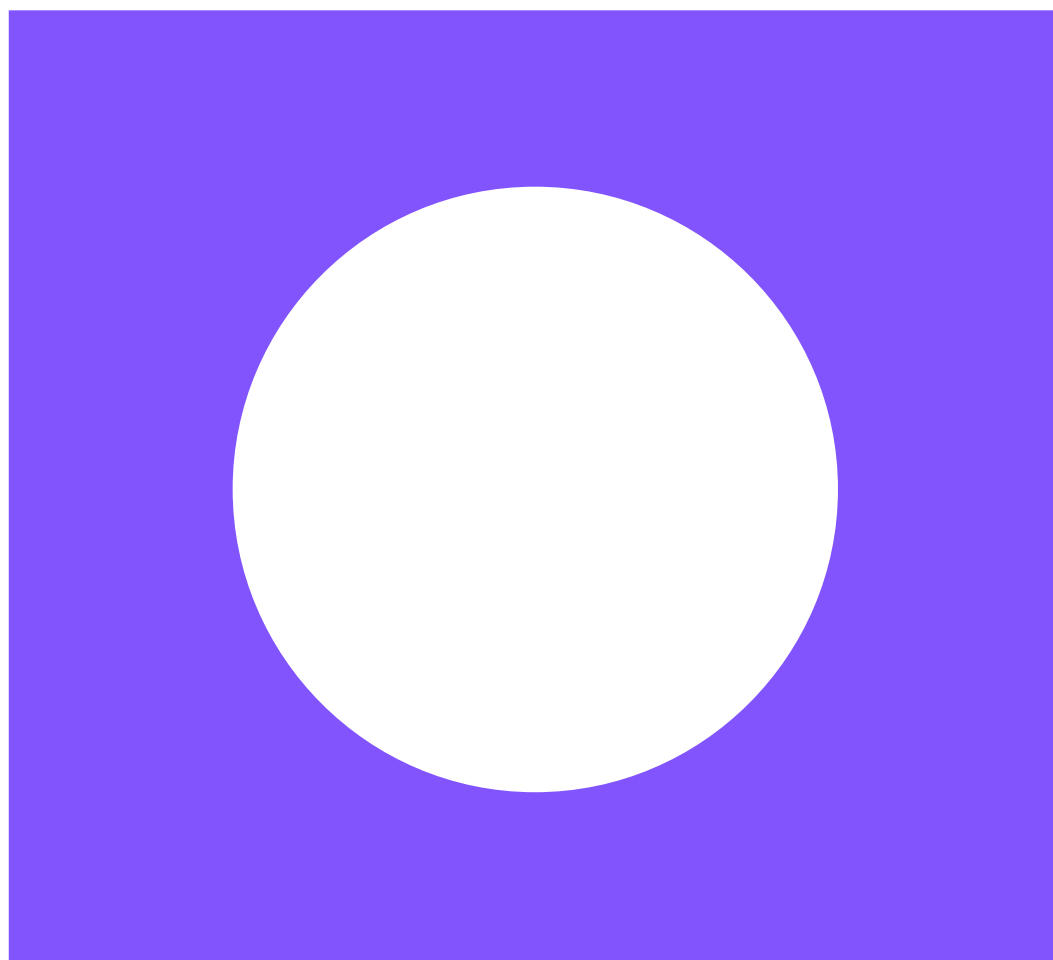




R610 St. Patrick's Junction Improvement Scheme

Planning Report

August 2026

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Mott MacDonald
5 Eastgate Avenue
Eastgate
Little Island
Co Cork T45 EE72
Ireland

T +353 (0)21 480 9800
mottmac.com

R610 St. Patrick's Junction Improvement Scheme

Planning Report

August 2026

Directors: B Williams BE (Hons) MEngSc
CEng FIEI FConsEI (Managing), R
Jefferson MSCSI MRICS BSc Dip Con
Law, T Keane BE (Hons) CEng MIET, D
Kelly BEng (Hons) CEng FIEI, J H K
Harris BSc CEng (British), C H Travers
MEng CEng (British), R Risdon, E G Roud
FCA MA (Hons) Economics (British)
Innealtóirí Comhairleach (Consulting
Engineers)
Company Secretary: S O'Donovan BBS
(Hons), CTA, FCCA
Registered in Ireland no. 53280.
Mott MacDonald Ireland Limited is a
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1 Introduction

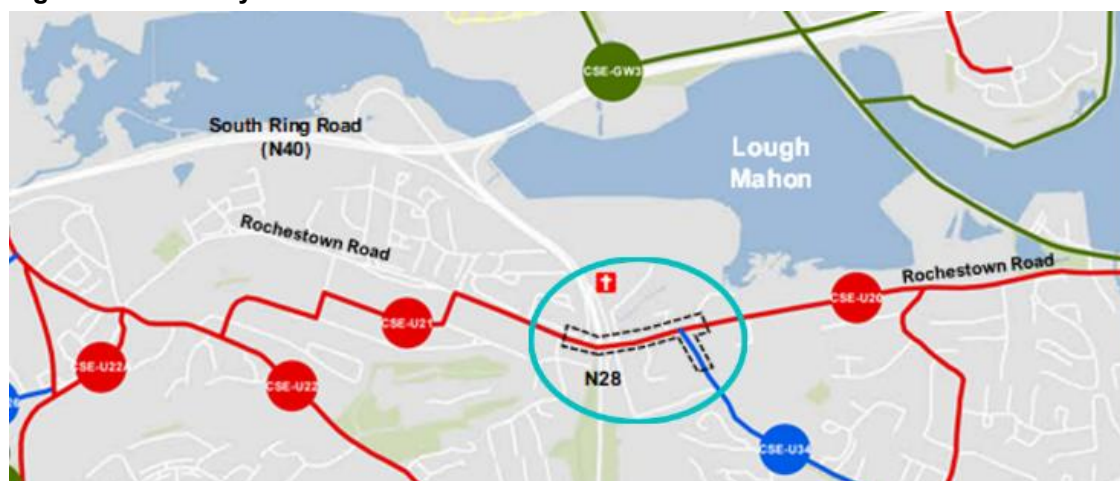
1.1 Project Overview

Mott McDonald Ireland Limited have been appointed by Cork City Council to prepare and lodge a Part 8 planning application for the construction/ delivery along a 0.4km section of Rochestown Road, between Rochestown Rise and Riverside (R610 St. Patrick's Junction Improvement Scheme), within Cork City (hereafter referred to as the "Proposed Development").

The study area is currently characterised by narrow footpaths, while also accommodating a high volume of vehicular traffic, resulting in unsafe conditions for cyclists, pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. This does not support the goal of active travel for the area.

The R610 St. Patrick's Junction Improvement Scheme aims to introduce safe, high-quality active travel infrastructure along this section of road and provides an opportunity for Cork City Council to refine the junction improvement proposals so that the junction better serves the needs of Cork City. The scheme aligns with CSE-U20 cycle route identified in the Cork Cycle Network Plan (CCNP), as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Cork Cycle Network Plan



Source: Adapted from Cork Cycle Network Plan 2017, Map U4, page 76

1.2 Site Location

The proposed development is located approximately 3km southeast of Cork city centre within the suburban area of Rochestown, within the townlands of Maryborough, Monfieldstown and Mounthovel. The proposed Active Travel Scheme will be located on Rochestown Road (R610) and Clarke's Hill (L2471). Both these sections of roads within the application boundary are located within a suburban residential area and predominately facilitate local traffic movements along Rochestown Road and into the city centre.

The R610 links Rochestown and other villages in lower Cork Harbour, to the city centre. Rochestown Road also links Douglas with the N40 South Ring Road.

The N28 intersects the route of the Proposed Development, running in a north-south direction through the area. The Proposed Development also incorporates a c.0.15km section of Clarke's Hill, with Lough Mahon being situated c.400m to the north (direct line). Lough Mahon is a

transitional waterbody which is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) as part of Cork Harbour SPA (Site code: 004030), comprising a sheltered bay system with intertidal flats and recognised as an internationally important wetland site. Cork Harbour SPA occurs approximately 100 m north of the Proposed Development at its closest point, adjacent to the junction of Rochestown Road and Riverside.

Figure 1.2: Project Location



Source: Extract from Mott MacDonald Ireland Limited drawing number 229101186-MMD-0000-XX-DR-C-0202

1.3 Project Need

The Proposed Development forms part of Cork City Council's ongoing programme to deliver a safe, connected and accessible active travel network across Cork City in accordance with the objectives of the Cork City Development Plan 2022–2028, the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), the Cork Cycle Network Plan, and broader national policy objectives relating to sustainable mobility, climate action, road safety and public health.

The Rochestown Road corridor is an important strategic movement route linking the residential communities of Rochestown and Douglas with key destinations including schools, community facilities, employment areas, public transport services, the Passage Railway Greenway and Cork City Centre. Despite its strategic role, the route currently lacks continuous and safe active travel infrastructure and is characterised by narrow footpaths, constrained pedestrian facilities, an absence of dedicated cycling infrastructure and significant traffic volumes. These factors act as barriers to walking and cycling and reduce the attractiveness of sustainable transport options.

The existing road environment requires pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable users to navigate a constrained corridor with limited separation from vehicular traffic. The absence of dedicated cycling facilities and substandard pedestrian infrastructure can discourage active travel and create conditions that are perceived as unsafe by many users, particularly children, older persons and those with mobility impairments.

A key objective of the Proposed Development is the completion of a currently missing section within the wider active travel network serving the southern suburbs of Cork City. While active travel infrastructure has been delivered in neighbouring locations, this section of the Rochestown Road remains a significant gap within the network and limits connectivity between existing and planned routes.

The provision of high-quality active travel infrastructure along this corridor is therefore necessary to address existing deficiencies in the transport network and provide a safe, attractive and accessible alternative to private vehicle use. It also provides an opportunity to deliver this section of active travel infrastructure in advance of wider future transport improvements in the area, helping to address an identified gap in the CSE-U20 cycle route identified in the Cork Cycle Network Plan (CCNP) while supporting safer and more accessible movement for all road users.

The Proposed Development seeks to address current deficiencies through the provision of segregated cycle facilities, upgraded footpaths, improved crossing opportunities and the reconfiguration of key junctions. Collectively, these measures will improve safety, connectivity, accessibility and comfort for all road users, while supporting national and local road safety objectives. The scheme will also facilitate integration with existing public transport services and future sustainable transport initiatives proposed under the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Scheme (CMATS).

1.3.1 Climate Action and Sustainable Mobility

Transport remains a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions nationally. National, regional and local policy increasingly seeks to facilitate a modal shift away from private car dependency towards more sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport. The provision of safe and direct active travel infrastructure is recognised as a critical component in achieving this transition.

The Proposed Development will support these objectives by delivering a short but important section of active travel infrastructure that form part of a wide planned network for the area. While the scheme relates to a limited section of the corridor, it provides an opportunity to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists in advance of wider transport improvements being brought forward. In doing so, it will address an existing gap in active travel provision, support the principles of the CSE-U20 cycle route, and contribute to making walking and cycling more realistic and attractive transport choices for local journeys. By enabling increased levels of active travel, the scheme will contribute to reductions in transport-related emissions, support climate resilience objectives and promote more sustainable travel behaviour.

1.3.2 Health and Wellbeing Benefits

The provision of safe walking and cycling infrastructure has well-established health, social and environmental benefits. Increased participation in active travel can contribute positively to physical activity levels, public health outcomes and community wellbeing while also reducing traffic congestion, noise and air pollution.

The Proposed Development will provide infrastructure that supports active lifestyles and improves accessibility to local services, schools, employment opportunities and recreational

amenities. This will promote social inclusion and contribute to the creation of healthier and more sustainable communities.

The Proposed Development aligns with Cork Cycle Network Plan and aims to introduce safe, high-quality active travel infrastructure along this section of road, aligning with the CSE-U20 cycle route identified in the Cork Cycle Network Plan (CCNP)," as outlined in Section 1.1 of this report.

The project aims to improve the cycling and pedestrian facilities at this strategic location between Douglas Village and the 'Cork City to Passage West' Greenway by implementing the following safety improvements which are relative to the proposal;

- Provide a continuous safe segregated cycle route on the Rochestown Road (R610) and Clarke's Hill,
- Introduce new signalised junctions and improve existing junctions along the route, particularly on the Rochestown Road, to prioritise active travel modes.
- Ensure all crossings are more conspicuous with buildouts and removal of obstructions to improve visibility for motorists and vulnerable road users.
- Increase safety and comfort for vulnerable road users through improved pedestrian infrastructure in line with DMURS principles.

1.4 Legal Context

Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (hereafter referred to as 'the Act') and Part 8 (Requirements in Respect of Specified Development by, on behalf of, or in Partnership with Local Authorities) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) (hereafter referred to as 'the Regulations'), set out the requirements of the legislation as it pertains to Local Authority Own Development (generally referred to as 'Part 8 development').

Specifically, Section 179 of the Act, states that:

179. "b) Where a local authority that is a planning authority proposes to carry out development, or development belonging to a class of development prescribed under paragraph(a) (hereafter in this section referred to as "proposed development") it shall in relation to the proposed development comply with this section and any regulations under this section."

Further to the above, Article 80 of the Regulations outlines the prescribed classes of development for the purposes of Part 8 (Section 179 of the Act). In this regard, the Proposed Development falls under the following class of development:

Article 80(1)(b) "the construction of a new road or the widening or realignment of an existing road, where the length of the new road or of the widened or realigned portion of the existing road, as the case may be, would be— in the case of a road in an urban area, 100 metres or more..."

Also applicable, is Section 80(1)(k) *"any development other than those specified in paragraphs (a) to (j), the estimated cost of which exceeds €126,000, not being development consisting of the laying underground of sewers, mains, pipes or other apparatus."*

Part 8 development proposals are subject to a public consultation process as set out in the Planning Regulations. This consultation process requires that public notices for the Proposed Development are provided in a local newspaper publication and that a site notice is erected. The public notices will set out where the plans and details of the proposal are available for inspection by the public and the dates for inspection and receiving submissions.

Any submissions or observations which are received by the Council are considered in the context of a Part 8 'Chief Executive's Report' which is subsequently prepared and is presented to the Councillors for adoption. The 'Chief Executives Report' lists those who made submissions, together with a summary of the points made in their respective submissions. The Chief Executive's Report then addresses each point which forms the Council's response. Arising from consideration of the representations, the 'Chief Executive's Report' sets out whether the Council proposes to proceed as originally planned or to proceed with a modified proposal. It is then a matter for the members of the Council (i.e., the Councillors) to grant planning or not.

This report is prepared for inclusion with the plans and particulars being made available for public inspection in accordance with the requirements of the Act and Regulations. It describes the need for, and objectives of, the Proposed Development, and provides a detailed description of it as well as outlining how the Proposed Development is considered to be in accordance with planning objectives and policies, and thus the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

1.5 Structure of Part 8 Application

The Part 8 planning application includes the following documentation listed within Table 1.1 below. All documentation is available for review and download on Cork City Council's consultation portal <https://consult.corkcity.ie/en/browse>.

Table 1.1: Application Documentation scheme

Item No.	Document Type	Document Name
1	Statutory Particulars	Site Notice
2		Newspaper Notice
3		Schedule of Drawings
4	Drawings	Drawings
5	Reports	Planning Report
6		Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report
7		Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
8		Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan

2 Description of Development

2.1 Development Description

The preliminary design which is presented in this Part 8 planning application has been prepared in accordance with the principles outlined in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), published by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) in 2013, as well as the Cycle Design Manual, published by the National Transport Authority in 2023.

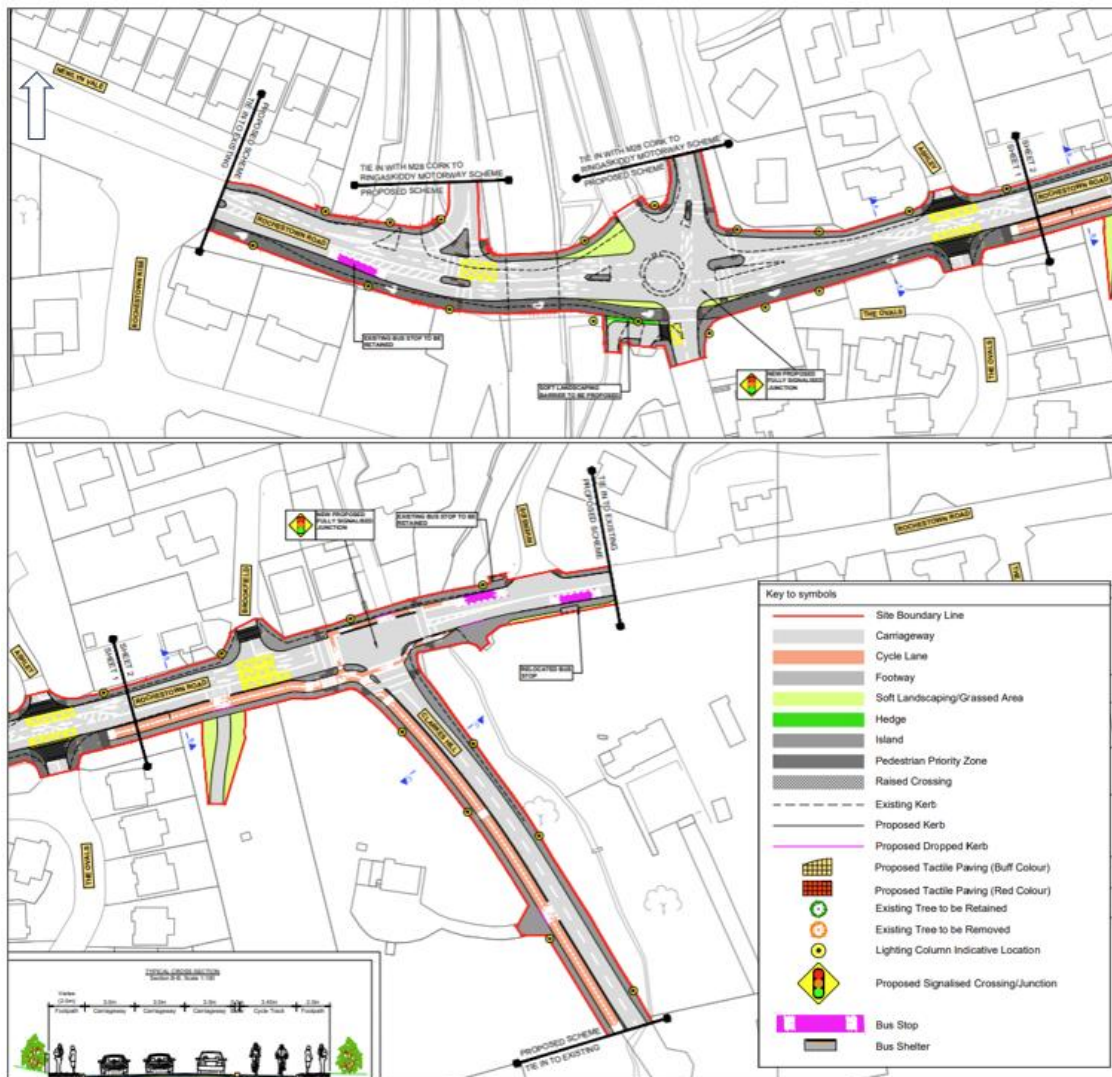
Cork City Council proposes to deliver new cycling and pedestrian infrastructure with a total scheme length of approximately 0.4 km along Rochestown Road, extending between Rochestown Rise and Riverside and a c. 0.15km section of Clarke's Hill. The proposed works are intended to enhance active travel provision, improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, and provide greater connectivity along this corridor.

The Proposed Development comprises the following principal elements:

- Provision of an upgraded road layout along approximately 0.4 km of Rochestown Road (R610) and c. 0.15 km of Clarke's Hill (L2471), comprising a 6.0 m wide carriageway together with the delivery of safe, high-quality, fully segregated cycling and pedestrian facilities along the length of the route.
 - Cycle tracks will be 2.4m wide (one way) / 3.4m wide (two-way) with 0.3m buffer; and
 - Footpath enhancement and widening up to 3m width;
- New fully signalised junction at Clarke's Hill and St. Patrick's roundabout on Rochestown Road;
- Uncontrolled raised table crossings at 4no. junctions along the route;
- Relocation of 1no. existing bus stop along Rochestown Road;
- Setback reduction of private property boundaries to facilitate provision of the cycle facilities where required; and;
- All associated works to facilitate the development e.g. upgrading and extension of storm drainage network and public lighting, provision of road signage, road markings, bollards, tactile paving, kerbing, traffic signalling and landscaping, as required.

The above proposed works are illustrated in the planning drawings accompanying this planning application.

Figure 2.1: Proposed Development



Source: Extract from Mott MacDonald Ireland Limited drawing numbers 229101186-MMD-0000-XX-DR-C-0009 and 229101186-MMD-0000-XX-DR-C-0010

2.1.1 Junction Reconfiguration

Junctions along the scheme corridor will be reconfigured, as appropriate, to maintain pedestrian and cyclist priority and to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the proposed active travel facilities. All existing junctions along the R610 Rochestown Road will be retained, with no new junctions proposed as part of the scheme.

Minor geometric and layout modifications to existing junctions will also be undertaken, where required, to improve safety and operational performance. As part of the proposed works, the Rochestown Road/Clarke's Hill junction and the St Patrick's Roundabout will be upgraded to fully signalled junctions.

In addition, the scheme will be designed to interface effectively with other existing and proposed transport initiatives, including those identified within the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), and relevant complementary projects such as the M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Motorway Project and the Clarke's Hill Road Improvement Scheme, where applicable.

2.1.2 Public Utilities and Drainage

The proposed road drainage will facilitate the efficient removal of surface and sub-surface water, while minimising the impact of runoff on the receiving environment. The principal type of drainage system will be kerb and gully, which will be integrated into the existing drainage network, with new gullies and gully connections to be installed, where required.

The design of the proposed road improvement scheme will include for the provision of road lighting for the full length of the route, tying into the existing local public lighting network. It will also include tying into other existing public utilities such as foul sewers, watermains, telecommunications and gas mains, in the vicinity of the proposed road development.

Local utility diversions and alterations will be made, as necessary, to facilitate the Proposed Development. Ducting will be provided for any future extension of services such as telecommunications and electricity.

2.1.3 Signage

Appropriate signage and road markings will be provided, as required, in accordance with the Traffic Signs Manual.

2.1.4 Vehicle Restraint Systems

Vehicle Restraint Systems (VRS) are not anticipated to be required as part of the proposed development. However, should the need for VRS be identified during detailed design, they will be designed and installed in accordance with the relevant Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Publications.

2.2 Pre-Construction Surveys

In advance of construction works, the following ecological surveys will be required to be completed.

2.2.1 Bats Emergence Surveys

Bat emergence surveys are required for trees that have been identified for potential bat roosts features. An initial survey was carried out by Mott MacDonald ecologists from the public road identifying several mature sycamore, ash and beech trees as FAR (Further Assessment Required). Access to these lands is required to carry out future survey work. Such survey should follow appropriate bat emergence survey methodology outlined in, for example, Collins (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London. These bat emergence surveys should be conducted between April and August.

2.2.2 Birds

The removal of vegetation/felling of trees, will be cleared outside of the birds nesting season (1st March to 31st August inclusive). Where vegetation removal will occur within the nesting season:

Pre-construction nest check surveys will be carried out for breeding birds prior to the felling of trees.

- Where vegetation clearance is proposed within the nesting season, a suitably qualified Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will conduct pre-construction surveys to assess risk of disturbance to nesting birds to inform vegetation clearance activity.

- In the event where pre-construction surveys confirm or presume nesting birds are present, an exclusion zone will be established around the nesting bird (to include the risk of abandonment due to indirect disturbance), and no vegetation clearance may proceed until young have fledged, or nesting has failed.
- Pre-construction confirmatory surveys will be undertaken no more than 72 hours before clearance, after which repeat surveys will be required if vegetation has not been cleared.

2.2.3 Invasive species

No invasive species listed on part 1 of SI 374/2024 European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 were recorded during the walkover survey.

2.3 Construction Activities

2.3.1 Road Closures/Re-Alignments

The works required for the Proposed Development do not include, and do not necessitate, the extinguishment of any public rights of way, and no permanent road closures are proposed. Notwithstanding this, the scheme will involve the reallocation of existing carriageway and roadside space to accommodate the proposed active travel facilities.

The proposed realignment may necessitate the acquisition of limited areas of private land. It is estimated that two adjacent properties along Rochestown Road may be affected by the proposed works. Any associated land-take would be required solely to facilitate the delivery of the proposed active travel upgrades along the route.

Traffic management measures will be required during the construction phase of the proposed works. A detailed Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared by the Contractor and submitted for review, consultation and agreement with An Garda Síochána and Cork City Council, in advance of the commencement of construction works.

The Traffic Management Plan will be prepared in full compliance with the requirements of "Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual" (Temporary Traffic Measures and Signs for Roadworks), issued by the Department of Transport.

The Contractor will also be required to take account of the "Guidance for the Control and Management of Traffic at Road Works", issued by the Department of Transport, in the implementation of the TMP, as well as the "Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads" issued by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport".

2.3.2 Tree Removal

Following a tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment it was concluded that 39 trees will be required to be removed (both individual trees and grouped trees), in order to facilitate the Proposed Development. This will necessitate part removal of two groups of trees totalling up to 21 trees. Holly, blackthorn, and beech trees will be retained, where possible. All trees were categorised as category 'B' (moderate value) with the exception of one ash tree which was categorised as 'U' (low value) due to visible rot.

All trees which are scheduled for removal are located within an existing private residential property. Each tree to be removed will be marked (red spray paint) ahead of work commencing.

2.3.3 Earthworks/Excavation

Limited earthworks are anticipated to facilitate the construction of widened sections of Rochestown Road and Clarke's Hill, where segregated pedestrian and cycle facilities are

proposed. It is anticipated that excavation works will be required adjacent to existing retaining walls to facilitate the proposed road widening. In addition, new retaining walls may be required at certain locations to retain the existing earth embankments adjoining the road corridor. It is anticipated that topsoil will be required in newly developed areas adjacent to the carriageway to support appropriate landscaping, and in locations where portions of private gardens have been acquired, in order to restore and retain the existing landscape character.

2.3.4 Demolition

It is anticipated that there are sections of existing boundary walls that will need to be demolished in order to facilitate the slight realignment and/or widening of the road to accommodate the proposed cycle and pedestrian facilities in some locations along the route. No house or building will be required to be demolished.

2.3.5 Temporary lighting

Any temporary lighting associated with the construction works will be placed strategically by the Contractor following consultation with the ECoW, such that illumination beyond the works area is controlled and kept to a minimum. Lighting will be cowled and directional, to reduce significant light splay. Lighting will be directed away from potential bat roost features and foraging habitat.

Conditions following NPWS derogation licences (if required) will be followed.

2.4 Construction Programme

The construction of the Proposed Development is anticipated to commence in July 2027, with an approximate duration of six months, with completion scheduled for December 2027.

3 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Introduction

The strategic context and need for the Proposed Development are supported by planning policies and objectives at European, national, regional and local level. This chapter outlines such policies and objectives and highlights how the Proposed Development is considered to be in line with the commitments and objects they set out. This chapter also outlines the relevant land use considerations pertinent to the Proposed Development, as set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, and the planning history of the 'site' and surrounds

3.2 European Policy Context

3.2.1 Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy – putting European transport on track for the future

In December 2020, The European Commission released a communication outlining the Europeans Union's aim to ensure that the transport system is resilient against any future crisis. The communication acknowledges that Mobility in Europe 'should be based on an efficient and interconnected multimodal transport system', and that 'more active mobility in greener cities' will contribute to the health and wellbeing of citizens. In line with this, it is acknowledged that it is important to ensure that this mobility is accessible to all, in terms of affordability and accessibility, and ensuring that rural areas are well connected.

A doubling of cycling infrastructure is also identified as an objective within the communication, to look towards having 5000km of safe bike lanes by 2030. In conjunction with this, the safety of the transport system is also key to achieving the overall aims of the Commission, which is to meet the goal of '*zero fatalities from mobility*'.

Project Response

The Proposed Development aligns with the European Commission's effort to provide 5000km of cycling infrastructure, while also ensuring there is a safe route option for those wishing to travel by foot or bike, as it will include segregated facilities for sustainable travel modes. The Proposed Development will also link with public transport networks, facilitating an increasingly interconnected system. By increasing facilities for active travel, more people will be encouraged to look at travel options other than that private car, therefore assisting in decreasing mobility related accidents and mortality

3.2.2 White Paper 2011 – Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system

The 2011 White Paper outlines the 40 concrete initiatives adopted by the European Commission with the vision of building a competitive transport system that will 'increase mobility, remove major barriers in key areas and fuel growth and employment' within wider Europe, while also cutting transport related carbon emissions by 60% by 2050.

Within this White Paper, it is acknowledged that having the option to walk or cycle is important to having cleaner cities, and therefore an increase in these modes of transport will assist in reducing carbon emissions. It notes that walking and cycling should become '*an integral part of urban mobility and infrastructure design*'.

Project Response

The Proposed Development is a pedestrian and cycle route, that will facilitate an increase in uptake of these modes. The Proposed Development is located in an area that is currently lacking in this infrastructure and is unsafe for active travel modes. Providing such infrastructure will assist in realising the goal to cut transport related emission as active travel modes become safer and more available, encouraging the uptake of cleaner modes of transport

3.2.3 The New European Urban Mobility Framework

The European Commission released The New Urban Mobility Framework in December 2021. This Framework was introduced to support the 'European Green Deal', and outlines guidance on local actions to support the implementation of sustainable mobility measures. The framework acknowledges that *"the transition to safe, accessible, inclusive, smart, resilient and zero emission urban mobility requires a clear focus on active, collective and shared mobility underpinned by low- and zero-emission solutions"* with a focus on the provision of active travel infrastructure and encouraging citizens to use active travel particularly in the first and last mile of their journeys.

Project Response

The Proposed Development will allow for the provision of active travel infrastructure in a currently car-dominated location within Cork City. The introduction of this infrastructure will allow for active travel to become a viable option in the area and will encourage the use of walking and cycling as the Proposed Development will allow for safe use of these modes.

3.3 National Planning Context

3.3.1 National Planning Framework - First Revision

The First Revision of the National Planning Framework (NPF) was approved by both houses of the Oireachtas on 30 April 2025 and represents the first revision of the document since its original publication in February 2018. The NPF First Revision supersedes the original NPF providing the State's current position on national planning policy. This revision was required due to key drivers of change within the State in the intervening years since

The NPF maintains the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) established in the previous policy. NSO 5 focuses on 'Sustainable Mobility', which outlines that major cities are too heavily dependent on car-based transport, which is increasing both congestion and carbon emissions. In this regard, the DNPF notes that *"The National Development Plan makes provision for transformational investment in public transport and sustainable mobility solutions in the main urban centres that will progressively put in place a more sustainable alternative"*. The NPF notes the following as the objective of this NSO:

- Expand attractive public transport alternatives to car transport to reduce congestion and emissions and enable the transport sector to cater for the demands associated with longer term population and employment growth in a sustainable manner through the following measures:
 - Provide public transport infrastructure and services to meet the needs of regional growth centres, key towns, large towns and smaller towns, villages and rural areas;
 - Develop a comprehensive network of safe cycling routes in metropolitan areas to address travel needs and to provide similar facilities in towns and villages where appropriate, in line with the NTA's CycleConnects plan.

- Improve connections and walking routes in accordance with the principles of universal design so as to optimise journeys undertaken by foot and enhance pedestrian comfort and safety
- Enable more effective traffic management within and around cities and towns through demand management measures including the re-allocation of urban road-space in favour of bus-based public transport services, shared mobility services and walking/cycling facilities; Maintain the ambition of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy as well as a focus on delivery through current and future Action Plans to 2030, and across the lifetime of the NPF

The NPF also provides a number of National Policy Objectives (NPOs), designed to guide the prioritisation of certain development. Those outlined below are considered relevant to the Proposed Development:

- **National Policy Objective 10** Deliver Transport Orientated Development (TOD) at scale at suitable locations, served by high-capacity public transport and located within or adjacent to the built up area of the five cities or a metropolitan town.
- **National Policy Objective 12** Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.
- **National Policy Objective 36** Support the objectives of public health policy including the Healthy Ireland Framework and the National Physical Activity Plan, though integrating such policies, where appropriate and at the applicable scale, with planning policy.
- **National Policy Objective 37** Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments, and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.
- **National Policy Objective 38** Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services
- **National Policy Objective 66** The planning system will be responsive to our national environmental challenges and ensure that development occurs within environmental limits, having regard to the medium and longer-term requirements of all relevant environmental and climate legislation and the sustainable management of our natural capital.
- **National Policy Objective 93** Improve air quality and help prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling as more favourable modes of transport to the private car, the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green and blue infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions

Project Response

The Proposed Development will support the objectives of the NPF as it will provide for additional active travel infrastructure, facilitating the uptake of walking and cycling infrastructure within an existing suburban area. The Proposed Development will make cycling and walking more accessible and safer for the local community, and provide an alternative to the private car, particularly for shorter journeys. This will retrospectively support NPO 10 as it will provide high quality infrastructure in an established urban area. This will also support NPOs 12, 37 and 38. The Proposed Development will also assist in reducing the number of journeys taken by private car, which will facilitate a reduction in the carbon emissions - which will support NPO 90.

In respect of NPO 36, section 3.3 of this planning report outlines how the Proposed Development will support a range of national policy documents, including the Healthy Ireland Framework and the National Physical Activity Plan.

3.3.2 National Development Plan 2021-2030 (including 2025 Review)

The National Development Plan (NDP) accompanies the NPF, and outlines priorities for investment which underpin the implementation of the NPF. The NDP acknowledges that *“a shift away from the private car to greater use of active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport”* is integral to the realisation of NSO 4 Sustainable Mobility and encouraging people to increase their use of these modes is a ‘major element’ of the NDP.

The delivery of significant additional walking and cycling infrastructure is also outlined, with a commitment to spend approximately €360 million per year to invest in *“walking and cycling infrastructure in cities, towns and villages across the country, including Greenways”*, with a target of approximately 700km of cycling and walking infrastructure across Ireland's five cities.

The National Development Plan Review 2025 notes that there has been significant investment into Active Travel in recent years, and that *“Low Carbon Transport”* will continue to be a priority.

Project Response

The Proposed Development is a direct response to the NDP target of delivering approximately 700km of walking and cycling infrastructure across cities nationwide. The implementation of this infrastructure will assist in the modal shift to encourage greater active travel journeys across Cork city through the provision of an approximate 0.55km cycling and walking network.

3.3.3 Climate Action Plan

The initial Climate Action Plan was published in 2019, building on the policy framework of National Mitigation Plan and Project Ireland 2040. The Climate Action Plan is integral to the National Development Plan and illustrates how climate solutions are central to the country's social and economic development.

Following the enactment of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 (Climate Act 2021) each CAP sets out a roadmap of actions on how it will achieve the commitment to 2030 emission reduction targets, increasing the proportion of electricity from renewable sources to 80% and reaching net zero by 2050. Updates to the initial CAP have been prepared in 2021, 2023, 2024 and 2024 (CAP25 was approved by Government in April 2025).

To support the above ambitions, the plan outlines a number of actions that are relevant to the Proposed Development as set out in each CAP, post the enactment of the Climate Act 2021, these are discussed below.

CAP21

CAP21 notes that the actions within the transport sector are focused on the modal shift to low carbon transport such as public and active transport. CAP21 acknowledges that this shift to active travel will not only reduce carbon emissions but also provide health benefits and improve air quality. In this regard, CAP21 notes that in order to meet the 2025 emission reduction targets, an additional 500,000 daily public transport and active travel journeys will need to be provided for.

CAP23

CAP23 continues to support the shift toward active travel, supported both the carbon emission reductions and health benefits it can present. It is also noted that the increased active travel options can support the transport sector in meeting the 30% GHG emission reduction targets.

CAP 23 also adopts an 'Avoid- Shift- Improve' approach which looks at 'reducing or avoiding the need for travel, shifting to public transport, walking and cycling and improving the energy efficiency of vehicles' and 'to connect people and places with sustainable mobility that is safe, green, accessible and efficient'. CAP23 outlines outcome focused indicators for the years 2025 and 2030. Those relevant to the Proposed Development are outlined below:

- Drive implementation and acceleration of identified measures to reduce car kilometres, guided by the SMP [Sustainable Mobility Policy] action plan and a new National Demand Management Strategy
- Communicate and demonstrate the well-being and co-benefits that accompany enhanced place-making and sustainable transport behaviour
- Expand the number of safe, accessible, walking and cycling routes, including through the provision of 500 Safe Routes to School schemes and the rollout of over 1,000 kilometres in active travel infrastructure
- Work with key stakeholders to implement the National Planning Framework (NPF), focusing on improving placemaking and accessibility
- Enhance the integration of sustainable transport considerations into the spatial planning system
- Improve air quality, particularly through the transition of our vehicle fleets along with reduced car dependency

These actions will be continued into 2030, when the following actions will also be implemented:

- Address transport poverty through the Connecting Ireland programme and by prioritising public transport projects and demand responsive services that enhance regional and rural connectivity
- Communicate the benefits of a shift away from private car usage and facilitate the provision of the required infrastructure and services to bring about a very significant modal shift to public transport and active travel, and away from car journeys (internal combustion engine and electric vehicle (EV))

CAP 24

Climate Action Plan 2024 builds upon the previous plans by refining and updating the measures and actions required to deliver the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The Plan provides a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021.

In respect of Active Travel, CAP24 reiterates the commitment to prioritising active travel for both environmental and personal health benefits. It is noted that *"the provision of safe and accessible walking and cycling infrastructure is key to encouraging modal shift away from private car use and towards walking and cycling. The role of local authorities in the development of active travel infrastructure cannot be overstated, and the increase in the capacity of active travel teams has already helped to deliver hundreds of kilometres of new and improved cycling and walking infrastructure around the country."*

The provision of such infrastructure is noted as being 'critical'.

CAP 25

CAP 25 acknowledges that Transport is a key sector to targeting emission reductions, noting that the remaining sectoral emission budgets will require "an unprecedented 12.4% decrease in emissions" in the sector in 2025, including a key target of a *"20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres travelled relative to business-as-usual, a 50% reduction in fuel usage, and significant increases to sustainable transport trips and modal share"*. As stated in CAP 24, it is noted that

“Local authorities have an integral and critical role in decarbonising transport, through the spatial and land-use planning system, promoting public transport-oriented development, ensuring permeability for active modes...”

The actions in CAP 25 are a continuation of those provided in the previous iterations of CAP. Whilst the majority of these actions are strategic, the Annex of Actions lists the measure titled *“Active Travel Infrastructure Programme”*. This measure has a related action - TR/25/7 which seeks to *“Advance roll-out of walking/cycling infrastructure in line with National Cycle Network and CycleConnects plans”*, with a documented output to *“deliver 200km of walking and cycling infrastructure over the course of 2025”*

Project Response

The Proposed Development aligns with the actions outlined in all iterations of CAP. The Proposed Development will provide enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure into a currently car dominated area within the city. This will remove primary barriers to walking and cycling, allowing for active travel to become a safe and accessible alternative to the private car. As walking and cycling becomes an attractive alternative, this will encourage private car usage to decrease and in turn see improvements in levels of congestion, emissions, air quality and urban environment, assisting in meeting the sector specific climate targets.

3.3.4 National Sustainable Mobility Policy 2026-2030

The National Sustainable Mobility Policy (NSMP) 2026-2030 outlines a number of policies which are envisioned to make it easier for people to travel by more sustainable means, like walking, cycling or public transport. In line with the NPF, the NSMP commits to a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. The overall target of the policy is to *“deliver at least 500,000 additional daily active travel and public transport journeys and a 10% reduction in kilometres driven by fossil fuelled cars by 2030 in line with metrics for transport set out in the Climate Action Plan 2021”*.

To support this, the NSMP is guided by three key principals, underpinned by 10 high level goals:

Safe and Green Mobility

- Improve mobility safety
- Decarbonise public transport
- Expand availability of sustainable mobility in metropolitan areas
- Expand availability of sustainable mobility in regional and rural areas
- Encourage people to choose sustainable mobility over the private car

People Focused Mobility

- Take a whole of journey approach to mobility, promoting inclusive access for all
- Design infrastructure according to Universal Design Principles and the Hierarchy of Road Users model
- Promote sustainable mobility through research and citizen engagement

Better Integrated Mobility

- Better integrate land use and transport planning at all levels
- Promote smart and integrated mobility through innovative technologies and development of appropriate regulation

Project Response

The increase in journeys taken by active travel modes, such as the subject Proposed Development, is one of the main focuses of the NSMP. The Proposed Development will provide infrastructure to facilitate safe and accessible walking and cycling, encouraging people to walk and cycle, thus decreasing the use of private vehicles.

The Proposed Development will be integrated with existing public transport, and other active travel routes, which will facilitate a cohesive, active and public transport network. This will facilitate an increase in use of these sustainable travel modes for end-to-end journeys, which may encourage a decrease in use of the private car.

3.3.5 National Physical Activity Framework and Plan 2024-2040

The National Physical Activity Framework and accompanying Plan was published in October 2025 aims to Build on the progress of the 2016 National Physical Activity Plan; the new Framework and Plan strengthens cross-sector collaboration and focuses on practical, measurable action. The Framework seeks to ensure the benefits of a physically active society are numerous and profound. Individual wellbeing, physically and mentally, are enhanced and developed with consequential social economic and environmental improvement across all of society. The accompanying Plan will assess progress towards the achievement of the physical activity objectives within the Framework.

The National Physical Activity Framework vision is to have, by 2040, the most physically active population in Europe, across all age groups and all sectors of society. To achieve this goal we will create enabling environments for everybody to enjoy physically active lifestyles, throughout their daily lives, with consequent benefits for both the individual and society.

Project Response

The Proposed Development will support the aims and vision of The National Physical Activity Framework by providing a dedicated walking and cycling route. This route will ensure that active travel is a viable option which in turn will help to promote and enhance physically active lifestyles and modes of transport.

3.3.6 Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 2025

The Healthy Ireland Framework provides a cross-government focus on a Healthy Ireland, where *“everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone’s responsibility”*.

The Framework acknowledges that active travel is a key factor in wellbeing, and that encouraging walking and cycling in urban areas is a priority focus.

Project Response

The Proposed Development is a dedicated walking and cycling route within the urban environment and will facilitate active travel as a viable option for those served by this route. This will aid an uptake of active travel, which will in turn assist in increasing levels of wellbeing and overall physical activity within the community.

3.3.7 National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland

The National Investment Framework for Transport Ireland (NIFRTI) aims to ensure that the transport system can respond to the demand that will come as result of population growth

during the period to 2040. The Framework acknowledges that the promotion of Active Travel and public transport is encouraged *“ahead of solutions reliant on private transport.”*

This includes the development of cycling infrastructure and sustainable mobility, in an effort to reduce greenhouse gasses and transport related emissions. Active Travel is placed number one on their Modal Hierarchy, taking priority over both public transport and private vehicles, and the expansion of walking and cycling infrastructure to combat urban congestion is highlighted as a key investment priority.

Project Response

The NIFRTI outlines Active Travel as its number one preference in the modal hierarchy and outlines the expansion of associated infrastructure as an investment priority. A strong active travel network will increase the likelihood of people using active modes of travel as it becomes safer and more accessible. The Proposed Development will also link with the existing public transport network, increasing the likelihood of people using active and public transport for end-to-end journeys. The Proposed Development is directly in line with these priorities, as it will expand on the active travel infrastructure in the city. An uptake in engagement with active travel will assist in decreasing levels of congestion and associated issues (e.g. noise, emissions pollution).

3.3.8 Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 and Phase 2 Action Plan 2025–2027

The Road Safety Strategy (RSS) is the fifth update to national road safety plans by the Road Safety Authority and outlines a strategy to achieve ‘Vision Zero’, eradicating road traffic accidents and serious injuries by 2050. The RSS outlines the need for delivering high quality infrastructure for all road users, as acknowledged within the seven Safe System priority intervention areas and aims:

- **Safe Roads and Roadsides** To improve the protective quality of our roads and infrastructure
- **Safe speeds** To reduce speeds to safe, appropriate levels for the roads being used, and the road users using them
- **Safe vehicles** To enhance the safety features and roadworthiness of vehicles on our roads
- **Safe road use** To improve road user standards and behaviours in line with traffic legislation, supported by enforcement
- **Post-crash response** To improve the treatment and rehabilitation of collision casualties
- **Safe and healthy modes of travel** To promote and protect road users engaging in public or active transport
- **Safe work-related road use** To improve safety management of work-related journeys

Under the *‘Safe and Healthy modes of travel’* intervention area this RSS notes that the implementation of an “active travel infrastructure scheme for local authorities” should continue, and the modal shift towards increased walking, cycling and public transport is encouraged. It is further noted that *“provision of safe, segregated infrastructure to facilitate modal shift towards active travel”* is a critical success factor that, if not achieved, will present a significant barriers to the progression of the RSS overall.

Within the Phase 2 Action Plan 2025-2027 the following Primary Actions are considered relevant

- 1a. Implement 500 kilometres of new, or upgraded, segregated active travel infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists.

- 1b. Upgrade 500 junctions or crossings to facilitate active travel modes through the provision of improved crossing facilities and speed reduction of vehicles.

Project Response

The Proposed Development supports the priorities of the Road Safety Strategy and Phase 2 Action Plan as it will provide segregated walking and cycling infrastructure that will increase the quality of the urban area and prioritise vulnerable road users. In addition, the Proposed Development will provide for the upgrade of pedestrian crossings, signalised junctions, road marking and overall footpath quality, which will increase overall road safety and ensure walking, cycling and public transport is prioritised.

3.3.9 TII Sustainability Implementation Plan – Our Future

Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) sustainability Implementation Plan published in March 2024 outlines the organisations vision to lead in the delivery and operation of sustainable transport, enabling public transport networks to drive inclusive growth, create job opportunities, enhance the well-being of all persons including vulnerable groups, strengthen resilience to address climate change, maintain the TII's commitment to the environment and continue to prioritise safety.

TII have six sustainability policies which ensure that the Sustainability Implementation Plan is delivered, these are:

- Provide effective, efficient and equitable mobility
- Enable safe and resilient networks and services
- Collaborate for a holistic approach
- Deliver end-to-end improvements
- Transition to net zero
- Create total value for society

The Plan recognises the need for evolving change within the transport system to ensure sustainable transport solutions are provided, it seeks to provide in the next five years "expansion of access for all to active travel e.g. cycle lanes, footpaths, greenways and segregated from other modes where possible". Within the next 10 years it seeks to provide "cycling and walking to be safe, enjoyable and accessible and the first choice for local journeys (combined with public transport for longer journeys)", *"reduced impact of vehicles in our towns and city centres, enabling more attractive and accessible public spaces"* and *"visibly more space within our towns and villages, enhancing safety of movement and liveability"*.

Project Response

The Proposed Development is aligned with TII's Sustainability Implementation Plan, as it will provide segregated walking and cycling infrastructure that will enhance the public realm and ensure the safety of vulnerable road users is prioritised. The proposal will also provide for public lighting, pedestrian crossings and footpath enhancement, which will ensure that active travel is a safe, attractive alternative to the private car that can be used by the surrounding community.

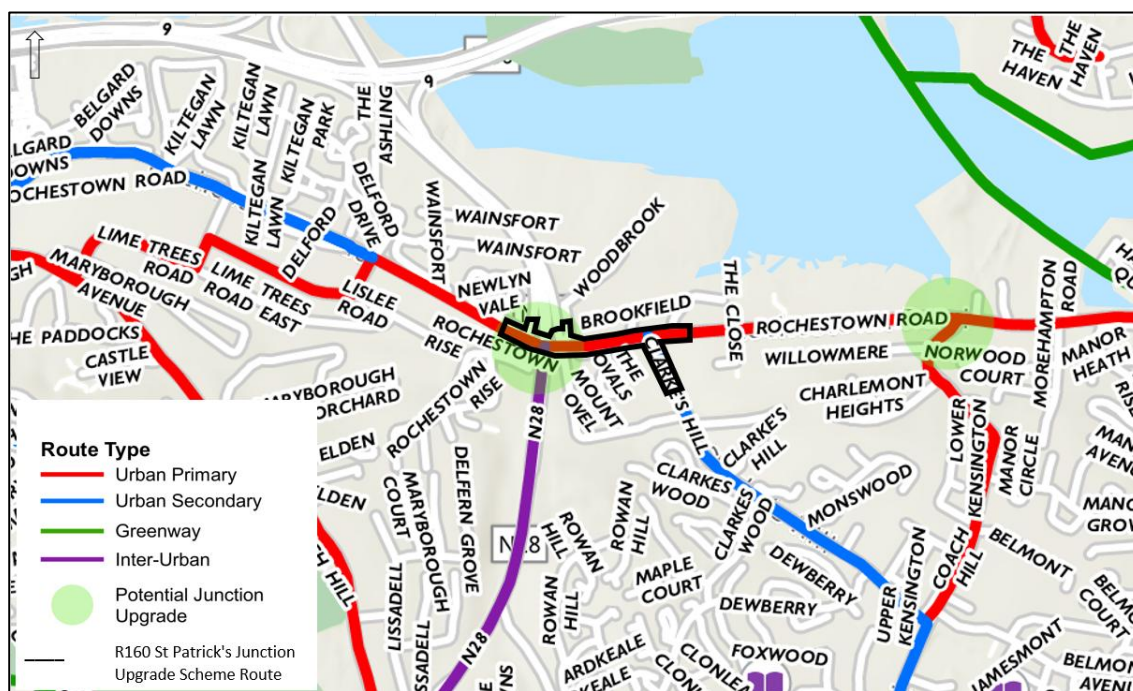
3.3.10 Cycle Connect: Ireland's Cycle Network

CycleConnects: Ireland's Cycle Network aims to improve sustainable travel by providing the potential for more trips on a safe, accessible and convenient cycling network, connecting more people to more places.

Proposals for cycling links in key cities, towns and villages in each county, are included in the plan, in addition to connections between the larger towns, villages and settlements. The plan

also incorporates existing and planned cycle routes such as greenways and blueways. For the Cork area, CycleConnects provides maps of the County and Metropolitan Proposed Cycle networks. The Proposed Development is included within these maps as an Urban Primary Route (the Clarks Hill section of the route is classes as an Urban Secondary Route) as shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Cork Metropolitan Area Proposed Cycle networks



Source: County Cycle Network, Proposed Cork City Cycle Network,

The Technical Note accompanying these maps notes that the provision of cycling networks across Cork is aligned with National and Regional policies and plans (Including the Cork City Development Plan and Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy). The Technical Note also states that Urban Primary Route corridors were identified to “*accommodate a high volume of cyclists typical in most urban areas. These will look to feature on major desire lines in town centres and form distinctive radial and orbital cycle routes in the major towns and cities. These primary routes should also form a cohesive and connected network within the urban area that will be simple for cyclists to navigate*”. Urban Secondary Routes were identified to connect to Primary Routes and add greater route density through residential, school and employment areas.

The overall Cycle Connect report notes the development of a cohesive cycle network will provide for “*physical health benefits, reduced dependence on fossil fuels and mitigating climate impacts*”. It is also noted that the promotion of cycling and improved cycling infrastructure will provide social and economic benefits.

Project Response

The Proposed Development is directly aligned with the objectives of CycleConnects: Ireland's Cycle Network. The scheme forms part of the proposed Cork Metropolitan Area cycle network mapped as both an Urban Primary Route and an Urban Secondary Route. By delivering high-quality, segregated walking and cycling infrastructure along this corridor, the Proposed Development will strengthen network connectivity, improve accessibility and safety for all users, and support greater uptake of active travel. The scheme will enhance connections between

residential areas, local services, public transport and the wider active travel network, delivering the social, health and environmental benefits associated with the development of a coherent and connected cycle network.

3.4 Regional Policy Context

3.4.1 Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032

The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) is a 12-year framework to guide development across the Southern Region and supports the delivery of both the NPF and NDP. The strategic vision of the RSES is to, among others, “Make the Southern Region one of Europe’s most creative, innovative, greenest and liveable regions”. The RSES outlines a number of Regional Policy Objectives, the following relevant to the Proposed Development:

RPO4 Infrastructure Investment: Infrastructure investment shall be aligned with the spatial planning strategy of the RSES.

RPO10 Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas: To achieve compact growth, the RSES seeks to: Prioritise housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.

RPO91 Decarbonisation of the Transport Sector: It is an objective to: Pursue policies to reduce reliance on private cars and achieve modal shift to sustainable transportation in conjunction with policies to achieve compact growth and reduce congestion.

RPO 130 Air Quality: It is an objective to: Improve and maintain good air quality and help prevent harmful effects on human health and the environment in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions and promotion of measures that improve air quality including provision and management of green areas and vegetation.

RPO152 Local Planning Objective: It is an objective to:

- Deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes, increasing with place context value as per the provisions of the Design Manual for Roads and Streets, to create accessible, attractive, vibrant and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life
- Planning at the local level will prioritise walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres, public transport services, and other services at the local level such as schools
- New development areas will be permeable for walking and cycling and the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling facilities shall be undertaken where practicable in existing neighbourhoods, to give a competitive advantage to these modes

RPO160 Smart and Sustainable Mobility: It is an objective to deliver on NSO: Sustainable Mobility subject to the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes. This includes the following sustainable mobility investment actions:

- Support initiatives under the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport to reduce congestion in our Region’s cities primarily by enhancing sustainable travel options through Smarter Travel projects that include traffic management, bus priority, urban cycling and urban walking routes

- Delivery of sustainable comprehensive cycling and walking networks with an emphasis on Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford metropolitan areas

RPO163 Sustainable Mobility Targets: It is an objective that:

- Through effective integration of land-use and transport planning, implementation of RPOs in the RSES and MASPs and actions driven through Development Plan, Local Area Plan, Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and Local Transport Plans, significant progress is sought for the Southern Region to reduce the modal share of private car travel and increase the modal share of travel by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing.
- National Smarter Travel Targets are supported which seek to achieve a reduction of work related commuting by private car to 45% of modal share by 2020 and commuting by walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing to 55% of modal share by 2020. Such targets are nationwide average targets and higher achievement under lower tiered plans such as for metropolitan areas are supported.

RPO 174 Walking and Cycling: The following walking and cycling objectives are supported and will guide investment subject to the required appraisal:

- Delivery of the cycle network set out in the three regional cities' metropolitan area Cycle Network Plans, inclusive of key commuter routes and greenways subject to SEA and AA where required
- Delivery of cycle routes, Greenway and Blueway corridor projects (subject to appropriate site selection and environmental assessment processes), having regard to the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways July 2018
- Delivery of high-quality safe cycle route network across the Region and cycling environments (applicable to cities, towns and villages) with provision for segregated cycle tracks
- Development of a safe cycling infrastructure to cater for the needs of all groups of cyclists, especially new cyclists, school children, elderly etc
- Greenways in the Region shall be linked up to a network to improve connectivity within the Region for walking routes and commuter cyclists in addition to recreational amenity functions
- A cycle network that is coherent, continuous and safe, particularly when going through busy junctions
- Enhance pedestrian facilities in all urban areas in the region Also, within the RSES, there are several transport priorities outlined for the Cork Metropolitan Area. Within Section 6.3.6.3 Transport Priorities for the Cork Metropolitan Area, the following are outlined:
 - e) The development of a metropolitan wide cycle network focused on the City, its environs and metropolitan area towns, and connectivity between the City and its metropolitan area towns, catering for a range of journey purposes:
 - Support the provision of segregated walkways and cycleways
 - Support the delivery of east-west greenway through the city centre, connecting major employment/education hubs to large commuter towns like Ballincollig and Carrigaline (Lee to See Greenway)
 - Support walking and cycle connectivity and infrastructure to amenities such as Ballincollig Regional Park from the city centre.
 - Support walking and cycling connectivity and infrastructure connecting the Cork Docklands and Tivoli regeneration areas to the city centre and other strategic employment locations

Cork MASP Policy Objective 8: Subject to the finalisation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transportation Strategy (CMATS) and the outcomes of required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment processes including SEA/AA as appropriate:

- Walking: Make Cork the most walkable city in Ireland, implement and further develop upon the Cork City Walking Strategy 2013-2018 and strengthen the role of walking through improved walkability, with a particular focus on new development areas, access to services at the local level and improved pedestrian accessibility to and within the City Centre area, Town/District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres. Seek and support greenways for walking in addition to cycling.
- Cycling: Implement and further develop upon the Cork Metropolitan Area Cycle Network Plan 2017, invest in infrastructure to support the integration of the cycle networks throughout the Cork Metropolitan Area and region, improve and develop primary, secondary, greenway (including the Lee to Sea Greenway) and feeder cycle networks and support cycling through provision of a high proportion of segregated cycleways to provide a safe infrastructure for all.

Project Response

A safe, sustainable transport network is central to many of the aims of the RSES and the Proposed Development will align with this as it will provide walking and cycling infrastructure to an area that is currently lacking in adequate provisions.

In support of RPOs 152, 160, 163 and 174; the Proposed Development will provide segregated walking and cycling infrastructure which will make these modes of transport safer and more accessible, particularly for vulnerable road users. In turn, this will allow for increased permeability through the neighbourhoods along the route, while also connecting with the wider BusConnects network. This will make sustainable travel viable for longer journeys, and also create a better sense of place for those in the area as it allows for a more active streetscape and passive surveillance. As the safety and attractiveness of these modes of transport increase, there will be a greater uptake of walking and cycling supporting wider reduction on car dependency.

In addition, the uptake of sustainable modes of transport will assist in supporting RPOs 91 and 130. As reliance on the private car reduced, so will issues relating to air quality and congestion and quality of life for those in the area will increase. In support of the MASP objective 8, the route will serve residential areas.

3.5 Local Policy Context

3.5.1 Cork City Development Plan 2022- 2028

The Proposed Development is located within the functional area of Cork City Council and is subject to the planning policies and objectives of the Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028 (CCDP). The CCDP outlines a strategic vision for Cork City, which is that Cork will *“take its place as a world class city, driving local and regional growth, embracing diversity and inclusiveness and growing as a resilient, healthy, age-friendly and sustainable compact city with placemaking, communities and quality of life at its heart.”* To achieve this vision, the CCDP outlines key strategic principals and objectives, of which the following are relevant to the Proposed Development (only relevant sections of objectives are reproduced herein): Key Strategic Principle - Sustainable and active travel To implement the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Study (CMATS) and develop a transformed sustainable transport system with a significant shift toward walking, cycling and public transport and to enshrine this principle in all developments across the City.

Strategic Objective 2 - Delivering Homes & Communities

Provide densities that create liveable, integrated communities by using a mix of house types, tenures and sizes linked to active and public transport. Provide amenities, services and community and cultural uses to enable inclusive, diverse and culturally rich neighbourhoods.

Strategic Objective 3 - Transport and Mobility

To support the implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS).

To integrate land-use and transportation planning to improve movement for all across Cork City. To protect, improve and maintain the operation of national and strategic regional transport networks and assets. To promote and prioritise sustainable transport including active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport; housing and employment development will be prioritised in locations where it can be served by walking, cycling and public transport. Cork City Council will support the delivery of multi-modal travel integration, smart mobility and transport networks and services that are accessible for all.

Proposals for new development in Cork City will be required to minimise the need for the private car, prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, be permeable, safe and secure for walking and cycling and where possible provide for filtered permeability. New developments will provide infrastructure for Electric Vehicles within the developments. Development proposals will provide for easy access to local amenities and education facilities.

The delivery of the key transport projects in CMATS will be supported by land use policies and the phasing of development which is compatible with those in CMATS' land use outcome.

Strategic Objective 9 - Placemaking & Managing Development Develop a compact liveable city based on attractive, diverse and accessible urban spaces and places. Focus on enhancing walkable neighbourhoods that promote healthy living, wellbeing and active lifestyles, where place making is at the heart. Follow a design-led approach with innovative architecture, landscape and urban design that respects the character of the city and neighbourhood.

The CCDP acknowledges that the transport needs of the metropolitan area are shifting toward *'more sustainable transport modes: walking, cycling and public transport'*. Sustainable transport, with a coordinated approach will allow for compact growth of the city, aiding in reducing congestion and lessening the environmental impacts of car dependency. The Passage Railway Greenway, which is listed as an initiative for walking and cycling improvements in Chapter 4 Transport and Mobility, is an important cycling connection to allow car free access to the city centre and beyond for the communities of Rochestown. Improved cycling infrastructure and access to the Passage Railway Greenway provides further linkages to the Lee to Sea Greenway and to the city hinterlands to the west.

The CCDP is in compliance with the Cork Metropolitan Cycle Network Plan 2015 through the delivery of the Proposed Development which promotes cycling and provides connections to the city and the wider metropolitan area, through connections such as the Passage Railway Greenway.

In this regard, the CCDP outlines several policies and objectives in relation to Active Travel in the city:

Objective 4.4 Active Travel

To actively promote walking and cycling as efficient, healthy, and environmentally friendly modes of transport by securing the development of a network of direct, comfortable, convenient, and safe cycle routes and footpaths across the city.

To support the 15-minute city concept and walk-able neighbourhoods with adequate walking and cycling infrastructure connected to high-quality public realm elements, including wayfinding and supporting amenities (benches, water fountains, bike stands).

To support the expansion of the Cork Bikes scheme. To accommodate other innovations such as electric bikes, public car hire, and other solutions that will encourage active travel. To support

the rollout of the NTA 5 Year Cycle Plan. To support and engage with the Safe Routes to School programme.

Objective 4.5 Permeability

b. To maximise permeability, safety, security and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists by creating direct links to adjacent roads and public transport networks in accordance with the provisions of statutory guidance as prescribed.

The CCDP lists specific sustainable transport objectives for Douglas within Chapter 10- Key Growth Areas & Neighbourhood Development Sites. Douglas and its surrounding neighbourhoods, including Rochestown, are described as forming *an “integral and vibrant part of Cork City”*. It has experienced significant growth and investment in recent years, however, there have been long standing challenges which required to be addressed during the lifetime of the CCDP, specifically traffic congestion, to ensure that continued regeneration can be delivered. The CCDP notes that this growth combined with *‘wider transport proposals, infrastructure investment, community infrastructure provision and public realm improvements will assist in delivering a better and healthier place to live, work and visit.’* The following objective is listed as trying to ensure this vision for the area is realised:

Objective 10.82 Douglas Sustainable Transport, Placemaking and Public Realm

a. To work in partnership with stakeholders in supporting and facilitating a more efficient and sustainable transport network for Douglas that provides an improved public realm, reduces congestion, encourages greater levels of walking & cycling, and improves the quality of life for the community. This includes the sustainable transport measures set out in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Study (2020) and key projects including:

i. Grange Road Transport Corridor & Tramore Valley N40 Bridge

ii. South Douglas Road Junction Improvement Scheme

iii. Clarke's Hill Improvements

iv. Donnybrook Hill Pedestrian Upgrades

v.

b. To support placemaking and public realm improvements where development proposals are encouraged to optimise placemaking opportunities through high quality design and creating or contributing towards a multi- functional, inclusive public realm comprising streets and spaces that can accommodate a range of appropriate uses and activities which will assist in improving the attractiveness of Douglas and introducing greater levels of landscaping, public art, vitality and surveillance.

Project Response

The Proposed Development facilitates the provision of additional pedestrian and cycling infrastructure within Cork city, which will allow for increased opportunities for people to cycle and walk as a mode of transport. In turn, the increase uptake of these modes will provide health and wellbeing benefits, and also assist in decreasing traffic related issues, like carbon emissions and congestion, supporting Strategic Objectives 2 and 3.

The Proposed Development will also increase safety for vulnerable road users in the area, ensure that walking and cycling is a safe and accessible mode of transport for people to use for shorter journeys, and progress the CCDPs vision for implementing the '15-minute city'. In turn, this will align with the Placemaking objectives outlined within the CCDP, as it will ensure the neighbourhoods along the route are walkable and are connected to each other and prioritise

pedestrians and cyclists. This will add vibrancy and life to the area, and in turn increase the quality of life for those living and working in the surrounding areas.

The Proposed Development will also intersect with existing public transport networks, allowing for the increase in active and public transport route options.

The Proposed Development will enhance active travel facilities along a section of the wider route connecting to the Passage West Greenway, improving safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

In addition, the Proposed Development is located in Rochestown and Clarkes Hill, which is identified as a location that is earmarked for increased sustainable transport and permeability measures in Objective 10.82. This will assist in removing the issues of congestion that are prevalent in the area, making it more attractive and increasing passive surveillance as the levels of footfall will increase.

3.5.2 Cork City Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2021-2026

The Cork City Heritage and Biodiversity Plan (CCHBP) 2021-2026 is a five-year strategy to protect, enhance, and promote the city's natural and cultural heritage while engaging the community in biodiversity conservation. The CCHBP is a comprehensive action plan developed by Cork City Council in collaboration with local heritage groups, the Heritage Council, and community stakeholders. Its primary aim is to protect, conserve, restore, and manage the city's heritage and biodiversity. The CCHBP provides for main themes:

- Promote best practice and encourage heritage and biodiversity conservation and management
- To be at the forefront of research and education, and support training in heritage and biodiversity related fields
- Raise awareness, appreciation, engagement with, and enjoyment of, heritage and biodiversity and communicate heritage message to citizens and visitors alike.
- Increase level of social, cultural, economic and tourism activity for heritage and biodiversity in the city

To support these themes, the CCHBP provides a number of objectives and associated actions. Of all the actions outlined within the CCHBP, the following three actions under Theme 1 are considered the most relevant to the Proposed Development:

- 1.3 Incorporate planning conditions to encourage pollinator friendly and native species planting in new developments.
- 1.7 Incorporate planning conditions to manage and control alien invasive species in developments as appropriate
- 1.14 Commit to restore and plant native trees on public land and increase tree cover Restore and expand native tree cover, woodlands and hedgerows.

Project Response

In support of Action 1.14, the Proposed Development will seek to retain existing vegetation where feasible and will include replacement planting and additional landscaping where opportunities arise, contributing to the enhancement of the public realm and supporting Cork City Council's objectives to increase urban tree cover and biodiversity value. Tree feeling is required to facilitate the Proposed Development. Replacement planting will be provided which will comprise a diverse mix of native and climate-resilient tree species. This mitigation will enhance the site's biodiversity, habitat value and long-term landscape character while providing a more resilient and sustainable tree population in the long term. The Proposed Development will also have regard to Action 1.7 through the application of appropriate construction and landscape management practices to avoid the introduction or spread of invasive alien plant

species during the construction and operational phases of the scheme. Overall, the Proposed Development will improve sustainable mobility while contributing to the protection and enhancement of the local environment and biodiversity resource.

3.5.3 Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy 2040

The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) is a document which provides a coordinated land use and transport strategy for the Cork Metropolitan Area, prepared by the National Transport Authority (NTA), in collaboration with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Cork City Council and Cork County Council. This document aims to “deliver an integrated transport network that addresses the needs of all modes of transport”. In order to realise this aim, the CMATS outlines six guiding principles, three of which are relevant to the Proposed Development:

Principal 1 To support the future growth of the CMA through the provision of an efficient and safe transport network

Principal 2 To prioritise sustainable transport and reduce car dependency within the CMA

Principal 5 To enhance public realm through traffic management and transport provisions

The CMATS also outlines key priorities and outcomes for various transport themes to realise the above priorities. The following are relevant to this development:

Walking

The CMATS envisioned that Cork city will be a walkable city, *where ‘people choose to walk as the safe, healthy and attractive alternative to private transport’*.

- An increase in walking levels for work, education and leisure across the CMA, particularly for short journeys (less than 2-3km)
- Address the barriers that prevent citizens and visitors from walking more in Cork
- Facilitate walking's role as part of linked trips, particularly with rail and bus journeys;
- Promote a far higher standard of urban design in new developments, and in highway design, in a fashion that consistently prioritises pedestrian movement and safety over that of the private car
- Upgrade pedestrian network in tandem with the implementation of BusConnects, Cycle Network and Light Rail stations

Cycling.

The CMATS sets out a vision for cycling as a priority, which is to “provide a coherent, safe and attractive cycle network that will support a shift from the private car to cycling”

- Designating a coherent network of east-west and north-south cycle routes across the CMA which will provide access to all major trip generators
- Providing the highest possible Level of Service on identified corridors of high demand
- Identifying and maximising opportunities for high quality greenways and quietways

Project Response

The Proposed Development is much needed active travel infrastructure, which will allow for safer transit for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users. This will directly support the guiding principles of the CMATS, as it will feed into future sustainable transport networks and assist in making walking and cycling safer and more attractive, which will in turn allow for decreased reliance on the private car. This will contribute to the reduction of traffic and traffic related issues like carbon emissions and congestion.

The Proposed Development will also support the Walking and Cycling Key Priority Areas, as it will provide appropriate infrastructure to allow for shorter journeys to be undertaken by these modes. In addition, it also includes upgraded bus stops, which will integrate walking and cycling routes with the wider sustainable transport network. The Proposed Development will also improve active travel facilities along a section of the route connecting to the Passage West Greenway which will maximise access options and integration with this amenity.

3.5.4 Cork Air Quality Strategy 2021-2026

The Cork Air Quality Strategy outlines a number of actions aimed at reducing air pollution within the metropolitan area, in an effort to positively impact the quality of life for those living in and visiting the area. This strategy works in conjunction with a number of air quality monitors, placed around the city to enable a swift response to areas of high pollution.

Within the strategy, Travel is identified as an Action Theme as air pollution from road vehicles contributes a large portion of overall air pollution within the city. To support this, the following objectives have been stated to try and ensure a cleaner environment for people to live, work and play, only those of relevance to the Proposed Development are reproduced below;

Objective 3.4 Reduce volume of traffic on city roads

- 3.4a Develop a phasing in of non-vehicular roads within city centre.

Objective 3.6 Expand the cycle network throughout the city and improve accessibility of cycle lanes

- 3.6d: Apply a minimum cycling level of service to all streets.
- 3.6f: Continue to support Mobility Management initiatives and other initiatives which support greater use of walking, cycling and public transport including Bike Week, European Mobility Week and other related promotions. Use the 'Cork City Cycling Strategy' and the 'Cork Cycle Network Plan' to help deliver this action.
- 3.6g: Continue development of the primary and inter-city cycle network, including 'Lee to Sea Greenway'
- 3.6h: Align implementation of the cycle network with the implementation of the Bus-connects network.
- 3.6i: Continue to promote the use of cycling including the delivery of infrastructure and facilities as part of Planning assessments.
- 3.7b: Oversee ongoing maintained and renewal of footpaths, urban realm improvements and walking network provisions

Objective 3.7 Increase Pedestrianisation

- 3.7a Align implementation of improvements to the walking and cycling network with the implementation of the BusConnects network
- 3.7b Oversee ongoing maintenance and renewal of footpaths, urban realm improvements and walking network provisions (e.g. increased seating areas)

Project Response

The Proposed Development will increase the primary cycle network within the metropolitan area and facilitate cycle provisions on an under-served route. In addition, the implementation of safe active travel infrastructure will encourage the uptake of walking and cycling, which will have the added benefit of a reduction in traffic related emissions as people transition to walking and cycling instead of the private car. The Proposed Development will also link with the existing public transport network, providing a cohesive active and public transport system.

3.5.5 Cork City Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

Cork City Council published their Climate Change Action Plan in July 2025 'as part of their statutory climate-action requirements and our participation in the EU 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission. Our aim is to accelerate our city's journey towards a climate-neutral, thriving and resilient city'.

The Climate Action Plan sets out 129 actions, grouped under five themes: Governance and Leadership, Communities and Partnerships, Built Environment and Energy, Transport and Mobility and Natural Environment and Resource management. The following actions are considered relevant to the Proposed Development:

Action 4.5: Complete design, plan and implement active travel infrastructure per the CMATS, Cork Cycling Network Plan, Pedestrian Network Plan, Cycle Connects and the National Cycle Network, inclusive of appropriate supportive elements such as wayfinding, benches, water fountains. Promote the need to have active-travel development carried out in a manner that has due regard to environmental sensitivities such as local human receptors, Biodiversity, European sites, water quality and hydrology, existing traffic and transport conditions and amenity value.

Action 4.13: Increase frequency of pedestrianisation periods for the city centre, and pilot in suburban areas and urban towns. Design and deliver such schemes in accordance with relevant good practice guidelines. Analyse and publish results.

Action 4.15: Ensure all new developments prioritise walking and cycling integration with the surrounding land uses to minimise travel distances by foot/bike.

Action 4.18: In tandem, with the preparation of individual Framework Masterplans to support the planned growth of Cork City, Local Transport Plans will be prepared prioritising accessibility by active and sustainable travel modes.

Action 4.19: Support the delivery of Transit Orientated Development at key nodes along the existing and planned public transport system in the city.

Project Response

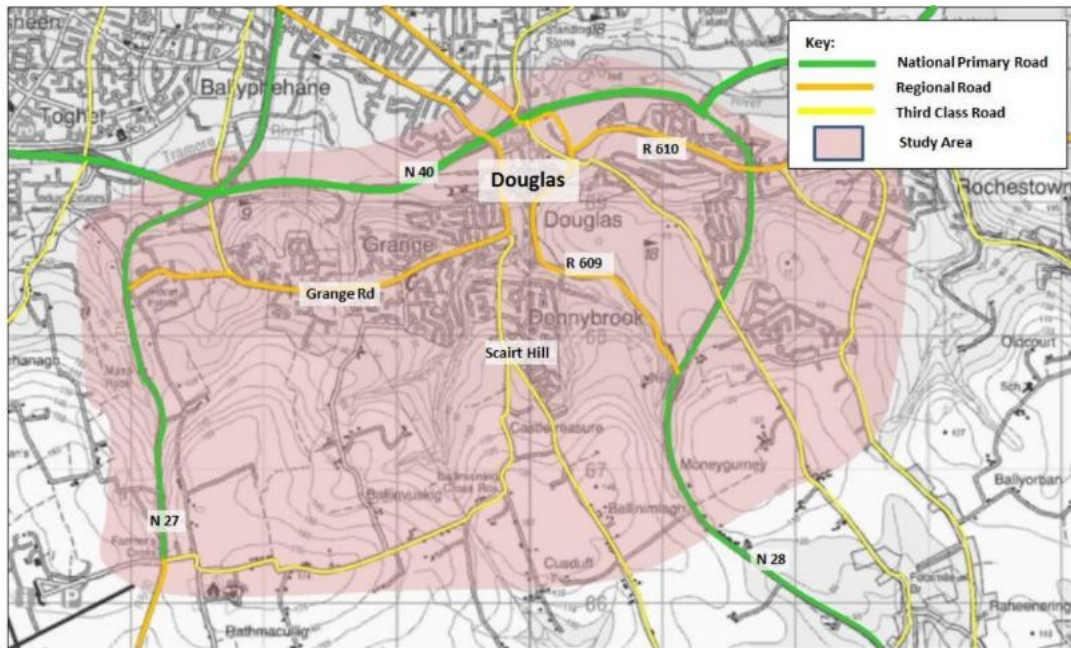
Cork City Climate Action Plan aims to deliver the changes needed to make our city more sustainable, resilient and to enable us all to thrive. The Proposed Development will support this aim by upgrading existing infrastructure and providing new walking and cycling infrastructure in addition to public realm improvements. Such provisions and developments will support Actions 4.5, 4.14, 4.18 and 4.19 by promoting and developing the shift to sustainable transport methods through the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure.

In addition, the proposal will support Actions 4.13 by delivering improved walking infrastructure which will help to increase the frequency of pedestrianisation periods.

3.5.6 Douglas Land Use Strategy

The Proposed Development falls within the study area of the Douglas Land Use Transport Strategy (LUTS), August 2013. This strategy is an integrated land use, transport and urban design strategy that aims to: *"secure a successful vibrant urban centre with a more efficient transport network for Douglas, that provides an improved public realm, reduces congestion, encourages greater levels of walking & cycling, and improves the quality of life for the community, thereby enabling sustainable future growth"*. The study area for the Douglas LUTS is outlined in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.2: Douglas LUTS Study Area



Source: Douglas LUTS Final Report, Cork City Council

The Douglas LUTS outlines a number of principals for transport, based on an analysis of the current transport environment and the competition among modes of transport. The following principals are outlined and aim to guide the development of the Douglas LUTS:

- Protect vulnerable road users
- Improve overall safety of all road users particularly walking, cycling and public transport
- Promote sustainable travel by walking, cycling and public transport
- Improve the operating environment of public transport and ensure reliability
- Promote sustainable travel to schools
- Improve the operation of the road network for all users
- Provide a transport network to enable Douglas to grow in a sustainable way
- Enhance integration between transport modes
- Improve circulation and connectivity within Douglas Village and the remainder of the DLUTS Area
- Ensure Land Use, Urban Design and Transport are improved in an integrated way

In relation to the above guiding principles, a number of these have a transport focus which would be considered relevant to the Proposed Development, and the LUTS outlines a number of objectives to achieve these, including the introduction of a cycle network, well designed cycle lanes and cycle parking facilities.

Project Response

The Proposed Development will be located within the Douglas LUTS, study area. It introduces infrastructure which will improve access, permeability, the public realm and movement for pedestrians and cyclists.

The implementation of this infrastructure will help to protect vulnerable road users, such as pedestrian and cyclists by providing segregated spaces, and improve circulation within the area.

The Proposed Development is integrated with existing public transport connection and will contribute to providing a cohesive active and public transport network.

3.6 Land Use Zoning

The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (CCDP) outlines a range of land use zoning objectives to facilitate orderly development within the city. This eliminates potential conflicts between incompatible land uses and establishes a basis for investment in public infrastructure.

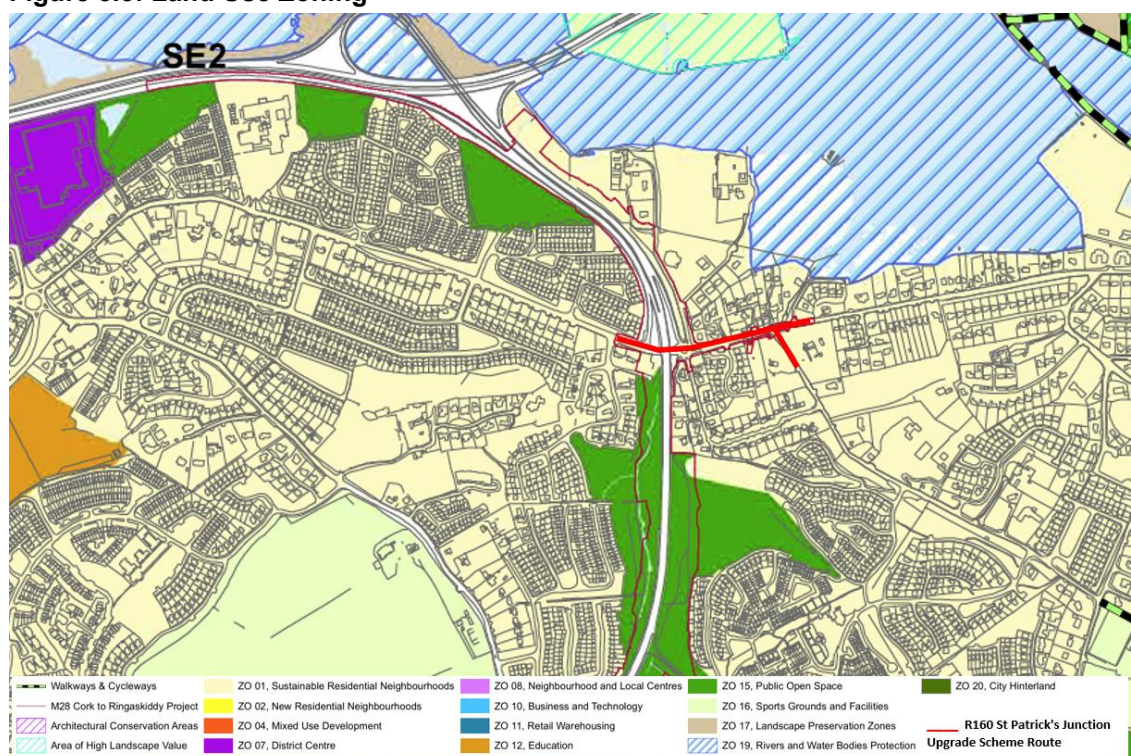
In the CCDP, the site and which the Proposed Development is to be located is zoned as ZO 01 Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods (Figure 3.2). The zoning overarching objective for this zoning is:

To protect and provide for residential uses and amenities, local services and community, institutional, educational and civic uses.

In conjunction with the zoning objectives outlined under ZO 01, the CCP also states that should a development not wholly align with the zoning objective, the council are open to considering land uses where:

- they would not have a detrimental impact on the primary land use zoning objective.
- they would be consistent with the relevant objectives and criteria set out in this Plan
- there would not be any significant adverse impacts on-site or on the surrounding environment

Figure 3.3: Land Use Zoning



Source: Cork City Development Plan 2022- 2029 – Zoning Map 14

Project Response

The Proposed Development is consistent with the land use zoning, and the 'open to consideration' land uses outlined in the CCDP. The Proposed Development is in line with the

objectives and criteria outlined in the CCDP and provides much needed civic and active transport infrastructure to allow for the sustainable development of the surrounding area. As such the Proposed Development is in compliance with the zoning objectives outlined within the CCDP

3.7 Relevant Planning History

3.7.1 Introduction

This chapter details the planning history of the application site and within the surrounding environment in order to identify any developments that may be incompatible with the Proposed Development or compromise the surrounding environment

3.7.2 Planning History of the Proposed Development and Environs

Table 3.1 below outlines the planning history for the Proposed Development and surrounding environs, the review included a search of relevant Section 34 applications to Cork City Council, Strategic Infrastructure Development and Strategic Housing Development applications to An Coimisiún Pleanála and any relevant local authority own development. This search was conducted for applications which were granted in the last 10 years and occur within a 300m radius of the Proposed Development. Table 3.1 does include applications which may be under first or third-party appeal but does not include withdrawn applications or where permission has been refused and excludes applications for one-off residential developments or extension to existing dwellings.

Due to the residential nature of the area and the Rochestown Road being a long-standing travel route there are no recent applications pertaining to the R610. The recent planning history for the area is largely based on small residential applications

Table 3.1: Relevant Planning History

Application reference	Description of Development	Grant Date
An Coimisiún Pleanála: HA04.HA0053	M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy Motorway Scheme (Approved by Cabinet 08 April 2025 and is intended to immediately progress to the construction phase)	29/06/2018 Was subject to Judicial Review which was dismissed – 2018 No. 708 [J.R.] Leave to Appeal – dismissed [2020] IEHC 706
Cork City Council 2140135 /ACP- PL28.312412	Permission for the construction of a 100no. bed space nursing home and 47 no. independent living units and all associated site development works at Clarke's Hill, Rochestown, Co. Cork.	Decision date 07/12/2021 Subject to third party appeal – ABP Case Ref: PL28.312412 with permission granted with revised conditions on 06.06.2023
Cork City Council 2140229	Permission to construct 45 no. one, two and three-bedroom apartments in a single building of 3-4 storeys in height over a semi-basement car park, together with all associated site development and infrastructural works.	Granted (on appeal) 01/07/22
Cork City Council 2543910/ ACP PL28.500529	Permission for (1) The demolition and removal of existing agricultural sheds/structures; (2) The construction of 72 no. residential units comprising 10 no. 3-bed dwelling houses and 62 no. apartments (comprising 21 no. 1 bed units and 41 no. 2 bed units) in 2 no. blocks ranging in height from 4-5 storeys with solar panels at roof level; (3) The provision of landscaping and amenity areas and all associated access, infrastructure and services including vehicular and	Granted (on appeal) 05/05/2026

Application reference	Description of Development	Grant Date
	pedestrian access to the Woodbrook Road/ Rochestown Road Roundabout; and (4) All associated ancillary development works including vehicular and pedestrian access, car and bicycle parking, footpaths, lighting, drainage, plant (including 1 no. ESB substation and 1 no. water break tank room) bike and bin storage. A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared and will be submitted to the planning authority with the application.	

3.7.3 Additional Plans/Projects

In addition to the above planning applications, a number of other plans/projects are currently in development/implementation which relate to the Proposed Development, by virtue of the fact that they all focus on traffic alleviation, active travel and public realm upgrades. As noted in the policy context section, these include the CMATS, the Rochestown to Douglas Active Travel Scheme, and the Passage Railway Greenway Improvement Scheme (Phase III).

Cork City Council is also advancing the Passage Railway Greenway Improvement Scheme. This scheme will include landscaping and public realm improvements that traverse the R610 Rochestown Road near Hop Island.

Project Response

A review of the planning history demonstrates that the surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature, including a number of recently permitted residential and care-related developments. There are no permitted or existing developments within the vicinity that would be incompatible with the Proposed Development. On the contrary, the pattern of existing and approved development reinforces the need for enhanced active travel infrastructure and traffic calming measures to support a growing residential population, improve connectivity, and provide safer conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users. The Proposed Development will complement the established residential character of the area and support sustainable travel choices for existing and future residents.

4 Additional Planning Considerations

4.1 Environmental Impact Assessment

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report has been prepared on behalf of Cork City Council to facilitate their role as the competent authority on EIA and their requirement to undertake an EIA Screening Determination pursuant to Article 120(1B)(b) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended. This EIA Screening Report concluded that having regard to the nature, scale and location of the Proposed Development, it is considered that significant effects on the environment are not likely to arise. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is therefore not required, and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required.

The EIA Screening Report and the EIA Screening Determination by Cork County Council both accompany the planning application.

4.2 Appropriate Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening report has been prepared for the Proposed Development. Two European Sites were identified with viable source pathway receptor links given the proximity of the Proposed Development. The closest European Site is Cork Harbour Special Protection Area (SPA) (Site code: 004030), which is located 40m at its closest point from the Proposed Development. Great Island Channel Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Site code: 001058) is located 3.7km from the Proposed Development.

The construction programme has been prepared to ensure that any construction works within the noise zone of influence for Cork Harbour SPA will be undertaken outside of the bird wintering season. As the hydrologically connected waterbody is a transitional waterbody - Lough Mahon (European code: IE_SW_060_0750), any sediment effect to local habitats will not have a detrimental effect given their natural reliance on sediments.

Consequently, the AA Screening report concluded that there is no potential for likely significant effects as a result of the Proposed Development and a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement) is not required.

The Appropriate Assessment Screening report is also provided with the Part 8 application documentation.

4.3 Flood Risk

A review of flood risk to and by the Proposed Development has been undertaken from a number of sources, including utilising the flood data provided by the Office of Public Works (OPW) via their Flood Map Viewer (www.floodinfo.ie), and the Cork City Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) undertaken for the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. From the OPW data, it is noted that the route of the Proposed Development has not been subject to any historical flood events and is located within Flood Zone C. From a review of available flood mapping, no pluvial flood risk is mapped in proximity to the Proposed Development.

The Proposed Development meets specific criteria for proper planning and sustainable development and the review undertaken highlights that it will not be subject to unacceptable flood risk, nor increase flood risk elsewhere.

4.4 Arboricultural Assessment

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan has been undertaken in accordance with BS5837:2012 Standards and is included within this planning application. This assessment outlines that, following a tree survey it was concluded that in order to facilitate the proposed development of 39 trees will be required to be removed (both individual trees and grouped trees) and the part removal of two groups of trees totalling up to 21. no trees will occur, whereby holly, blackthorn, beech will retained where possible. All trees were categorised as category 'B' (moderate value) with the exception of one ash tree which was categorised a 'U' (low value) due visible rot.

All trees which are scheduled for removal are located within an existing private residential property. Each tree to be removed will be marked (red spray paint) ahead of work commencing.

Replacement planting will be provided which will comprise a diverse mix of native and climate-resilient tree species. This mitigation will enhance the site's biodiversity, habitat value and long-term landscape character while providing a more resilient and sustainable tree population in the long term.

4.5 Design Guidance

4.5.1 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)

The Proposed Development has been designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) and associated advice and guidance documents. The DMURS was initially published in 2013 by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, together with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

DMURS provides the national framework for the design of streets in urban areas and promotes a balanced approach that recognises streets as places for people as well as corridors for movement. It seeks to create safe, attractive and accessible streets that support active travel, enhance place quality and contribute positively to the character and function of urban areas.

A key principle of DMURS is the adoption of a place-based approach to street design, whereby the function of a street is considered not only in terms of movement but also its role as a destination, public space and community asset. This is supported through the Movement and Place Framework, which provides a structured method for balancing the movement of people and vehicles with the social, economic and environmental functions of streets. This Section notes that street designs should optimise the movement of public transport, cater for greater numbers of pedestrians and cyclists and higher volumes of traffic if appropriate.

DMURS provides the practical measures to achieve:

- Highly connected street which allow people to walk and cycle to key destinations in a direct and easy-to find manner.
- A safe and comfortable street environment for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages.
- Streets that contribute to the creation of attractive and lively communities.
- Streets that calm traffic via a range of design measures that make drivers more aware of their environment.

The Proposed Development reflects these principles through the provision of segregated cycling facilities, enhanced pedestrian infrastructure, upgraded crossing facilities, improved junction layouts and traffic calming measures. The scheme has been designed to improve safety, accessibility and connectivity for all users, while creating a more attractive and inclusive streetscape. By prioritising active travel and vulnerable road users, the Proposed Development

is consistent with the objectives of DMURS and supports the creation of a safer, more sustainable and people-focused transport environment.

4.5.2 National Cycle Design Manual (2023)

The National Cycle Design Manual (CDM) was published by the National Transport Authority in 2023 and represents the principal national guidance document for the planning and design of cycling infrastructure in Ireland. The CDM replaces the previous National Cycle Manual (2011) and provides a comprehensive framework for the delivery of safe, high-quality and inclusive cycling facilities. The guidance places greater emphasis on designing for a broad range of users, including children, older persons and people using adapted cycles, and promotes the provision of infrastructure that supports cycling as a practical and attractive mode of transport for everyday journeys.

The CDM is centred around five core design requirements: safety, coherence, directness, comfort and attractiveness. These principles seek to ensure that cycle infrastructure forms part of a connected and legible network, provides direct and convenient routes to key destinations, and creates an environment where people feel safe and comfortable when choosing to travel by bicycle. The guidance also promotes a Safe System approach, user-focused design and the application of Universal Design principles to ensure that facilities are accessible and usable for people of all ages and abilities.

The Proposed Development has been designed having regard to the requirements and principles of the CDM. The scheme incorporates dedicated cycling facilities, improved pedestrian infrastructure, enhanced crossing opportunities and upgraded junction arrangements that prioritise the movement and safety of vulnerable road users. The proposed layout seeks to provide a coherent and continuous active travel route through the corridor, strengthen connectivity with surrounding residential areas and existing transport infrastructure, and improve accessibility for those travelling on foot or by bicycle.

The design also reflects the CDM's emphasis on appropriate segregation, route continuity and user comfort through the provision of high-quality active travel infrastructure, improved crossing facilities and a more legible street environment. By creating a safer, more accessible and attractive route for active travel, the Proposed Development is consistent with the objectives of the CDM and will contribute to the delivery of a connected and sustainable transport network within Cork City.

5 Conclusion

The Proposed Development will deliver a high-quality active travel scheme along approximately 0.55km of existing road corridor, comprising segregated cycling facilities, upgraded pedestrian infrastructure, enhanced crossing facilities and the signalisation of key junctions. The scheme will address an identified gap in the active travel network, improving safety, accessibility and connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users in an area that is currently constrained by inadequate active travel provision.

This Planning Report outlines the key contextual planning, technical and ecological/ environmental and design considerations relating to the Proposed Development. The policy assessment provided of the Proposed Development highlights that it is considered to be in accordance with strategic planning and policy considerations, and the principles of sustainable development. It can therefore be summarised that the Proposed Development:

- Complies with and supports relevant European, national, regional and local planning policies and objectives relating to sustainable mobility, climate action, public health and active travel
- Is compatible and consistent with the land use zoning objectives of the surrounding area, as identified within the extant Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028
- Will improve conditions for walking and cycling, support greater modal shift towards sustainable transport and enhance connectivity to surrounding residential areas, community facilities, public transport services and the wider active travel network.
- Can not be precluded from positive consideration based on incompatibility with surrounding development, as neither the planning history of the proposed 'site', nor the surrounding area, includes planning applications that would either be negatively impacted by or which would negatively impact on, the Proposed Development

Has been subject to ecological and environmental screening assessments to ensure that impacts to the surrounding area are not significant and where necessary, mitigating measures are provided, to ensure any nuisance or pollution is minimised in accordance with best practice.

In conclusion, the Proposed Development represents an important investment in active travel infrastructure within Cork City. By delivering safer and more attractive facilities for walking and cycling, the scheme will support sustainable transport objectives, improve accessibility and road safety, enhance the quality of the public realm and contribute to wider climate, health and wellbeing goals. Accordingly, the Proposed Development is considered to accord with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

