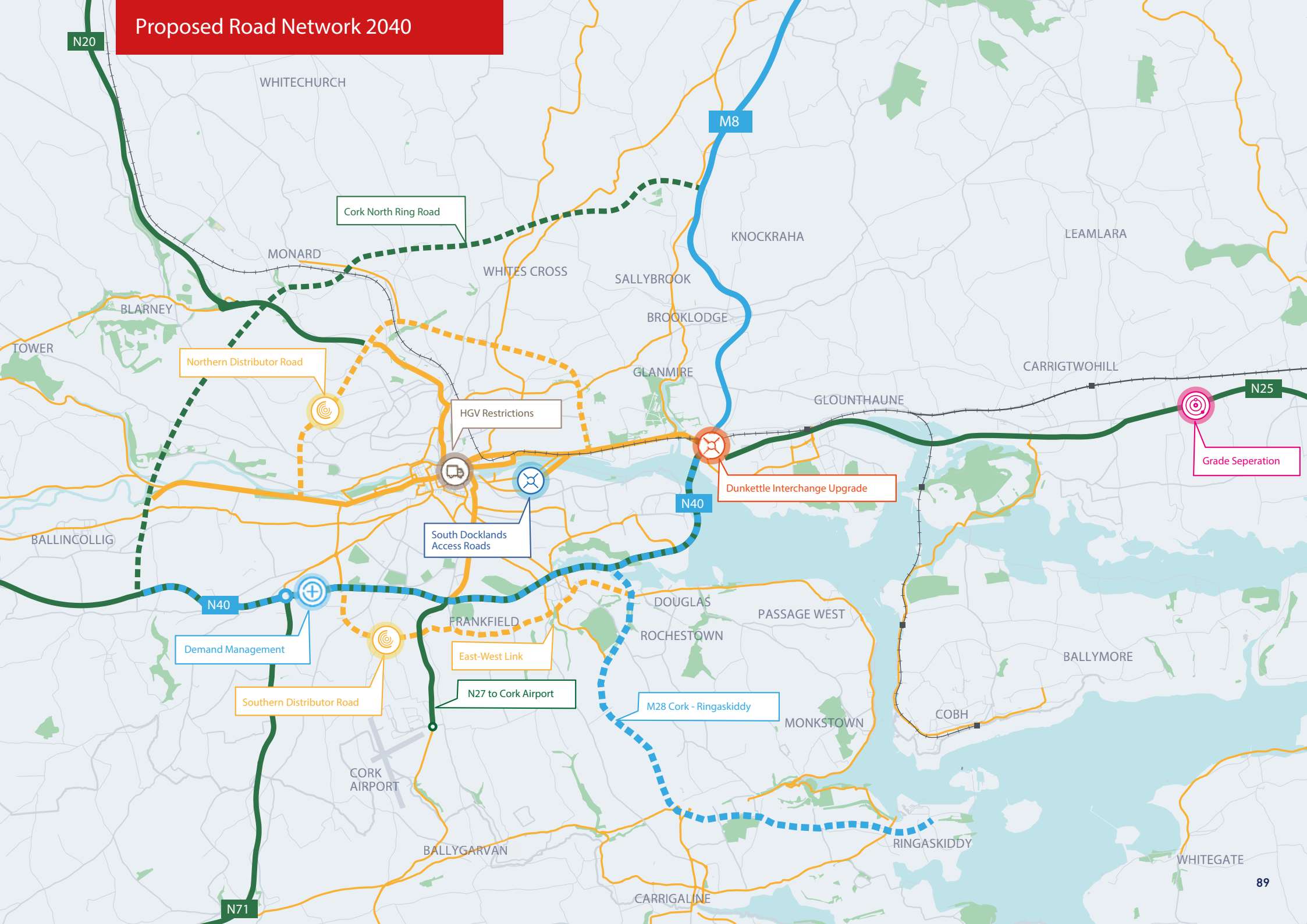
Cork has a high level of car trips that originate outside the city centre and other key employment locations that can contribute to congestion, noise and air pollution. CMATS seeks to reduce this by provision of park and ride facilities at key public transport interchanges to provide onward access to the city centre via public transport walking and cycling.

## Local Roads

The first priority for road investment in CMATS is to maintain, renew, manage and operate the existing roads infrastructure. Other priorities reflect a need to provide multi-modal travel, particularly on new roads in urban areas. CMATS proposes new distributor roads on the north side and south side of Cork City to facilitate orbital bus and active travel movements around the city, reducing trips through the city centre and the N40 South Ring Road by private vehicles. These new routes will also serve new development areas in suitable locations.



# Proposed Road Network 2040



## Regional and International Connectivity

Regional and international connectivity are also key to development of the city and region. CMATS includes provision for upgrade of national and regional roads, and improved intercity rail links to Dublin. It includes National Road network route improvements including the M20 Cork to Limerick and Regional Road improvements, including the Dunkettle Interchange, the M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Road and the Cork North Ring Road.

RSES supports optimising our international connectivity through investment and increased capacity in our ports and airports, and provision of high-quality digital connectivity, which are vital to the success of the regional economy. Port of Cork is a TENS-T Port and an important asset for Cork and the region. RSES supports Port of Cork's Strategic Development Plan including redevelopment of existing facilities in Ringaskiddy and preparing City Docks and Tivoli Docks for regeneration, It also supports Cork Airport which is one the regions two international airports, and a driver of growth for the region and in particular for Cork City and Metropolitan Area. The City Development Plan will seek to include land-use polices that ensure the Airport can continue to develop and expand its important role in the region in the future.

## Digital Connectivity

Cork is connected to high capacity digital connectivity with the EU and USA via Cork fibre network. This provides a direct connection from Cork to key technology and financial centres in the UK and the USA. A new sub-sea cable is planned that will connect Cork directly to mainland Europe via France. The Cork Metropolitan Area Network supports high speed network connections across Cork's key business zones and is capable of delivering virtually unlimited bandwidth to the areas it serves. Additional WiFi zones, facilitated by Cork City Council and the WiFi4EU scheme will also help to improve the city's digital connectivity for all.

## 8.2. Trends

- According to CMATS there are in the region of **820,000** trips originating within the Cork Metropolitan Areas on average each weekday, with the morning peak and late afternoon being the busiest periods;
- Trips to places of education make up the highest percentage of trips in the morning peak at 36%; while commuter trips account for 29%; and other trips 29% (shopping, leisure, business and visiting friends or family);
- Over 22% of the City's population walk or cycle to work or education, with 9% using public transport and 63% using private modes;
- Around 47% of residents of the central area walk or cycle, while over 80% of those living outside the city centre and suburbs use a private car to get to work or education;
- The number of workers commuting into Cork city and suburbs increased by 13.5% between 2011 and 2016. Over 40% of workers in Cork commuted from outside the urban area.



### 8.3. Progress

Cork City Centre has a well-established pedestrian network with a generally attractive and walkable environment. However, there is a need to enhance the public realm through traffic management and transport interventions designed to improve the quality of the pedestrian network and the environment to support safer and higher levels of walking and accessibility. In addition, cycling is a low cost sustainable and growing mode of transport in Cork Metropolitan Area which will need to be supported in terms of provision of cycle lanes and other facilities.

The past five years has seen significant improvements in cycling infrastructure primarily, within the City Centre as part of the roll out of the Cork City Centre Movement Strategy, with more work needing to be done. Since the last City Development Plan, the following projects which enhance public transport, walking and cycling routes have been carried out:

- Mary Elmes pedestrian/cycle bridge
- The first phases of the Cork City Centre Movement Strategy
- Kent station to city centre scheme
- UCC to City Centre Cycle Route
- Ballyvolane to City Centre (Phase 1: North Ring Road to Gordons Hill)
- Thomas Davis Bridge junction improvement scheme
- Mahon Bus Gate and Access Ramps
- Skehard Rd - Phase 2 & 3 (Church Rd to CSO Junction)
- Variable Messaging Signage installation
- Introduction of 30kph slow zone speed limits in residential areas
- Public bike sharing scheme



THE METROPOLE HOTEL

## 8.4. Challenges and Opportunities

Cork's transport network will not be able to support the future transport needs of a growing city and metropolitan area without considerable modal change. Cork has a very high car mode share and unless the attractiveness of alternative modes of transport is enhanced, metropolitan Cork will have increasing levels of car dependency, journey delays, congestion and pollution, which will have impacts on quality of life.

### Challenges include:

- Dispersed patterns of residential, employment and retail development, particularly outside of the central city area and dependency on the private car, which can only be addressed by better integration of land-use and transport policies;
- A public transport service and network in need of enhanced capacity, improved reliability and additional priority;
- A limited and discontinuous cycle network;
- Greenhouse gases from transport need to be reduced.

- Transport accounted for 19.8% of Ireland's greenhouse gases in 2017, 96% of which came from road transportation and
- If development continues to be oriented around the car as the primary means of transport then issues such as urban sprawl, traffic congestion, long commutes and social exclusion will increase in significance.

### The opportunities facing Cork include:

- Cork is projected to be the fastest growing metropolitan area in the State. The substantial increase in population, employment and educational use will lead to a subsequent increase in demand for travel and an opportunity to meet this demand with more compact development served by public transport, walking and cycling;
- Need to support the vibrancy accessibility and liveability of Cork City centre and metropolitan centres;
- Reducing the impact of transport on the environment through targeted measures to limit the negative impact of air and noise emissions;
- Need for stakeholder support and leadership to implement the necessary transport measures.

## 8.5. Key Questions

- ▶ **What key actions would you like to see to improve walking and cycling infrastructure?**
- ▶ **What needs to be done to increase use of public transport over the coming decade?**
- ▶ **How can we get stakeholder buy-in to support the delivery of high quality reliable public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure?**
- ▶ **In your view, what are the key priorities to enhance Cork's regional and international connectivity?**
- ▶ **What are the top priorities when it comes to meeting the mobility needs of all citizens in a fair and inclusive way?**



# 09. The City Centre, City Neighbourhoods, Towns and the City Hinterland



## 9.1. Introduction

Cork City has recently expanded its administrative boundary<sup>1</sup>. The resulting increase in population, to over 210,000 persons, also resulted in a fivefold increase in the city's total area, to 187km<sup>2</sup>. Cork City is now defined as a Medium Sized European City<sup>2</sup>.

The distinctive character of the city is created through a combination of its natural and built form. Built on estuarine islands in the marshy valley of the River Lee, the city gradually expanded up the steep hills rising to the north and south of the city centre and then into its hinterland. Its overall character therefore derives from a combination of its natural landscape and topography, its built fabric and its location on the river at a point where it forms a number of waterways.

The urban character of Cork City is reflected in a wide range of material assets, and is better understood by looking in greater detail at the nature of the city centre, the range of neighbourhoods in the city suburbs and the character and form of the city's urban towns and wider hinterland area. Recent development that has happened, or are currently underway, is also resulting in further transformation within these ever-changing areas.

<sup>1</sup> On May 31, 2019 Cork City expanded to nearly five times its former size and the population of the city grew by 85,000 to 210,000: <https://www.corkcity.ie/en/council-services/public-info/boundary-extension/history-and-legislation/>

<sup>2</sup> Regional Focus, RF 01/2012, European Commission



## 9.2. City Centre

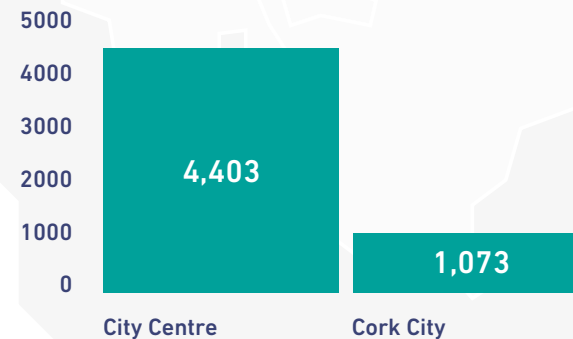
Cork City Centre is the largest urban centre in the region, with a diverse and vibrant living environment, at the heart of the Cork Metropolitan Area. The City Centre can be broken down into the following sub areas:

1. Heart of the City (the City Centre Island)
2. Shandon Area
3. McCurtain Street/St. Luke's Area
4. North City Docks
5. South City Docks
6. South Parish Area
7. Main Street/South Gate Area

With a population of over 24,000 persons, the City Centre accounts for 12% of the city's total population. Its density is nearly four times greater than that of the total city. The Shandon and South Parish areas are the most densely populated, accounting for half the total population living in the City Centre. Cork City Centre has a young population, with over half being aged between 25-44 years. More than half of all residents live in rental accommodation, with a much lower numbers of young families or retired households, when compared with the rest of the city.



Population Density  
(Persons per km<sup>2</sup>)



## 09. THE CITY CENTRE, CITY NEIGHBOURHOODS, TOWNS AND THE CITY HINTERLAND

Cork City Centre has seen a number of significant regeneration and urban renewal projects over the last five years, bringing new life into the city centre. Recent examples include:

- A mixed-use development, currently under construction at Horgan's Quay that includes 30,000m<sup>2</sup> of office space, 325 residential units, a hotel, shops and restaurants;
- Navigation Square is a next generation office development at Albert Quay, providing over 33,000m<sup>2</sup> of office space, with phase one now complete and in use;
- Student accommodation developments are currently under construction at Victoria Cross (255 bedspaces) and within the Beamish and Crawford site (417 bedspaces) and
- A large increase in Third Level spaces, including: UCC's Centre for Executive Education in the former Cork Savings Bank on Lapp's Quay and UCC's and MTU's Cork Centre for Architectural Education (CCAIE) on Douglas Street.

The Cork City Centre Strategy (2014) sets out clear aims to further revitalise the City Centre through improvement and development, better management based upon partnership of stakeholders and increased marketing of the City Centre's offer<sup>1</sup>. Annual action plans are part funded to help implement the strategy. An overall review of the strategy is due to be completed later in 2020, to feed into the next City Development Plan.



<sup>1</sup> Cork City Councils CORE Partnership, the City Centre Steering Group and the City Centre Co-ordinator are three examples of city centre initiatives aimed at implementing the City Centre Strategy (2014): <https://corkcitycentre.ie/>

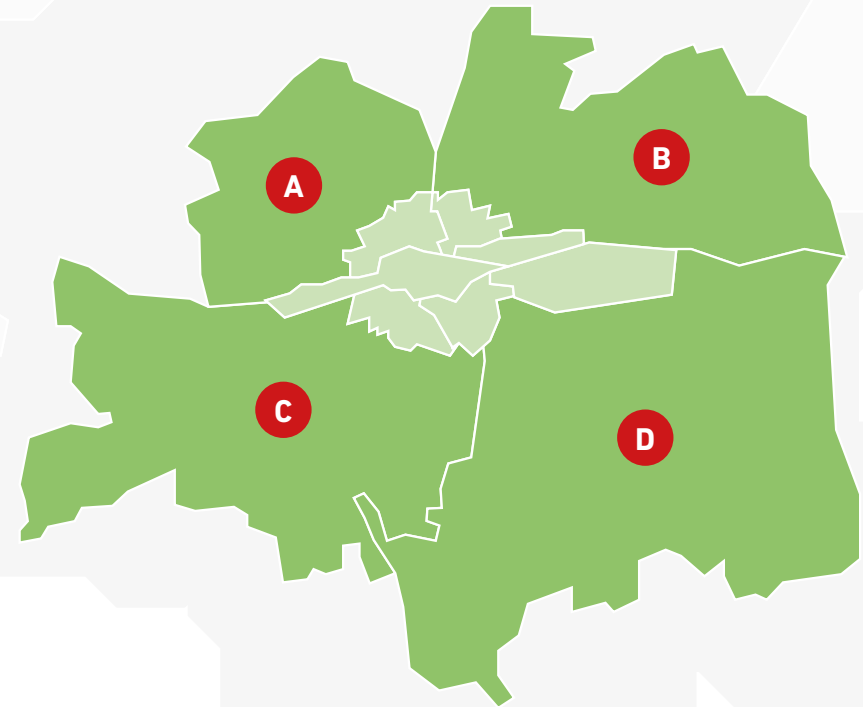
Further consolidation and regeneration of the City Centre, will underpin its role as the vibrant, living and working heart of the city. As outlined in Section 4 above, the regeneration of the City Docks as a high quality, mixed use sustainable waterfront with new urban quarters and transformational projects will be a major catalyst for further investment and regeneration of the City Centre.

### 9.3. City Suburbs

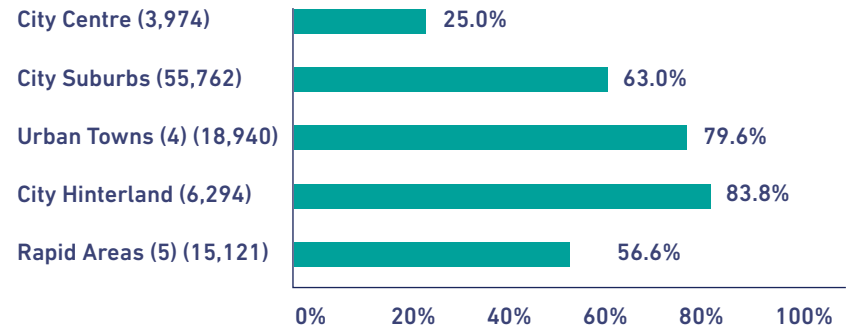
With over 30 identifiable neighbourhoods, Cork City Suburbs offers a variety of vibrant community, social, employment and cultural activities to its residents and the wider area. Given the topographical nature of the city and the natural boundaries created by its major transport corridors, the City Suburbs naturally divides into the following four geographical areas:

- A. North West Suburb**
- B. North East Suburb**
- C. South East Suburb**
- D. South West Suburb**

With over two thirds of the total population, the City Suburbs is home to the largest population base within the city. The area remains heavily dependent on private transport, with 63% of residents using their car/van/etc to get to work or education and only 9% using public transport.



**Private Transport to Work/Education (Census 2016)**  
City and Sub-City Areas



### A. North West Suburbs

The North West Suburbs has experienced significant changes in the last decade. Blackpool has added large scale mixed retail, office, leisure and residential developments with a number of other prominent sites still available for further regeneration. The North-West Quarter Regeneration plan for Knocknaheeny and Hollyhill is well underway, while new mixed tenure housing is proposed on a City Council owned site at Old Whitechurch Road. The North West Suburbs has been identified for significant public transport intervention as part of CMATS<sup>2</sup>, including a new commuter railway station and high frequency bus routes.

### B. North East Suburbs

Growth in the North East Suburbs has been somewhat limited in recent years, mainly due to topographical and infrastructural constraints. The area is bookended to the north by hilly and often steeply sloping terrain, with low lying floodplains to the north east providing a natural buffer with Glanmire. The Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area (UEA) is the main area identified for future growth within this area, through a mix of housing, employment and commercial uses. This area has been earmarked for significant public transport improvements as part of CMATS. These will improve connectivity across the wider city, but future development in the area is also constrained by the lack of other physical infrastructure.

<sup>2</sup> Cork Metropolitan Area Transportation Strategy (CMATS) is a €3.5bn investment package for Cork including commuter rail, bus corridors, light rail, park and rides, walking and cycling infrastructure and road networks.



### C. South East Suburbs

The population of the South East Suburbs has grown rapidly in recent years, reflecting its close proximity to Cork City Centre and its growth as employment base. In tandem with this growth there has been a notable rise of peak hour congestion. The area is identified for significant public transport interventions as part of CMATS, including a potential light rail route from Mahon to Ballincollig, via the city centre and priority bus corridors from Douglas to the City Centre. Douglas is at the heart of the South Eastern Suburbs and is the focal point for surrounding residential areas of Rochestown, Frankfield, Donnybrook and Grange. Mahon is the largest neighbourhood in the area, with significant population, employment and economic activity. There has been a growth in high-tech employment in Mahon, with the completion of the City Gate and City Gate Park office developments, alongside the development of a new private hospital. Mahon Point, a conventional shopping centre with ancillary retail park, has a wide regional catchment. These uses have increased the number and frequency of car borne journeys to and from this area and its peak time congestion.

### D. South West Suburbs

Significant growth in housing and population has occurred in the Southwest Suburbs over the last ten years, including lands around Mathew Hill where development continues apace. Given its close proximity to the city centre and the



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range of large employers (e.g. UCC, MTU and CUH) and local services, demand for further population and housing growth is high. Permission was granted in 2019, for the redevelopment of the Wilton shopping centre, including additional retail, hotel, cinema and office space. The lands surrounding the Tramore Road and Kinsale Road are largely home to a light industrial and wholesale uses. Given its strategic location, this area may have potential for future urban renewal, if suitable high quality public transport services can be provided. The former Dairygold site has been earmarked for a possible primary health care centre and residential development, and would be a catalyst for wider regeneration and urban renewal of the area.

The characteristics and wide variety of neighbourhoods within the four suburban areas located around Cork City Centre offer a diverse range of opportunities to further enhance liveability within the city. Investment in the regeneration and consolidation of the city suburbs will however require a range of well planned mixed use urban renewal projects that fully integrate high quality, architectural and urban design responses to achieve sustainable development that properly reflects the existing characteristics of these neighbourhoods.



## 9.4. Urban Towns

There are four urban towns in Cork City, each with a population of 2,000+ persons: Ballincollig, Glanmire, Tower and Blarney. The nature, scale and characteristics of these towns differ greatly. Ballincollig and Glanmire are larger towns, located on the edge of the city suburbs, with a wide range and mix of uses. Both are expanding, mainly through new residential development on the edge of each settlement. Tower and Blarney are located further to the northwest of the city, being separated by the city hinterland. Tower is largely a residential area, built around a small village centre. Blarney has a smaller population base and is centered on the historic Blarney Castle, a major tourist attraction within the region.

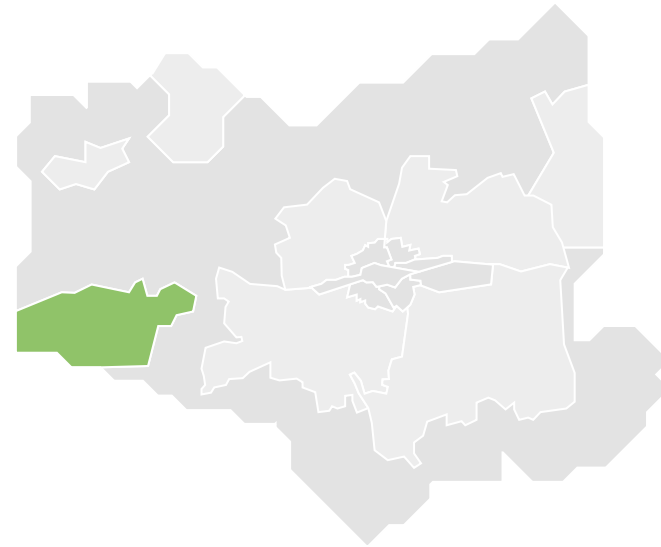




### (i) Ballincollig

Ballincollig has a population of 18,159 persons, being one of the largest towns in the Southern Region. With a modern and vibrant main street, the town's large shopping centre and historical riverside Regional Park are two of its most popular attractions. The town is a significant tech-business employment base, being home to both VM-Ware and EMC. Ballincollig has a young population base. Nearly a quarter of the town's total population is aged 0-14 year olds. Pre-school going families make up 12% of the town's total households. The town is very car dependent with only 6% of people using public transport to travel to work or education, and 12% walking or cycling.

Ballincollig experienced significant growth up until the recent economic downturn. The town continues to experience housing growth, with pockets of greenfield land currently being developed. Additionally a number of brownfield and infill sites are coming on stream. There remains significant vacancy within the town centre. The Maglin Urban Expansion Area has potential for a large amount of new residential development, but has notable transport and drainage constraints, which Cork City Council is currently working with landowners and developers to address. Major transport and connectivity improvements are planned under CMATS,



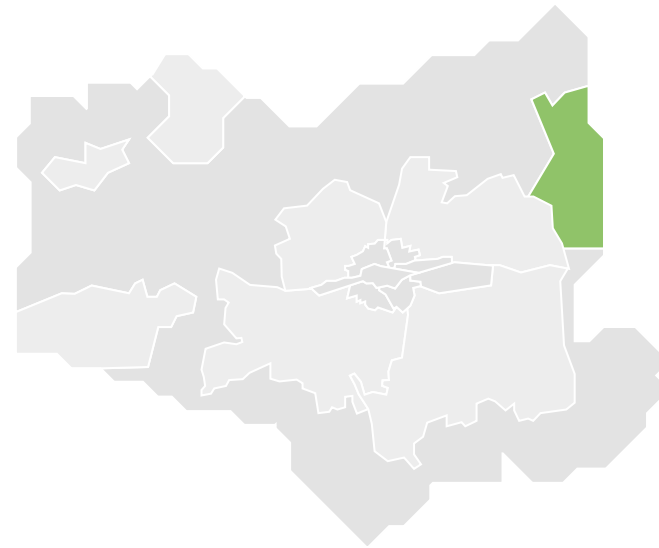
Ballincollig Regional Park

including a future Light Rail corridor, connecting to Cork City Centre and onto Mahon. Within this context, Cork City Council will examine the suitability of sites in and around the town to meet future housing, employment, community and neighbourhood needs.

### (ii) Glanmire

Glanmire has a population of 9,903 persons and is located in the northeast of the city, north of Tivoli Ridge. The town is positioned within the steep river valley of the Glashaboy and Butlerstown rivers, with agricultural lands to the southwest. Employment and economic activity is largely focused on the retail and services sector, including Hazlewood shopping centre. Glanmire's population base is largely made up of young families, with 58% of all households being pre-school, early school or adolescent families. Despite its bus connections and close proximity to the city centre, only 6% use public transport to get to their place of work or education.

There is a large amount of lands zoned for future development within Glanmire. The Ballinglanna Urban Expansion Area, located to the south east of the town centre, is currently under construction and will add a significant number of new dwellings. Whilst some other development has occurred, the future expansion of Glanmire is heavily constrained by difficult topography and the location of low-lying agricultural lands to the southwest, which are susceptible to flood risk. These constraints have largely prevented the settlement



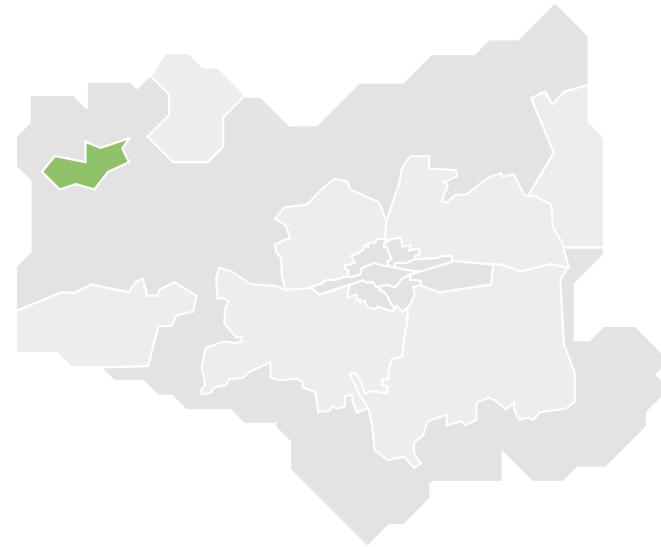
Glanmire

from merging with the northern suburbs of the city, while helping to preserve a distinct identity for the town. Major transport and connectivity improvements are envisaged for Glanmire in the form of the Metropolitan Cork Cycling Strategy and other CMATS projects. The location and nature of future development in Glanmire will need to be examined in the context of the issues outlined above, and in accordance with national and regional planning guidance.

### **(iii) Tower**

Tower has a population of 3,274 persons and is situated in the northwest corner of the city, 11km from the city centre. The town is located on an elevated ridge and developed rapidly in the earlier part of the 20th century around a smaller village. Tower has experienced significant population growth since the start of the 1990's and is now mainly a residential settlement. The town is set within visually prominent steep slopes that form catchments for rivers and streams feeding in into the River Lee to the south. Tower has a young population with 38% of the total being aged between 0- 24 years old. The majority of households living in the town are young families, with over half being pre-school, early school or adolescent families. The town is extremely car dependent with 85% of the population travelling by private means (car, van, motorbike, etc.) to their place of work or education.

While planning permissions have been granted for residential developments in recent times, Tower is somewhat constrained

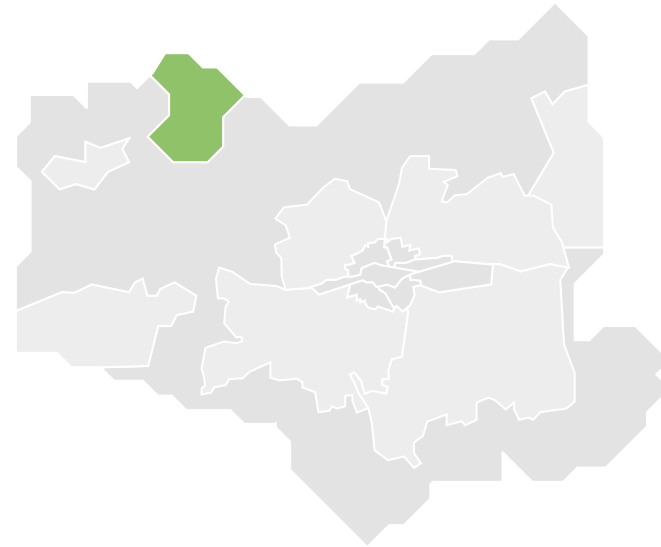


by the topography of the area and associated flood plain to the east. Large areas to the south and west have also experienced significant flood risk. The potential for additional development in Tower needs to be examined in the context of these constraints and the need to balance development with local services and sustainable transport targets for the wider Cork area.

#### (iv) Blarney

Blarney has a population of 2,550 persons and is located in the northwest of the city, 8km from the city centre. The historic Blarney Castle and the former Woolen Mills are the focal points for the town, being major tourist and commercial attractions, drawing large numbers of visitors on an annual basis. In more recent times, new employment opportunities have arisen through the ongoing development of the Blarney Business Park, located to the North East, with direct access onto the N20 Cork-Limerick national road. Blarney has an older population base, with one in five residents being aged 65 years or older. The town is also extremely car dependent with only 4% of people using public transport to travel to work or education, and 3% walking or cycling.

The population of Blarney has remained somewhat static, with large areas of zoned land undeveloped within the town. This is due in part to infrastructural constraints. Stoneview, a large area of residential and employment zoned land immediately to the north of the town, requires large scale roads and



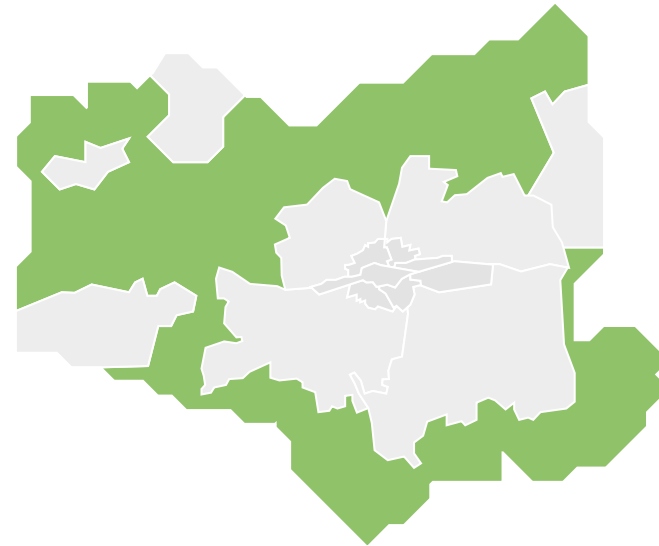
utilities infrastructure investment to facilitate development in this area. CMATS provides for a suite of public transport interventions for Blarney, including a new train station at Stoneview. The potential for additional development needs to be examined in the context of these constraints and the need to balance development with the tourism potential, the need for local services and wider sustainable transport targets for Cork.

## 9.5. City Hinterland

The City Hinterland is made up of the lands outside the City Centre, the City Suburbs and the four urban towns. The area is mainly rural in character with large tracks of agricultural lands, but also contains a number of smaller settlements like Kerry Pike and White's Cross. Cork Airport is located to the southern end of the hinterland area. The airport acts a central hub for the city, metropolitan and region from a transport, connectivity and economic view point. The adjoining Cork Airport Business Park is a large scale employment base within the region and is home to a wide range of businesses. There are a number of large industrial parks and warehouses within the City Hinterland area, mostly located on lands adjacent to the city.

The City Hinterland has a population of 11,546 persons, accounting for only 5% of the overall population living in the City. The area has the largest land mass but the lowest population density and is largely rural in character. The City Hinterland has an older population base with 44% being aged 45 years or older. One in ten of all households in the area are retired couples/persons living alone. The City Hinterland is also extremely car dependent with only 4% of people using public transport to travel to work or education, and 6% walking or cycling.

Some residential sites located in the small settlements of the City Hinterland are currently being developed. There is also



a significant amount of one-off housing development in this area. Future provision of such house types will be examined in the context of national policy for rural areas under strong urban influence. The potential for additional development in the City Hinterland needs to be examined in the context of the local and environmental characteristics of the area. There will be a requirement to balance any future development with the wider needs of Cork City to achieve compact growth and more sustainable transport patterns, while ensuring environmental preservation and the retention and enhancement of the urban and rural character of the wider city.

## 9.6. Key Questions

- ▶ **How do we provide more residential and employment opportunities within each of the City's sub areas? What types of uses should go where and what scale should they be?**
- ▶ **How do we increase residential densities within the city, while respecting the scale and quality of existing built and natural heritage?**
- ▶ **How do we address issues of retail vacancy and dereliction in the City Centre and other urban and neighbourhood centres?**
- ▶ **What are the most important issues facing suburban areas like Douglas, Mahon, Ballyvolane, Blackpool and outer settlements such as Ballincollig, Glanmire and Tower?**
- ▶ **What are the important issues facing the City Hinterland area within the time period of the next City Plan and beyond? How do we best plan for these?**



# 10. Delivering Homes and Successful Neighbourhoods



## 10.1. Introduction

Allocating sufficient land to enable the supply of homes to meet demand and need is a core function of a development plan and the planning system. Cork requires homes for new workers that come to Cork to live, as well as homes to meet local need. The City Development Plan aims to ensure that the right blend of home-types and tenures are provided in appropriate locations. Critical to understanding this will be the completion of a Housing Need and Demand Assessment and the Housing Strategy.

Creating successful neighbourhoods is a key aim of the planning system, which is focused as much on the quality of homes and placemaking as it is on ensuring the right quantity of homes are provided. This is supported by integrated planning and the use of placemaking to create socially sustainable communities and environments all of which enable high standards of quality of life that are as environmentally sustainable as location and standards allow. The Development Plan aims to ensure that the right civic and community infrastructure is provided and ambitious development standards are applied to enable the creation of successful neighbourhoods and a city that is truly 'liveable'.





## 10. DELIVERING HOMES AND SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBOURHOODS

To support and improve Cork's liveability means to take action around several cross-cutting themes each with their own challenges, and to work with existing communities in neighbourhoods to collectively identify improvements necessary to ensure that all parts of the City benefit from high standards of 'liveability'.

### 10.2. Trends/Achievements

- Housing: c.635 home completions in Cork City in 2019;
- Strategic Housing Development commitments –10 schemes containing c2600 residential units and 674 purpose-built student bed spaces housing have been permitted since the process was introduced;
- Social housing: target for 2017-2021 is 2230 units (c. 550p.a.) 697 units provided in 2019 (build, acquire and lease). 461 - 2018; 292 – 2017; strong pipeline planned for 2020 and 2021;
- Selected Social housing developments completed – Cork North West Quarter Regeneration (Phase 1 and 2A), The Meadows (69 homes); Church Road, Blackrock (43 homes) and Deanrock, Togher (66 homes);
- Affordable Housing: City Council with DHPLG assistance is progressing affordable housing schemes. 147 unit scheme at Boherboy Road has progressed to construction; O'Cualann Housing Cooperative has planning permission for 17 homes at Knocknaheeny; further affordable housing projects planned for various sites.
- Civic and community infrastructure developed: Hollyhill Library (2018); Douglas Community Centre (2019)
- Student Housing: there are c. 5,500 Purpose-Built Student Bedspaces (PBSBs) in the city;
- Community: Cork has 10 Libraries; 4 Swimming pool/leisure centres; 12 Community Centres;
- Education: Primary Schools; new schools planned for Douglas, Togher and Old Whitechurch Road; post-primary school planned for Rochestown
- UCC Completed: Student Hub (2020) and UCC Centre for Executive Education, Lapp's Quay (2019);
- Planned: Cork University Business School; Dental School, Curraheen; Health Innovation Hub, Curraheen.
- MTU: Planned: Strategic Masterplan Review (2020); Planned MTU Sports Arena; Upgrade of 1970s building stock.



Housing development under way, Ballinglanna, Glanmire

### 10.3. Challenges and Opportunities

#### (i) Delivering Homes

The Department of Housing Planning and Local Government (DHPLG) introduced many initiatives, including the programme under Rebuilding Ireland, to improve housing supply. Housing supply has increased but housing output remains insufficient to meet either housing demand or housing need.

An important element of every Development Plan is to ensure that there is a balance between the demand for new residential land - as set by the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy population projections for Cork - and the supply of zoned, serviced residential land. There have been significant changes to the planning policy context to development plans at both a national and Regional level that the Plan is required to demonstrate consistency with. The recently published RSES, includes ambitious population projections that will directly influence residential zoning requirements.

The City Capacity Study being prepared by Cork City Council is assessing how much residential land is available for development. The forthcoming plan will determine if the



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existing quantity of zoned lands is adequate to deliver the RSES targets.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) introduces a new standardised methodology that requires planning authorities to differentiate between: zoned land that is serviced; and, zoned land that is serviceable within the life of the Plan (National Policy Objective 72a). The NPF requires that, when considering zoning land for development purposes that cannot be serviced within the life of the City Development Plan, then such lands should not be zoned for development. The NPF also obliges each local authority to undertake a 'Housing Need and Demand Assessment' (HNDA) in order to correlate and accurately align future housing demand. It is intended that the HNDA will be a database which allows Local Authorities to run a number of different scenarios to inform key decisions on future housing need and supply. As set out in the NPF, the HNDA will primarily inform housing policies, housing strategies and associated land use zoning policies, as well as assisting in determining where new policy areas or investment programmes need to be developed. A joint Cork City and County HNDA will be prepared.

### (ii) Housing Strategy

Cork City Council and Cork County Council will prepare a Joint Housing Strategy building upon the HNDA to inform the respective Development Plans of each Council. The Strategy will set out an overall framework for the supply of land to



Elysian apartment complex

## 10. DELIVERING HOMES AND SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBOURHOODS

meet housing needs arising across the administrative areas in line with population and housing targets for the Metropolitan Area. It will set out how housing needs, including specialist housing needs, will be met.

### (iii) Student Housing and Co-Living

Purpose-built student bedspaces (PBSBs) are required to meet the needs of students attending University College Cork and Munster Technological University. Co-living is a new form of short-term housing tenure aimed at meeting the needs of new workers moving to cities, such as Cork, before people find longer-term housing. What are the right kinds of locations for these specialist kinds of housing and how should these be distributed to ensure that neighbourhoods can be balanced in their make-up and thrive? What are the essential facilities that should be provided with them so that they offer a high quality of life to residents?

### (iv) Regeneration

The Cork City Development Plan must include specific objectives for redevelopment and reuse of vacant urban sites in specific areas. Identification of regeneration areas and sites and specific objectives, which will be of benefit in securing the objectives of the Core Strategy, will be included in the forthcoming Plan.



Munster Technological University



University College, Cork

**(v) Community facilities**

A key component of urban life is having access to the necessary community facilities to ensure a high standard of living for citizens, including the provision of facilities to meet health, educational, recreational, cultural, retail, local services, worship and social needs, as well as facilities for young people and the elderly. Objectives to ensure adequate provision of infrastructure to serve civic and neighbourhood needs will be incorporated into the development plan. A key input into the development plan will be the completion of a Recreational Needs Study to identify active sports requirements for the city and its constituent communities. Similarly, citizens should have access to public transport and nature within close proximity to their home.



## 10.4. Key Questions

- ▶ **What community facilities are needed to serve new neighbourhoods in major development areas to make them “liveable” and what are the current obvious gaps in provision within Cork’s existing neighbourhoods?**
- ▶ **Cork needs a new acute hospital. Which accessible location should provide a new home for this regional facility?**
- ▶ **What is the right proportion of below-market housing in major development areas to meet the needs of all citizens?**
- ▶ **What role could historic areas play to provide more homes in the city and which should be identified for regeneration?**
- ▶ **How should the forthcoming plan ensure protection of existing community amenities and the provision of appropriate facilities in tandem with housing delivery?**
- ▶ **Where should increased height be accommodated in line with the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines?**
- ▶ **How do we ensure that higher density developments meet the needs of families, as well as those of smaller households?**
- ▶ **Where should purpose-built student bed-spaces (PBSBs) and co-living homes be located and what will make these attractive to live in?**
- ▶ **In an age of scarce public money what facilities should be shared (e.g. sports halls shared by schools and communities) to enable as many people as possible to make use of them? Who should own and run the facilities?**

# 11. Built Heritage, Urban Design & Culture

## 11.1. Introduction

Cork City features a wealth of built heritage that has been amassed over many centuries by previous generations. Our built heritage encompasses both archaeological and architectural heritage that includes a varied array of Protected Structures, National Monuments and a range of designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) that underline the historic fabric and streetscapes of this city. To underline this importance the city is host to approximately 5,039 built, archaeological and cultural heritage designations.

The main aim of the City Development Plan from a built and archaeological heritage standpoint will be to manage change so that building conservation principles and objectives are about guiding and enhancing development. The conservation of our built and archaeological heritage needs to be an integrated part of the development process. There needs to be a balance between the development-led scenario and the need for the protection of our heritage.

The City Council plays a key role in relation to the creation and development of the built environment and in delivering good quality design for successful and sustainable places. Urban design is essentially a tool



Crawford Art Gallery

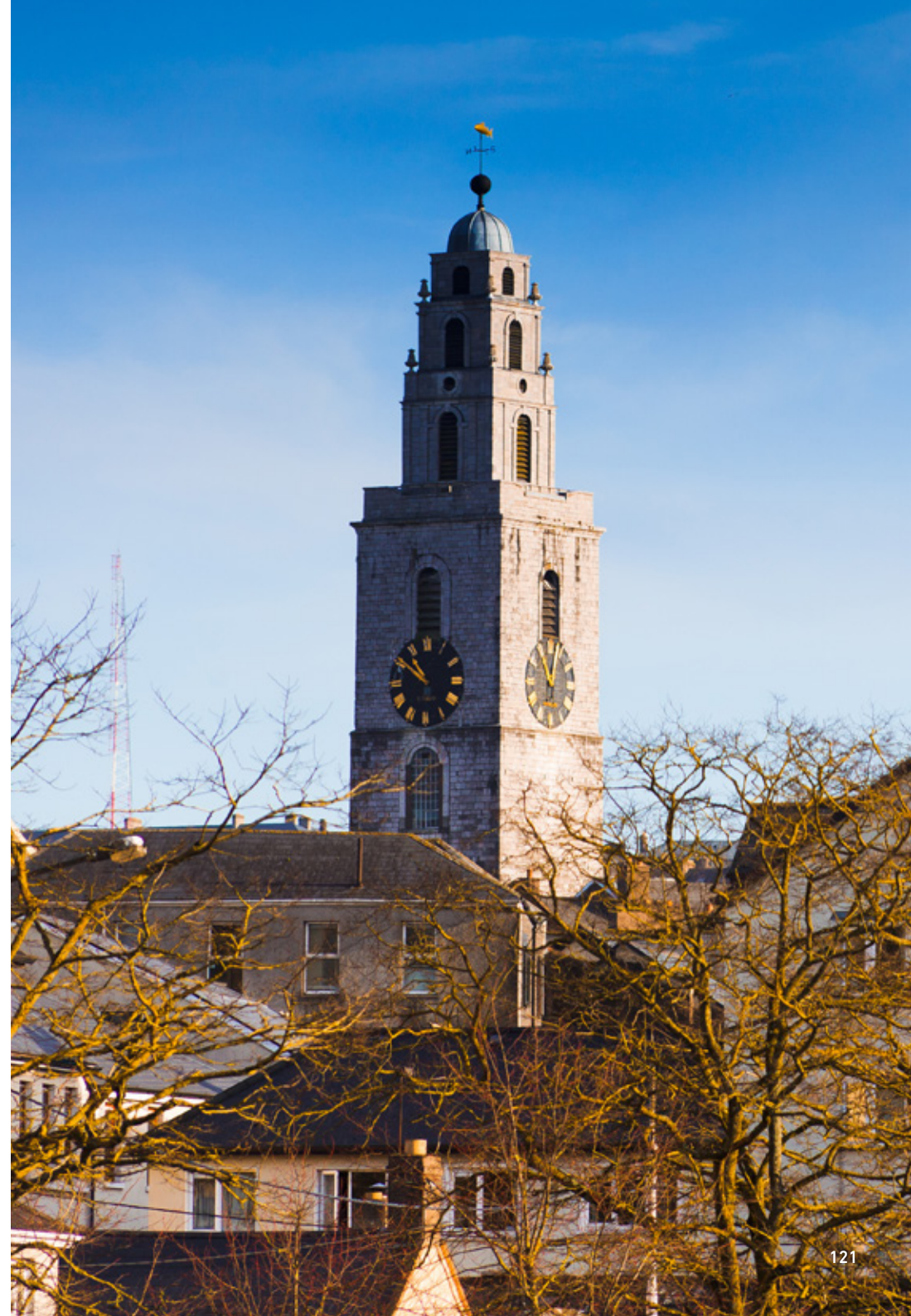


## 11 BUILT HERITAGE, URBAN DESIGN & CULTURE

to assist in the craft of creating quality urban spaces; it is about how buildings are put together to shape and enliven our streets and civic spaces. Good urban design supports the economic, social, cultural and sustainability goals of the city. It also creates attractive and sustainable neighbourhoods. High-quality modern urban design should also work in tandem with and enhance long established and historically important buildings, structures, streetscapes and public spaces.

Cork City Council acknowledges the importance of cultural heritage through the actions of the Cork City Heritage Plan and also provides a focal point for cultural activities through the work of its Arts, Tourism, Heritage and Conservation sections. Cultural heritage includes such obvious manifestations such as museums, libraries and archives however it can also include aspects of our heritage such as language, music, genealogy, folklore, sport, traditional food and local history. Cultural heritage can also be found in the subtle, less tangible aspects of our heritage such as accents, turns of phrase, local customs and collective memories. Put simply, our cultural heritage links us to where we come from, gives our everyday lives a clearer focus and shapes an understanding of our city as a unique and special place.

Examples of sites and buildings that are significant in terms of their tourism value as well as their archaeological, historic and cultural importance include St Anne's Church, St. Finbarre's Cathedral, Blarney Castle Estate and Elizabeth Fort.



## 11.2. Achievements

In terms of promoting the city for tourism and boosting interest and protection of the city's heritage the following key achievements are of note:

- Many events are held each year during Heritage Week to promote the built environment as well as cultural heritage, with Heritage Open Day, where a range of historic buildings are open to the public for a day being one of the highlights;
- Annual grant schemes for repair of historic buildings and grants for heritage associations and publications have been helping protect and promote the value of built and cultural heritage;
- The annual Schools Heritage Project is also very popular and has introduced the value of heritage to hundreds of children;
- Archaeological excavations at former Beamish and Crawford Brewery site continue to lead to a greater understanding of the early development and settlement of the city;



Savoy

- The Annual Archaeology Lecture Series commenced in 2015 and it continues to attract large attendances.
- The Annual Medieval Day Celebration, including archaeology roadshow, during Heritage Week at Elizabeth Fort attracts 3,000 visitors annually.

Recent good examples of well designed modern spaces that are both functional and respectful of their surrounding area and historic buildings are as follows:

- Nano Nagle Place and Heritage Centre
- St Angelas College, St. Patricks Hill
- The Student Hub/The Windle Building, University College Cork
- Deanrock, City Council housing development, Togher

### 11.3. Challenges & Opportunities

There is a need to assess and review the cumulative impact that development (or lack of) has had on the historic core. How much archaeological excavation is appropriate? Have we excavated enough of the city?

Climate Change is a major challenge for the city and it does present a threat to the city's historical environment. More severe and frequent flood events and the related risk to low lying areas of the city centre present a significant challenge to the city's built and archaeological heritage.

Upgrade works to historic structures will be a significant requirement especially with regard to energy efficiency and 'liveability'.

Cork City now also includes small towns and areas of historical character such as Ballincollig, Blarney and Glanmire. Each of these settlements are very different and each have their own historic and cultural significance. Fully understanding the significance of these areas is vital to ensure any development enhances the character of these unique areas. Historic Landscape Characterisation Assessments are useful in providing a baseline to guiding and developing masterplans and allowing modern intervention to enhance the character of these areas.

## 11.4. Key Questions

- ▶ **How can we tell the story of Cork City through our built, our archaeological and our cultural heritage?**
- ▶ **How do we broaden people's horizons and deepen people's knowledge regarding built heritage, archaeology and cultural activities?**
- ▶ **How can we facilitate development while protecting our archaeological heritage and the character of historic streetscapes and monument settings?**
- ▶ **What buildings and structures are worthy of being designated as protected under the Record of Protected Structures which forms part of the City Development Plan?**
- ▶ **How should we achieve and maintain a balance between development and protection of the city's built, archaeological and cultural heritage?**
- ▶ **How can we ensure that the design of our new buildings and public spaces are of a high quality and contribute to the enhancement of the overall character and landscape of the city?**

# 12. Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Space, Sport and Recreation



Proposed Marina Park

## 12.1. Introduction

The high levels of growth proposed in the National Planning Framework for Cork City place increased demand on the quantity and quality of our shared spaces, especially our parks. The challenge we face is how to manage our natural assets (which include our open spaces such as parks and greenways) whilst accommodating and meeting the recreational needs of our existing and growing population and improve the attractiveness of Cork City as a place to live.

## 12.2. What is meant by 'Green and Blue Infrastructure' ?

"It is important to consider the interrelationships between biodiversity, natural heritage, landscape and our green spaces." (National Planning Framework, p.125)

Green and blue infrastructure means our natural assets. Green infrastructure is a term used to describe our agricultural land, green spaces, parks, amenity space, green belts, gardens, cemeteries, community allotments, woodland, trees, nature reserves, hedgerows and shrubs. Blue infrastructure refers to waterways and water bodies, including the harbour area, rivers, streams, reservoirs, lakes, floodplains, river banks, wetlands and ponds.

These natural assets provide us with important benefits including food production, wildlife habitats, sustainable drainage, filtering noise and air pollution, supporting biodiversity, carbon capture and helping to reduce impacts of man-made climate change. All forms of development have an impact or footprint. How significant the footprint is depends on how we manage development in relation to these natural assets.

Cork City has a great range of natural assets and is home to Cork Harbour Special Protection Area, 10 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas, parks, woodland habitats, Beaumont Quarry, city trees, hedges and rivers including the Lee, Bride, Douglas and Glashaboy.



Cork Harbour Special Protection Area



### 12.3. Open space, sport and recreation

Green and blue infrastructure is associated with our use of outdoor spaces. Cork City has a variety of public parks, sports pitches, playgrounds, walk and cycle ways and areas of open space on land and water. These assets have multiple uses throughout the year ranging from sport, recreation, leisure and play to music, drama, and special events such as 'Summer events in the Park', 'Carnival of Science', 'Harbour Festival', 'Patricks Day Festival, Jazz Festival and 'SeaFest'. We need all of these for good physical and mental health.

In terms of our indoor spaces, these are wide ranging and are provided by both public and private sectors. These are also necessary for good physical and mental health, for all age groups and abilities.

How we use these natural assets and open spaces must evolve to meet the changing and diverse needs of our growing city population. Some parts of Cork city have younger communities whilst other parts have older communities. The recreational and leisure needs will need to be bespoke to the respective needs of each community within our city.



Bishop Lucy Park winning design



Proposed Marina Park



## 12.4. Trends and achievements

Parks are crucial to the quality of life and well-being of people in Cork City. Recent and planned achievements include:

- The new Tramore Valley Park has opened and will be further improved on in coming years;
- Construction of the new Marina Park in the South Docklands has commenced and will be completed in 2021;
- Fitzgerald's Park has been upgraded over recent years;
- The 'Shaky Bridge' to connect the northside of the city to Fitzgerald's Park has been restored and reinstalled;
- A new playground has been provided in Bishopstown to meet the needs there;
- Ballincollig Regional Park continues to be upgraded with a recent addition of a pedestrian and cycle path;
- All of these Parks have multiple activities ranging from 'Summer in the Park' events, music, Park runs, playgrounds, yoga etc.

Over the past 10 years there have been development of sports pitches and associated changing facilities, and various upgrades of public realm throughout Cork City. Our public realm spaces are evolving to better accommodate pedestrian and cycle routes, people with reduced mobility and play/recreation and there is potential to do much more. For example, Marina road was closed to vehicles on Sundays last October to accommodate informal play and recreation and is now being closed again as part of the COVID-19 response.

## 12.5. Challenges and Opportunities

We need to manage our natural assets while at the same time meeting the recreational needs of our expanding population. Two strategies are planned to help address these challenges:

1. **'Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy'** to identify our natural assets and provide recommendations of how best to accommodate development growth whilst complimenting nature, and
2. **'Open Space, Sports and Recreation Needs Strategy'** to bring up to date the different needs and demands of local communities and people of all abilities within Cork City.

These studies will identify current strengths and shortfalls and offer recommendations to address current and future needs of a growing city.

There is a growing understanding and appreciation of the benefits of sustainable and active travel to business, the environment and human health. Proposed greenways, the Lee2Sea and Euro Velo, are opportunities to allow people to walk, jog or cycle to and from work, school, shops and for recreation.

Universal design represents an opportunity in the way we design our open spaces, public realm, parks, greenways to be open, accessible, welcoming, friendly and safe to everyone. Layout of spaces, equipment, facilities, landscaping, natural surveillance, appropriate lighting, quality seating in good locations, effective management are some key factors in designing and providing quality open spaces for all.

A further opportunity is the growing use of nature-based solutions in all types of development. Nature-based solutions provide better environments to live, work and visit and are frequently a cheaper design solution compared to more traditional approaches. They are multi-functional as they meet amenity and recreational needs but also help address drainage, wind tunnels, heat islands, climate change impacts and reduce noise and air pollutants whilst supporting biodiversity and improving public health.

## 12.6. Key Questions

- ▶ **How do we provide additional high quality parks and open space whilst accommodating a larger city population and where should they be located?**
- ▶ **How do we design in measures which make our open spaces, parks, public realm etc inviting, welcoming and safe to citizens and visitors?**
- ▶ **How should our natural assets be managed in light of a more populated city?**
- ▶ **How do we integrate multi-functional nature-based solutions within compact urban development?**
- ▶ **What do you think are the most important natural assets in our city?**
- ▶ **What are the opportunities to connect our natural assets (land and water) to form corridors?**
- ▶ **What are the evolving demands of your local community in terms of sport, recreation, and leisure to meet the needs of people of all abilities? How do we integrate play opportunities in new developments?**

# 13. Environmental Quality

### 13.1. Introduction

The provision of sustainable physical infrastructure and improvement and protection of the quality of the city's water bodies, while managing flood risk, is of key importance in dealing with the environmental challenges facing the city. The City Council seeks to ensure that water, air quality and waste management accord with EU and national legislation and policy. While Irish Water has responsibility for provision of wastewater and water infrastructure since 2014, Cork City Council continues to provide day to day delivery of service and management of the Capital Programme in partnership with Irish Water under a Service Level Agreement.

Air quality standards are set in legislation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) having the lead role in monitoring the level of various air pollutants against these standards and local authorities having responsibility for addressing local instances of air pollution. The EPA are also the designated National Authority for environmental noise while local authorities have a role in preparing Noise Action Plans for urban agglomerations such as Cork City.

The management of infrastructural requirements and issues relating to energy supply and telecommunications, also ensures the city will develop in a sustainable way. While issues relating to climate change and mitigation underpin all facets of this section, climate change is dealt with specifically earlier in this Issues Paper.



## 13.2. Strategic Context

The National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (RSES) contain a number of over-arching goals and objectives, setting the context for Environmental Quality issues to be addressed through the City Development Plan.

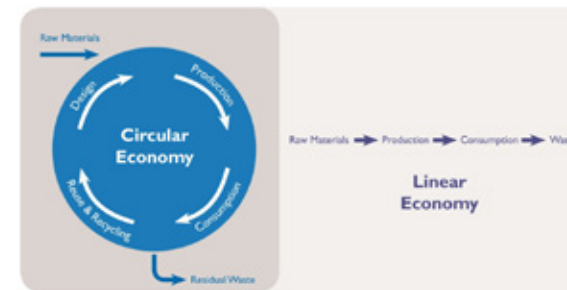
Chapter 9 of the NPF Realising our Sustainable Future, recognises that the “key national environmental challenges include the need to accelerate action on climate change, health risks to drinking water, treating urban waste water, protecting important and vulnerable habitats as well as diminishing wild countryside and dealing with air quality problems in urban areas”.

The RSES includes a large number of Regional Policy Objectives, just some of which are highlighted here:

- The need for local authorities to continue to work with the Office of Public Works to implement the Flood Risk Management Plans and address existing and potential future flood risks (RPO 89);
- To support the development of a Regional Renewable Energy Strategy (RPO 98);
- To support innovative initiatives that develop the circular economy through implementation of the Regional Waste Management Plan for the Southern Region 2015-2021 and its successor (RPO 107);
- It is an objective that an Ecosystem Services approach will be incorporated into the preparation of statutory land use plans in the region (RPO 110);
- To build on Smart Cities initiatives and seek investment in broadband, fibre technologies, wireless networks and integrated digital infrastructures (RPO 134)
- To support the implementation of Irish Water Investment Plans and seek such plans to align the settlement strategy in the RSES and to ensure Local Authority Core Strategies demonstrate compliance with DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities and demonstrate phased infrastructure led growth (RPO 208) and
- To support strategic wastewater treatment infrastructure investment and facilitate the separation of foul and surface water networks (RPO 215).

### 13.3. Achievements/What's Happening?

- Cork City Council operates a major water treatment plant located on the Lee Road on behalf of Irish Water. Approximately 43.9 million litres (9.8 million gallons) of raw water are extracted daily from the River Lee to supply the plant. A major upgrade to the site is underway and expected to be completed in 2021.
- A Drainage Area Plan (DAP) for Cork City Agglomeration is currently being developed by Irish Water.
- A feasibility study for upgrades to the Carrigrennan Wastewater Treatment Plant to allow for compliance with its waste licence and to cater for expected future population growth is in progress.
- A number of Flood Relief capital projects are currently being progressed:
  - Lower Lee (Cork City) Flood Relief Scheme (€140M)
  - Morrison's Island Public Realm Improvement and Flood Defence Scheme (€6M)
  - River Bride (Blackpool) Flood Relief Scheme (€20M)
  - Glashaboy (Glanmire) Flood Relief Scheme (€8.5M)
  - Douglas Flood Relief Scheme (€5.5M)
  - Togher Culvert Works, Service Diversions and Public Realm Enhancement (€6.5M)
- The Cork Agglomeration Noise Action Plan is currently in preparation to act as a means of managing environmental noise, and to meet the aim of the END Directive of preventing, and reducing where necessary, environmental noise.
- Cork City Council has four air monitoring stations at Heatherton Park, South Link Road, UCC Distillery Fields and CIT that provide live, continuous air quality data. In addition, a number of air quality sensors from PurpleAir have been installed at locations across Cork City.



Source: Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021

### 13.4. Challenges/ Opportunities:

- Addressing the challenges of climate change through proper management of environmental infrastructure;
- Water quality and resource management issues (flood risk management; consideration of River Basin Management Plan objectives, sustainable water management solutions such as SuDs and green roofs);
- Efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure;
- Management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and quality;
- Adopting measures to ensure sustainable waste management, including the employment of principles relating to the circular economy (prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery) and
- Adopting measures to improve air quality.

**Resource Efficiency and Transition to a Low Carbon Economy**

- Sustainable Land Management and Resource Efficiency**  
Adopting the principles of the circular economy to enable more sustainable planning and land use management of our natural resources and assets.
- Low Carbon Economy**  
Our need to accelerate action on climate change.
- Renewable Energy**  
Our transition to a low carbon energy future.
- Managing Waste**  
Adequate capacity and systems to manage waste in an environmentally safe and sustainable manner.

**Protecting, Conserving and Enhancing Our Natural Capital**

- Sustainable Water Management**  
Consideration of flood risk in planning and development management and treating urban waste water.
- Green Infrastructure Planning**  
Protecting and valuing our important and vulnerable habitats, landscapes, natural heritage and green spaces.

**Creating a Clean Environment for a Healthy Society**

- Water Quality**  
Recognising the links and addressing on-going challenges between development activity, water quality and our health.
- Promoting Cleaner Air**  
Addressing air quality problems in urban and rural areas through better planning and design.
- Noise Management**  
Incorporating consistent measures to avoid, mitigate and minimise or promote the pro-active management of noise.

Source: Chapter 9 Realising our Sustainable Future of Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework, Government of Ireland.



### 13.5. Key Questions

- ▶ **What are the most important “environmental quality” issues facing Cork City?**
- ▶ **How do we move towards a more equitable, carbon-neutral city?**
- ▶ **How can we best deal with health risks to drinking water and comply with the Water Framework Directive on water quality?**
- ▶ **How do we enhance water conservation and reduce wastage?**
- ▶ **How do we reduce surface water run-off to help prevent flooding (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), green roofs etc)?**
- ▶ **How do we best address the challenges of flooding?**
- ▶ **What renewable energy sources could we utilise in the city e.g. smartgrids, bioenergy, district heating?**
- ▶ **How do we increase the potential for sustainable local/ community energy projects and micro generation to both mitigate climate change and to reduce fuel poverty?**
- ▶ **What policies could we use to comply with the principles of the circular economy i.e. prevention, reuse, recycling, recovery?**
- ▶ **What practical methods can we use to improve air quality?**

# 14. Environmental Assessments

### 14.1. Introduction

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a statutory process that involves the systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the forthcoming Cork City Development Plan, before a final decision has been made to adopt it. It is carried out in parallel to the City Development Plan making process. The assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment is required by a European Parliament Directive commonly known as the SEA Directive.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is also a statutory process whereby the EU Habitats Directive requires an assessment on any plan or project that is likely to have a significant effect on the conservation status of a site that is located within or adjacent to a network of protected wildlife sites. These wildlife sites are designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPA's) – collectively known as Natura 2000 sites. The AA process, even though it is entirely separate to the SEA process, runs in parallel with the SEA process and the outcomes of the AA process will feed into and inform the SEA process.

There are a range of National Planning Framework policies also contained in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy that underpin the need and requirement for SEA and AA as part of the City Development Plan process and all must be incorporated into the new City Development Plan.



## 14.2 Trends

Climate change is a major issue and challenge that influences all walks of modern life. It is clear that the trend of ever-increasing severe weather events and extreme conditions will continue to influence how this city operates. This means that changes to how the city will operate will need to be built into the Environmental Assessment of the City Development Plan.

As has been described earlier in the section on climate change, flooding and flood prevention are serious issues of concern and the likely trend is for storms and significant flood events to become more prevalent which has major implications, especially for the city centre. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of the City Development Plan will be key to informing how the city develops in terms of land use policy guidance.



### 14.3 Important natural habitats

Cork Harbour, the River Lee as well as related water courses are vital natural water resources and ecospheres that if protected and enhanced can be used as major selling points and provide an attractive benefit to those living and working in the city. It is important that these natural habitats are protected and enhanced so that the city is seen as a place that balances the built and working environment with the protection of the natural environment. The specific Natura Sites which are relevant to the City are set out below:

#### **Special Area of Conservation**

Great Island Channel SAC (Sitecode: 001058)

#### **Special Protection Areas:**

Cork Harbour SPA (Sitecode: 004030)

#### **Proposed Natural Heritage Areas:**

- Douglas River Estuary (Sitecode: 001046)
- Glanmire Wood (Sitecode: 001054)
- Cork Lough (Sitecode: 001081)
- Lee Valley (Sitecode: 000094)
- Shournagh Valley (Sitecode: 000103)
- Ardamadane Wood (Sitecode: 001799)
- Blarney Bog (Sitecode: 001857)
- Blarney Castle Woods (Sitecode: 001039)
- Blarney Lake (Sitecode: 001798)
- Ballincollig Cave (Sitecode: 001249)

### 14.4. Challenges & Opportunities

The intake of large areas of land within the extended city boundary and how they will impact on the scale and nature of the City Development Plan will be a major consideration in terms of Strategic Environmental Assessment, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Appropriate Assessment. Ensuring that the City Development Plan allows for the development and growth of a modern city whilst balancing this with the preservation and enhancement of its natural habitats will be both a considerable challenge but also a great opportunity. The City Development Plan will need to set goals and objectives that will allow for a balanced approach in the protection and enhancement of these areas for the benefit of all in the City.

The River Lee forms a key part of one of the largest natural harbours in the world and is also host to a Tier 1 seaport. The medium to long term proposed change in use of the North and South Docklands and Tivoli Docks from port infrastructure to mixed use areas is part of an international trend that the City Development Plan will help to facilitate. The Environmental Assessment of the new City Development Plan will have to take into account the resilience of these areas in terms of strategic environmental, strategic flood risk and appropriate assessment with their proposed medium to long term change in land use.

## 14.5 Key Questions

- ▶ **What strategic environmental issues should be taken into account in the consideration of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the forthcoming Plan?**
- ▶ **An additional emphasis is to be placed on climate change and its impact on the city. How will this impact SEA, SFRA and AA?**
- ▶ **What are the implications for the increase in population and land area in terms of SEA and AA for the City Development Plan?**



[www.corkcitydevelopmentplan.ie](http://www.corkcitydevelopmentplan.ie)



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