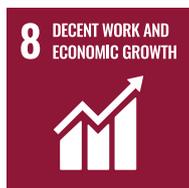


# Chapter 7

## Economy and Employment





## Introduction

### 7.1

The Cork Metropolitan Area (CMA) is recognised as a key employment base and economic driver in Ireland. Over recent decades, the CMA has been successful in attracting a significant level of foreign direct investment (FDI) and indigenous enterprise, a trend that has accelerated over recent years. The CMA has a track record in attracting investment in key sectors such as bio pharma, medical devices, food, international business services and ITC. The City is also building strengths in rapidly emerging and expanding clusters in areas such as financial services, fintech, cyber security and energy.

### 7.2

In addition, the city serves as one of Ireland's key services centres. Cork City offers a range of business services, hospitality, cultural, tourism and retail to support the needs of businesses as well as residents and visitors to the region.

## Economic Profile

### 7.3

Details of the Economic Profile of Cork City are presented in the Socio-Economic Profile of the City. This is based on 2016 Census data, the most up to date data available at the time of preparation of this plan. The profile highlights that:

- There is a lower than average proportion of people working in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (1%); Building and Construction (4%); and Public Administration (4%);
- There is a higher than average proportion of people working in Manufacturing (15%), which is anticipated given the strength of a number of manufacturing sectors in the CMA.
- There is also a higher proportion (10%) of the working population employed in Transport and Communications than the State average; and
- The proportion of people working in Commerce and Trade and Professional Services is on a par with the average for the State at 23.5% and 25% respectively.

**7.4**

Importantly, the Socio-Economic Profile highlights the areas of relative affluence and deprivation across the City. This confirms the importance of delivering an employment ecosystem that creates suitable employment opportunities for all residents of the City.

**7.5**

In addition, the economic profile of Cork illustrates a dependence on high value manufacturing and services. A key objective of the City Development Plan will be to ensure that the city can continue to compete to attract both indigenous and foreign investment while creating a broad range of employment opportunities that suit the needs of all residents in a socially inclusive manner. This will mean that the City Council, along with partners in IDA, Enterprise Ireland, UCC, MTU and business representative organisations will need to continue to collaborate to enhance the skills, research and development needed to ensure that businesses in Cork can innovate and create employment opportunities. This is required to continue to position Cork as a globally competitive business location.

## Policy Context

**7.6**

The City Development Plan is being prepared in the context of a global pandemic COVID 19. This has led to a period of uncertainty as businesses faced operational challenges of adhering to the public health advice, which understandably changed as the nature of and remedy for the virus changed. In addition, the UK, historically, Ireland's main trading partner, left the European Union (EU) as of 1st January 2021. While the medium to long term impacts of these events are unknown, both in terms of the global or local economies, they highlight the importance of resilience, innovation and agility among all employment sectors, whether public or private sectors. In particular, much of the commentary relates to diversification of markets and accelerated digitisation of business, both of which represent opportunities and risks to Cork's economy. A range of policies and strategies are being or have been prepared to address these challenges. These are ultimately designed to support the continued growth of Ireland's economy.

## National Planning Framework

**7.7**

The National Planning Framework (NPF) was published by the Government of Ireland in 2018. This provides a framework for the long-term development of Ireland to 2040, which will be underpinned by investment of a sequence of National Development Plans (NDP). The NPF sets 10 National Strategic Outcomes, including the development of 'a strong economy supported by enterprise, innovation and skills' (NPF p13). The NPF highlights that this objective is to be achieved by building regional economic drivers and by supporting opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy, to leverage the potential of places. Delivering this outcome will require the coordination of growth and place making with investment in world class infrastructure, including digital connectivity, and in skills and talent to support economic competitiveness and enterprise growth. Importantly, the NPF reiterates the importance of ensuring that economic growth is achieved in a sustainable manner, with particular attention to climate change. The NPF emphasises the role that cities, including Cork, play in driving regional economic growth, in particular to attract skills and deliver a critical mass to facilitate investment in excellence. Importantly, the NPF highlights that the economic objectives for Ireland cannot be achieved without considering the delivery of housing, health, social services, community facilities along with a range of other cultural and commercial services. The NPF highlights the requirement to grow and diversify Cork's employment base by creating the conditions to attract and retain talented innovators and entrepreneurs and to be accessible to investors.



## National Economic Plans

### 7.8

In 2019 the Government published 'Future Jobs Ireland, 2019 – Preparing for Tomorrow's Economy'. This set out a strategy for Ireland's economy under five pillars:

1. Embracing innovation and technological change;
2. Improving Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) productivity;
3. Enhancing skills and developing and attracting talent;
4. Increasing participation in the labour force; and
5. Transitioning to a low carbon economy.

### 7.9

The Government has published the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, which forms part of Ireland's recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic, supported by Exchequer and EU funding.

### 7.10

Key agencies such as IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland and Fáilte Ireland among others, have prepared their strategies and plans that set out their objectives and goals to achieve economic growth. Each of these strategies emphasise a commitment to balanced regional development.

## Regional Economic Plans

### 7.11

The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), which was published by the Southern Regional Assembly in 2020, carries forward the NPF objectives for the Southern Region. In particular, the RSES contains specific development objectives for Cork City, under the Cork Metropolitan Area Plan (MASP). The RSES seeks to create a sustainable, competitive, inclusive and resilient economy by pursuing five economic principles; smart specialisation, clustering, placemaking for enterprise, knowledge diffusion and capacity building. The MASP identifies the need to develop key employment sites in Cork, including the Docklands, Cork Science and Technology Park and Mahon.

The strategic employment sites proposed in this City Development Plan are designed to achieve the objectives of the MASP.

### 7.12

With its genesis in the Regional Action Plan for Jobs, which was instrumental in providing cohesion in Ireland's recovery from the recent global recession, the focus of the South West Regional Enterprise Plan is on creating added value and innovation across all regions in Ireland. Cork City Council is a key partner in the South West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020; which contains six strategic objectives:

1. To build capacity and resilience of the region's enterprise base;
2. To develop the region's enterprise hubs;
3. To leverage opportunities through business clustering;
4. To increase the capacity of the tourism sector;
5. To support the growth of the region's marine and maritime sector; and
6. To ensure the availability of skills and talent to underpin the region's growth potential. This particular action is being implemented by the Regional Skills Forum.

### 7.13

At the time of preparing the City Development Plan the preparation of the next iteration of the Regional Enterprise Plan had commenced. In addition to the key objectives set out above, it is envisaged that the new South West Regional Enterprise Plan will contain particular objectives to combat climate change, with a particular emphasis on just transition, and support the region's evolution to smart specialisation.



## Local Plans

### 7.14

Whilst the City Development Plan will provide an overarching framework for the development of the city, the Cork City Local Community and Economic Plan (LECP) 2016 - 2021 clearly sets out key objectives and actions for the coordinated development of the city. The LECP presents 15 key themes for the development of Cork City. Whilst all interrelated and relevant to economic development, the themes that focus on economic development are:

- **Theme 5 Social Economy:** To ensure the vibrant social economy sector is supported and enhanced.
- **Theme 6 Education & Learning:** Support the culture of learning in Cork and enhance educational levels across the city.
- **Theme 7 Social Inclusion & Equality:** Reduce the marginalisation of specific communities within the city.
- **Theme 10 Economic Diversity:** Support the maintenance of a diverse economic base within the city.
- **Theme 11 Innovation:** Support innovation in the local economy.
- **Theme 12 Skills and Human Capital:** Develop skills within the Cork area to match the needs of existing and future businesses. Provide support services for the unemployed and help maintain and expand businesses in areas of high unemployment.
- **Theme 14 Quality of Place:** Build on Cork's strong place quality assets and improve the attractiveness of the city for residents and visitors.
- **Theme 15 Competitiveness Through Strategic Governance:** Cooperate with other stakeholders to deliver the strategic governance that ensures that Cork remains a competitive location for economic activity and to maintain the excellent quality of life available in Cork which underpins the city's competitiveness.

### 7.15

The LECP is scheduled for review in 2021/2022. This will provide an opportunity to revise these objectives and ensure that there is a collaborative approach to delivering the actions required to underpin the City Development Plan.

### 7.16

Fáilte Ireland, in partnership with Cork City Council, is currently leading the preparation of a Tourism Destination Experience Development Plan for Cork City and East Cork. It is envisaged that this plan will seek to broaden the appeal of Cork to tourists by enhancing the tourism product and strengthening the existing assets of the city. The plan will also build on the lessons of COVID 19 by, for example, enhancing the attractiveness of outdoor dining and other activities in the City and develop sustainable tourism products and services, building on the strength of the maritime heritage of the City. It is also envisaged that the plan will support the expansion of the night-time economy, particularly for families, by expanding the cultural offering of the city.



## Spatial Economic Strategy

### 7.17

The NPF sets ambitious targets for Cork City to grow by 125,000 by 2040. It is estimated that approximately 31,000 jobs will need to be created in Cork City by 2028. In making provision for sufficient zoned employment land to accommodate this level of jobs growth, the Development Plan adopts a proactive, flexible economic strategy informed by the findings of the Cork Strategic Employment Locations Study (2021). In addition to quantifying the jobs target and the level of employment land, the Development Plan through the spatial distribution of new employment lands has sought to positively respond to wider challenges that includes targeting neighbourhoods where there are relatively high levels of unemployment, creating inclusive and sustainable communities and anticipating likely market trends over the period to 2028.

Overall Target to 2028	Retail <sup>1</sup>	Office	Manufacturing/Light Industry
35,000	7,130 (20.4%)	17,927 (51%)	9,976 (28.5%)

**Table 7.1:** Disaggregated Jobs Targets to 2028.

An overview of the economic strategy is outlined below:

**a. Jobs Target and Disaggregation of Jobs**

Based on the analysis contained within the Cork Strategic Employment Locations Study 2021 (SELS), the projected population growth within Cork City is estimated to generate approximately 31,000 new jobs and this is later disaggregated as follows:

**b. Employment Land Requirement**

The retail jobs target of 7,130 is addressed primarily on lands already zoned for retail-related uses. The quantum of employment land to accommodate the office and manufacturing/light industry jobs projection is assessed within the SELS using international best practice whilst also taking account of the need to plan for replacement employment lands to accommodate approximately 4,000 jobs that are likely to be displaced from regeneration areas including City Docks, Tivoli and areas under regeneration influence such as Tramore Road. The decanting of existing uses to new greenfield sites is critical to realise National and Regional Policy Objectives in the delivery of ambitious large-scale regeneration projects for the provision of new employment, housing and supporting infrastructure in Cork Docklands and other strategic areas, and realising the ambitious growth targets for the City as a regional driver of future development. The SELS quantifies a need to identify 228ha of employment lands to accommodate the office/manufacturing/light industry needs of the City over the period to 2028.

**c. Review of Existing Strategic Employment Land Zonings**

The Development Plan, guided by the SELS, undertook a review of lands zoned for employment at Tivoli, the Cork Science and Innovation Park (CSIP), Ballincollig, Cork International Airport and Kilbarry and applied more realistic development timeframes or re-zoned the lands for alternative uses.

**d. New Strategic Employment Lands**

The Development Plan provides for approximately 207ha of zoned, undeveloped employment lands that also includes an allowance for employment proposals within the City Centre Core, Town Centres, District Centres and mixed-use sites over the period to 2028. The Plan has taken forward some of the recommended new strategic employment lands listed in the SELS and in total identifies 6 new strategic employment locations. These have been targeted at or within close proximity of areas with higher unemployment rates as is the case with the new employment locations at Hollyhill, Clogheen, and Ballyvolane. Lands at Blarney and Glanmire, have been identified owing to the proximity to successful employment facilities or where there is market demand for a location alongside the strategic road network.

<sup>1</sup> Representing 23% of overall new jobs generation based on a review of CSO employment sectors / workplace zones in Cork City and assuming this percentage will remain constant through to 2028.

# Cork City Economic Goals

## 7.18

Based on the analysis of the economic trends, combined with the need to address the socio-economic imbalances in the city, the development objectives of City Development Plan seek to support Cork City Council, along with other partners to achieve the following goals:

1. Support Sustainable Economic Growth;
2. Continue to Attract Foreign Direct Investment;
3. Support Indigenous Enterprise and Entrepreneurship;
4. Develop a Socially Inclusive City;
5. Support Innovation, Research and Development – An Innovation City;
6. Address Climate Action – A City of Neighbourhoods;
7. Enhance Tourism;
8. (Foster Quality of Placemaking;
9. Build a Diverse Economic; and
10. Support a Full Range Excellent Products and Services.

## 7.19

Details of each of these are provided in the paragraphs that follow. Combined they are designed to ensure that Cork can continue to compete globally for business and investment opportunities, while supporting social inclusion and ensure that the city's economy is resilient to economic cycles and shocks.

## Support Sustainable Economic Growth

### 7.20

The NPF sets ambitious targets for Cork City to grow by 125,000 by 2040. It is estimated that approximately 31,000 jobs will need to be created in Cork City by 2028. This will require a considerable effort by employers, agencies and academia to ensure that the City's economic ecosystem can support this level of job creation. It will also need a broad range of property solutions to satisfy the needs of employers, from entrepreneurs and small businesses to larger multi-national companies, and cater for office based, manufacturing and services based employment.

### 7.21

The competing issues and trans-boundary nature of Cork's Maritime and Harbour economy requires collaboration as part of the Cork Harbour Planning Framework Initiative, as per RSES Objective 79 and Cork MASP Objective 3 Cork Harbour. Cork City Council is committed to partake as a key stakeholder and consultee in the preparation of this framework.

## Continue to Attract Foreign Direct Investment

### 7.22

As previously stated, the CMA has been relatively successful in attracting and sustaining foreign direct investment. These are broadly in sectors that require either office or manufacturing based property solutions. By its nature the timeframe of the investment can be uncertain, however the city must be ready to harness suitable opportunities that arise. Therefore, Cork City Council will work with IDA Ireland and private sector developers to ensure that a suite of property solutions required by FDI companies is available.

## Support Indigenous Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

### 7.23

It is important that the economy of the city is diverse and resilient and includes a balanced mix of FDI and Indigenous Enterprise. Cork City Council will continue to harness entrepreneurship in the city. Acting as a first-stop-shop, Cork City Local Enterprise Office (LEO) will continue to support small businesses in Cork. In addition, the City Council will work with Enterprise Ireland, academia and local communities to support entrepreneurship, development of indigenous industry and business start-ups throughout the city.

## Develop a Socially Inclusive City

### 7.24

While economic development is only one instrument that can help to address social exclusion, it will be important to ensure that there is improved access to employment opportunities for all residents of Cork. The property solutions set out in this development plan are designed to support job creation in areas of the city which experience social deprivation.

## Support Innovation, Research and Development – An Innovation City

### 7.25

For business based in Cork City, whether they are indigenous enterprise or FDI, to continue to succeed they must continuously innovate. The skills available in the city, along with the level of research and development conducted in Cork must continue to squarely meet the needs of a quickly evolving economy. This requires ongoing development of the two universities located in the City; University College Cork and Munster Technological University. It will also need the provision of a broad spectrum of skills, provided by UCC, MTU, Cork City Education and Training Board along with other education institutions and business representative organisations.

### 7.26

In light of the development of Cork Science and Innovation Campus, along with the development of MTU, UCC, Cork University Hospital, North Mall Campus, the City Centre, Cork University Business School (CUBS), the Docklands, and Mahon, an Innovation Corridor is emerging in the city along the proposed route of the Light Rail Transit network. The objective is to strengthen innovation in Cork and ensure that its benefits are spread throughout the city.

### 7.27

Cork is a UNESCO City of Learning, using knowledge and talent as a key enabler for city and economic growth.

In addition to University College Cork and Munster Technological University, Cork City has four Colleges of Further Education (CityNorth College, Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa, St. John's Central College and Cork College of Commerce) and benefits from the work of the Cork Education and Training Board (CETB), Regional Skills Forum for the South West, SOLAS and other stakeholders in strengthening and expanding the education and training ecosystem in Cork City.

### 7.28

In a wider regional context, Cork City is working with both Limerick and Waterford to finalise a Learning Region Action Plan for the region as part of its commitments under RSES. The implementation of this report will support increased investment for education and training providers in the Region and enhance Cork's unique proposition as a Learning City and Region.

## Address Climate Action – A City of Neighbourhoods

### 7.29

As set out in Chapter 5 of this City Development Plan it is envisaged that there will be key climate change and carbon emission targets for Cork to 2050. However, the Neighbourhood Profile of the city highlights that the majority of people living in Cork commute outside of their neighbourhoods to work, and there is a higher than average dependence on private cars to commute to school or work. This Development Plan will seek to create employment opportunities in each neighbourhood of the city. This will include the objective to foster entrepreneurship in each neighbourhood by supporting communities who plan to develop community enterprise centres in their local areas.

### 7.30

Cork has an emerging cluster of excellence in the energy sector. The City Council will support this cluster to identify solutions to reduce emissions, including those that provide business opportunities.

### 7.31

Cork City Council will support those affected by the transition to a low carbon and digital economy by implementing just transition measures.



### 7.32

Cork City Council will consider ways of enhancing the sustainability of food consumed in the city by promoting local produce and urban farming.

## Enhance Tourism

### 7.33

While Cork is an attractive city, it needs to diversify its tourist market by attracting more leisure tourists, as the majority of tourists visit the city for business purposes. This will be achieved by developing a broader range of activities in the city. Cork City Council will support the expansion of the cultural offering of the city, in particular, the development of the Crawford Arts Centre and the provision of the Cork Events Centre. In addition, the City Council will work with existing attractions to continuously improve their offering. The City Council will enable the expansion of the range of cultural attractions, with an emphasis on the maritime and other heritage assets of the City. Cork City Council will support the development of outdoor activities, including outdoor dining, sports, and cultural activities. Cork City Council will implement a wayfinding strategy for the city, to improve information and interpretation of the range of activities in the city. The tourist accommodation supply should match demand in a sustainable manner.

## Continue to Improve Quality of Placemaking

### 7.34

Quality placemaking is recognised as a method of improving the quality of life of residents and attracting visitors to the city. In addition, the quality of the city enhances the potential to attract internationally mobile skilled labour. Cork City Council will implement public realm enhancements throughout the city, in particular, Bishop Lucey Park, Marina Park, The Grand Parade Quarter, MacCurtain Street along with other areas in the city centre and neighbourhoods throughout the city.

## Build A Diverse and Resilient Economy

### 7.35

Economic resilience is dependent on both the diversity of economic activity, and the scope to attract new or emerging economic sectors. In addition to the property solutions and the enterprise ecosystem, Cork City Council will support a diverse range of economic sectors by enabling the provision of utilities, connectivity / broadband and transport solutions required by these sectors. In particular, Cork City will continue to adapt to the quickly evolving digital environment and seek to implement and continuously review the Cork City Digital Strategy. Importantly, Cork City will implement smart specialisation measures in economic sectors of strength.

## Develop Markets and Excellence in Business Products and Services

### 7.36

Becoming a city of scale will provide commercial opportunities for a more diverse range of business services. It will also create a market for continued excellence in products and services, whether they are local retail, hospitality, cultural services, business support services such as accountancy, legal services, logistics, financial services / banking, rural enterprises etc.

## Strategic Employment Locations

### 7.37

Cork City's key employment locations as identified in the MASP include Cork City Centre, Hollyhill, Tramore Road, Blackpool / Kilbarry, University College Cork, Munster Technological University, Cork International Airport, Model Farm Road / South Environs, Cork University Hospital and Cork Science and Innovation Park. To inform this Development Plan, Cork City Council conducted a review of strategic employment locations which considered the future needs for employment lands and other property solutions over the period of the plan as outlined below.

## Cork City Strategic Employment Locations Study (SELS) 2021

### 7.38

The Cork City Strategic Employment Location Study (2021) was commissioned to inform the Development Plan in relation to the property requirements for office and manufacturing-based employment. This considered the level of land zoned to support the growth of a broad range of sectors over the lifetime of the plan (2022 – 2028) and onto 2031.

This involved an assessment of job requirements to support projected growth to 2028; a baseline assessment of existing office and manufacturing supply and zoned employment land; a qualitative and quantitative assessment of future zoned land requirements to meet the needs of the sectors and job projections; and recommendations on potential new strategic employment locations in the City to meet these growth requirements.



## Jobs Growth Target

### 7.39

As set out in the SELS, zoned land is needed to achieve the targeted growth in employment that reflects the growth ambition for Cork City. In addition, when considering the quantum of land required for employment use it is important to consider the needs of businesses in areas that are earmarked for regeneration e.g. Cork City Docklands and Tramore Road. There is also a need to ensure that Cork City can compete for internationally mobile investment and to provide opportunities for existing business to re-locate to larger premises whilst continuing to operate in their current location while the new premises is under construction//refurbishment. This requires a flexible employment land strategy. This dynamic nature of economic development emphasises the need to plan ahead to deliver serviced strategic employment sites. For the purpose of informing the zoning of employment land in Cork City, a jobs target in the order of 31,000 jobs over the period to 2028 informs the Development Plan.

## Strategic Employment Land Requirement

### 7.40

The SELS found that there is 650ha of employment zoned land in Cork City, of which 417ha is undeveloped. However, 63% of these undeveloped lands are spread across five sites (Tivoli, Kilbarry, Ballincollig, Cork International Airport and CSIP), all of which have longer term development trajectories. This Development Plan seeks to reprioritise this into a more realistic development framework that included reviewing all of the above growth locations.

### 7.41

Based on the SELS which applies international good practice in transposing jobs growth into zoned land requirements and accounts for additional zoned land to facilitate future decanting of up to 4,000 jobs from regeneration areas including City Docks, Tivoli and areas under regeneration influence such as Tramore Road, the Development Plan is informed by a minimum zoned employment land target of 207ha to meet office, manufacturing and light industry related employment needs.

However, it is unlikely that these lands will be developed over the period of the plan due to infrastructural constraints.

- **Ballincollig:** Land north of Castle Road can deliver a mix of uses, including employment uses as part of a comprehensive, high quality development.
- **Tivoli:** The first phase of development of Tivoli will enable a mix of employment and residential uses at the western end of the site.

### 7.43

Additional lands have been identified as potential employment sites with a view to supporting social inclusion, attracting strategic investment and harnessing economic opportunities in a sustainable manner. These are outlined in the tables on the following pages.

### 7.44

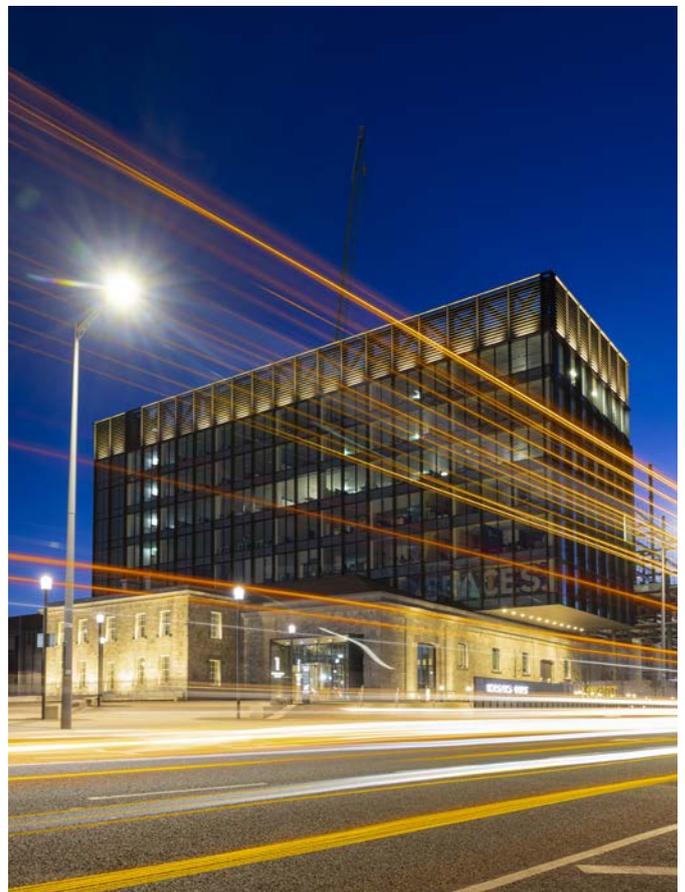
In total, the Development Plan provides for approximately 207ha of zoned, undeveloped employment land (not including retail zonings) including an allowance for employment from proposals within the City Centre, Town Centres, District Centres and mixed-use sites over the period to 2028.

## Strategic Employment Sites

### 7.42

The following Strategic Employment Sites are proposed across the City.

- **Cork Science and Innovation Park:** Considering the evolving dynamics of economic development the proposed composition of the CSIP will be made up of 35ha employment use, and zoning of lands to accommodate the expansion of MTU, the provision of open spaces and the long-term provision of housing.
- **Cork International Airport:** Cork City Council recognises the importance of Cork International Airport as a key driver of the Southern Region. There is a need to diversify the income sources of the airport to ensure it continues to be financially viable. Therefore, Cork City Council will work with Cork International Airport to agree a master plan for the development of the airport, which will include an element of employment lands.



<b>Strategic Employment Site</b>	Blarney Business Park Extension	<b>Zoning</b>	Light Industry and Related Uses
<b>Area</b>	22.5ha	<b>Zoning Tier</b>	Tier 1



## Strategic Employment Site

# 1

<b>Strategic Employment Site</b>	Clogheen Business Park Extension	<b>Zoning</b>	Light Industry and Related Uses
<b>Area</b>	3ha	<b>Zoning Tier</b>	Tier 1

## Strategic Employment Site

# 2



<b>Strategic Employment Site</b>	Land at Ballyvolane	<b>Zoning</b>	Light Industry and Related Uses
<b>Area</b>	31ha	<b>Zoning Tier</b>	Tier 2



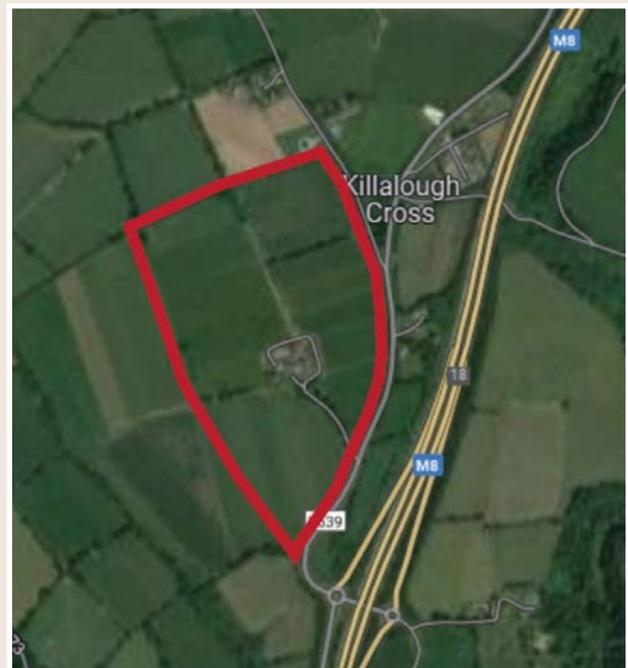
**Strategic Employment Site**

3

<b>Strategic Employment Site</b>	Land at Glanmire (4A)	<b>Zoning</b>	Logistics
<b>Area</b>	22ha	<b>Zoning Tier</b>	Tier 2

**Strategic Employment Site**

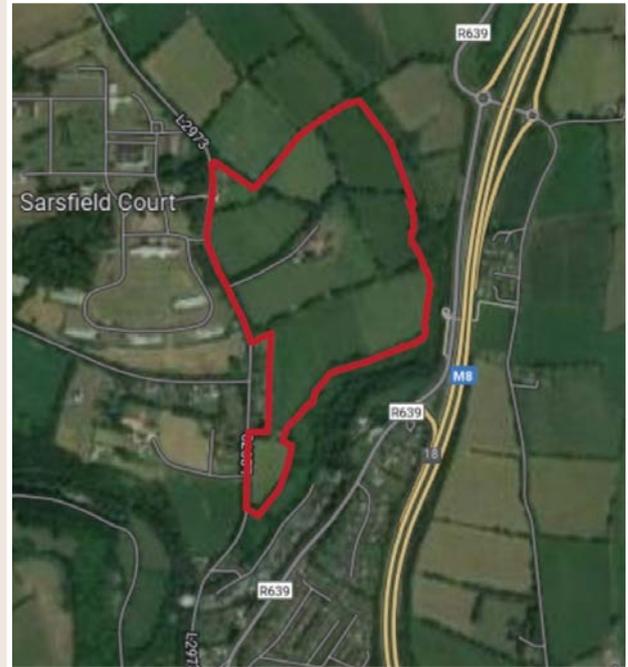
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<b>Strategic Employment Site</b>	Land at Glanmire (4B)	<b>Zoning</b>	Light Industry and Related Uses
<b>Area</b>	24ha	<b>Zoning Tier</b>	Tier 2

**Strategic Employment Site**

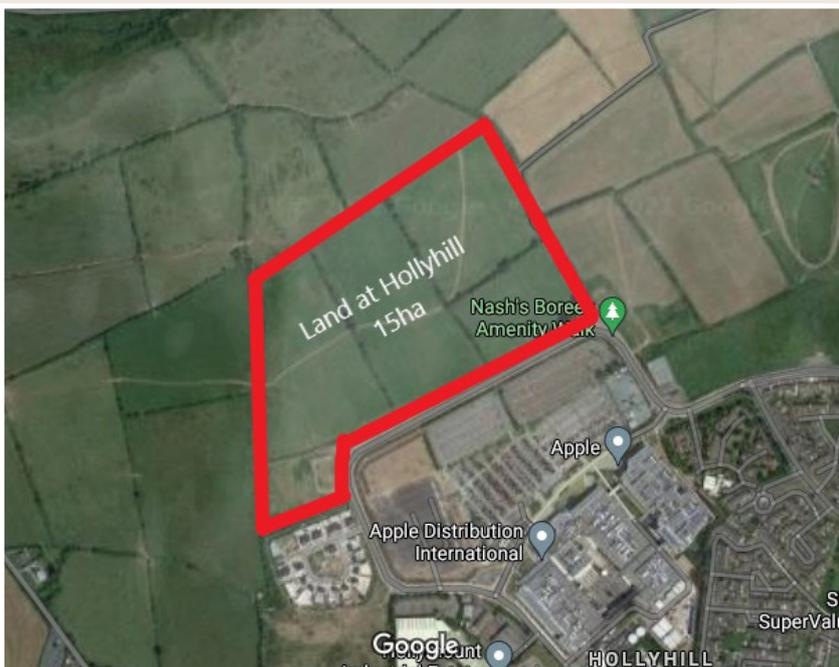
4



<b>Strategic Employment Site</b>	Land at Hollyhill	<b>Zoning</b>	Business and Technology
<b>Area</b>	15ha	<b>Zoning Tier</b>	Tier 1

**Strategic Employment Site**

5





## Key Employment Types

### Offices

#### 7.45

Office uses form a vital part of Cork City's economy and provide a significant amount of employment, particularly in the City Centre. A wide range of activities take place in an office environment including retail offices such as banks, general business activities but also technology uses such as software development and various forms of research and development.

#### 7.46

Office based activities tend to have a high density of employment when compared to manufacturing uses and as such are better suited to locations which are accessible by public transport and other sustainable transport modes<sup>3</sup>. The impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the density of employees per office space is not yet clear, however, it is anticipated that employers will require lower densities and, in some cases, offer a blended solution of office and remote working. Both options will be provided for in Cork City.

#### 7.47

Cork City, and particularly the City Centre with proportionate provision in the District Centres and urban towns, represent the most appropriate and sustainable locations for office development.

<sup>3</sup> UK Homes and Communities Agency, Employment Density Guide, 2015.

## Retail Offices

### 7.48

Retail offices are those where financial, professional and other services are provided to visiting members of the public. The primary location for retail offices will continue to be the City Centre and District Centres. These are addressed within the retail section of this chapter below.

## General Offices

### 7.49

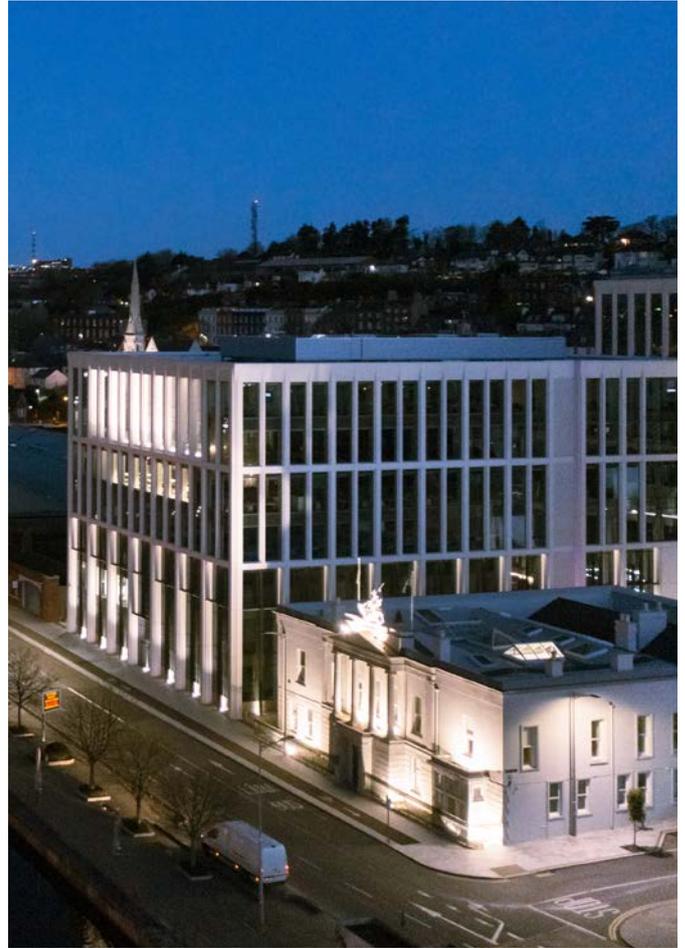
General offices provide a range of financial, professional and other services and administrative services. In some instances, they may be combined with a retail office in appropriate locations. As outlined above there is increasing overlap between technology and general office functions in terms of the type of accommodation they need and the density of employment. This has locational implications due to potentially high levels of traffic generation if alternatives to the car are unavailable.

### 7.50

The main focus for office uses in the city has traditionally been the City Centre, where the mix of retail office and general office activities are essential to the health and vibrancy of the City Centre. While there has been significant office construction in the City Centre in the last decade these new facilities are nearing full occupation as set out in the Cork City Strategic Employment Locations Study (SELS).

### 7.51

There remains scope for development of large floor plate offices in the City Centre and eastwards into Docklands, as a natural extension of the City Centre. This Plan will strongly support development of offices in these areas which can be served by existing transport and other infrastructure. The employment generated would also help support the City Centre retail and service functions.



### 7.52

General offices will be open for consideration in Business and Technology zones in the suburbs of the city, provided each office unit is greater than 1,000 sqm in area, in order to encourage smaller office uses to locate in the City Centre. These zones are well dispersed throughout the city and currently provide a significant amount of employment. In order to increase focus on the City Centre and adjacent mixed-use areas for office development over the next plan period, the Cork City Council will be guided by the general distribution strategy set out in the Cork City SELS and in the Strategic Employment Locations section above.

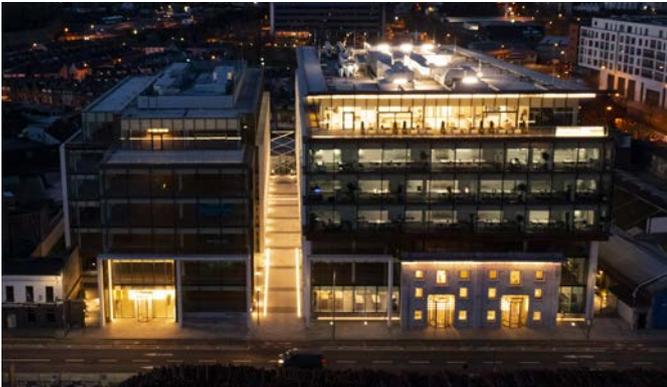
### 7.53

General office uses will also be open for consideration in District Centres, provided they are in scale with the overall size of the specific District Centre and do not exceed a total of 20,000 sqm in any one District Centre.

## Technology Industries

### 7.54

Traditional industries are being replaced by new categories of business which provide a range of products and services in an environment which is frequently similar to a modern office environment. These businesses are sometimes known as office-based industry. They include activities such as software development, information technology, telemarketing, commercial research and development, data processing, publishing, and media recording. They are increasingly locating in City Centre and edge of City Centre locations. Cork City Council will support development of these activities, particularly in the City Centre and Docklands and also in the suburban Business and Technology Zones. As these are frequently high intensity employment uses similar to offices, the provision of high-quality public transport will be a priority in determining the capacity of suburban locations to take these activities.



## Light Industry and Other Related Uses

### 7.55

Light industry and manufacturing are core contributors to the local economy. They provide for a diverse economic base to support a more inclusive and resilient city overall and can be an integral part of the Circular Economy. New collaborative ways of delivering responsible entrepreneurship, underpinned by sustainable design and circularity is supported within these sectors and the wider economy.

### 7.56

There is a need to protect space for these uses due to increasing land values and higher density developments and this can be done effectively through zoning. As set out in the strategic employment locations section, consideration also needs to be given to how these uses are distributed throughout Cork City with integration between the economic uses and current skills-sets whilst also looking ahead to upskilling and higher education attainment rates city-wide.

### 7.57

The general strategy will be to retain the majority of these light industrial areas and where possible, provide for their expansion where there is limited capacity in existing facilities or zoned areas. Offices or office-based industry or retail uses will not be permitted in areas zoned for light industry unless they are ancillary to the primary industrial uses. Leisure uses which are compatible with the surrounding uses may be open for consideration in limited cases where no other suitable location is available, the land is not needed for industrial uses (documentary evidence may be required), and taking into account access, traffic and broader safety issues, and amenity considerations. In determining the compatibility of any particular leisure use within this zone Cork City Council will take into account inter alia existing levels of non-industrial uses in the surrounding zoned area; the major land use in any area zoned for light industry purposes should be uses permitted under the primary objective of this land-use zoning.

### 7.58

There are a number of general industrial uses in transitional parts of Cork City where planned regeneration is proposed, such as Tivoli and Docklands, but also in areas that are under regeneration influence such as Tramore Road. Cork City Council supports and will facilitate the relocation of these industries to more appropriate and suitable premises, including the strategic employment locations identified in this Plan.

## Health and Education

### 7.59

The City contains a significant number of institutions which are collectively major employers in the City. The growth and collaboration within these sectors is recognised as a vital component of the City's economic success.

## Commercial Leisure

### 7.60

Commercial leisure facilities are those run on a profit basis and include cinemas, family entertainment centres such as bowling, indoor children's play centres, fitness centres, gyms, swimming pools, hotels, restaurants, public houses etc. Commercial leisure facilities generate a high level of movement and are best located in places that offer the highest levels of accessibility to a range of transport modes, in particular public transport.

### 7.61

However, it is also important to protect the amenities of the City Centre and of residential areas. The City Council will therefore seek to control the location, size and activities of entertainment uses that are likely to attract large numbers of people, in particular 'super-pubs' and night clubs, in order to safeguard residential amenity, environmental quality and the established character and function of parts of the City Centre.

## Home Based Economic Activities

### 7.62

Home-based economic activities include home / remote working and small-scale commercial activities carried out by residents of a dwelling which are ancillary to the main use of the property as residential accommodation. It has been magnified as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, though the long term trend is still unknown.

Cork City Council supports more flexible and sustainable working practices and recognises their potential in transitioning to a carbon neutral society, improving quality of life and making the labour market more accessible to those who cannot commit to long-distance commuting or being permanently based in a workplace.

### 7.63

As a separate consideration, home-based economic activities also encompass uses such as small-scale childcare provision, art-based activities such as painting or craft workshops, and single person offices such as professional services where public access is not a normal requirement. These activities can take place within existing buildings or in new live-work units specifically designed to accommodate home-based economic activities. This latter form of development would be appropriate in locations within the City Centre and Docklands, and in or close to Town, District or Neighbourhood and Local Centres. As set out previously in this chapter, the establishment of neighbourhood enterprise centres will be supported by Cork City Council, and these also complement home-based activities or a transition towards home-based activities as not all existing properties will have sufficient space or suitable working environment.

## The Maritime/ Blue Economy

### 7.64

Cork City owes its origins and historic growth to its maritime location and functions. Although the migration of Port activity to a more appropriate location at Ringaskiddy is required to maximise the competitiveness of the facility in a global maritime market, Cork City will continue to support the migration of the Port and facilitate the growth of the maritime economy within the wider Cork Metropolitan Area and Southern Region. Although the primary maritime-related functions are relocating, the city council will support the development of the maritime economy by facilitating the education, research and development and professional services that relate to the maritime economy.

## The Rural Economy

### 7.65

The rural economy provides employment in the City's hinterland. It also plays a role in providing a sustainable food supply, transitioning towards a carbon neutral society, improving the quality of the environment, curating the natural landscape and character of our rural areas, supporting tourism and facilitating active recreation. In a Cork City context, the rural hinterland supports a mix of businesses of varying sizes across a range of sectors; however, it is also under strong urban influence and the development plan needs to protect its character and quality, whilst supporting its housing, employment, infrastructure and community requirements.



### 7.66

One of the 10 National Strategic Outcomes in the National Planning Framework seeks to deliver stronger rural economies and communities while the Government's Charter for Rural Ireland (2016) seeks "to support enterprise creation and development, maintain and restore the rural cultural heritage, support and protect existing towns and settlements, facilitate safe and secure rural communities and foster an increased quality of life for all rural dwellers".

This underpins this Development Plan and Cork City Council will support and facilitate the growth and diversification of the rural economy alongside associated improvements to help improve the quality of life for those living in rural settlements and the hinterland.

### 7.67

In March 2021, the Department of Rural and Community Development published its 'Our Rural Future: Government's blueprint to transform rural Ireland'. It forms a 5-year transformational strategy for rural development that focuses on facilitating remote working, revitalising town centres, rural jobs, adventure tourism, green economy and broadband roll-out. All of these considerations are applicable to Cork City's hinterland.

## Quarries and Aggregate Resources

### 7.68

Currently there are no quarries registered under Section 261 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) operating within the functional area of Cork City Council, and given its largely built-up nature, it is considered that there is limited potential for quarrying activity. However, as mineral extraction and the aggregate industry can provide raw materials for the construction industry, it is important to protect any reserves of aggregates and minerals from development that might impact on their utilisation. As the processes involved in extraction can give rise to long term environmental effects and significantly alter the character of the landscape as well as impacting negatively on residential amenity, there is also a need to balance the economic benefits of extraction against potential environmental impacts. Extractions that would result in a reduction of the visual amenity of areas of high amenity or damage to areas of scientific importance or of geological, botanical, zoological and other natural significance including all designated European Sites will not be permitted. Cork City Council will have regard to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities for Quarries and Ancillary Activities (DoEHLG, 2004) when assessing applications relating to the extraction industry.

## Diversification of the Rural Economy

### 7.69

The Development Plan supports in principle the enhancement and expansion of rural economic uses such as agriculture, agri-food, agri-tech, rural crafts and arts, social enterprises, forestry, tourism and horticulture. This also extends to entrepreneurial projects and initiatives arising from these uses, particularly where they generate environmental betterment.

### 7.70

There are also further opportunities to enhance economic potential and jobs creation through innovation and diversification in Cork City's hinterland.

## Creative Industries and the Arts

### 7.71

Cork City already benefits from a host of creative and artistic enterprise and this economic niche area will be supported into the future as part of the overall strategy of delivering a more diverse economy. The sector includes, but is not limited



<sup>4</sup> Fáilte Ireland Key Tourism Facts 2019 (Published March 2021).

<sup>5</sup> [www.europeanbestdestinations.com/destinations/cork](http://www.europeanbestdestinations.com/destinations/cork)

to, music, film, visual and performing arts, IT, publishing, art and crafts. The City Council will encourage the delivery of new workspace for SMEs, the creative industries, artists and the fashion industry within new mixed-use developments and will work with stakeholders to explore opportunities for workspaces to be delivered.

## Tourism

### 7.72

Tourism is an important indigenous economic industry in Cork City where it provides income and jobs through direct and indirect employment. It also plays a valuable role in promoting Cork as a place to live and work to visitors and businesses with the sector often acting as an initial interface between Ireland and international investors, therefore representing an opportunity to positively influence foreign direct investment. Cork City boasts a high quality natural, cultural and built heritage and forms a gateway to the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East. In 2019, prior to disruption associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, the tourism sector generated €9.5 billion nationally, equating to 3.6% of Gross National Product (GNP) in revenue terms. The south west region, including Cork, was the second highest performing region (behind Dublin) in terms of the number of visitors in 2019 and Blarney Castle and Gardens was in the top-10 of fee-charging visitor attractions in the State, attracting a total of 460,000 visitors in the same year. More recently, travel website 'European Best Destinations' cited Cork as among the 15 of the 'European Best Destinations 2020' following a vote of more than 600,000 people.

### 7.73

Ireland's national tourism policy, 'People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025' seeks to maximise the economic contribution of tourism, while protecting the invaluable assets that are our natural, built and cultural heritage. This reflects the approach of Cork City Council in promoting the sustainable growth and expansion of tourism in the city whilst protecting the very assets and uses that attract tourism. It is a diverse and dynamic sector with intense competition for visitors and this is likely to be amplified as the global tourism sector recovers from setbacks associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.



#### 7.74

Heritage, cultural, creative and arts facilities form a key part of Cork City's tourism offer and are a catalyst for further growth in visitor numbers. These are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8 while the tourism potential of rural parts of the wider city is discussed above and the City's Green and Blue Infrastructure is addressed in Chapter 6 Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Space and Biodiversity.

#### 7.75

As previously stated, at the time of preparation of the Development Plan, Cork City Council is working with Fáilte Ireland and other stakeholders to prepare a Destination Experience Development Plan for Cork City and East Cork. It is envisaged that this will address the reliance of Cork City's tourism market on commercial tourism. There is a need to broaden this base to include leisure tourism by developing the tourism products and activities in the city.

#### 7.76

Cork City Council supports in principle the enhancement and expansion of existing visitor facilities and the development of new facilities and activities, particularly those which optimize opportunities associated with our City's rich natural, built and cultural heritage and seek to introduce a new type of attraction which will help diversify the range of visitor attractions in the City. In particular the City Council will support the expansion of the cultural offering of the city, notably the development of the Crawford Art Gallery and the delivery of the Cork Events Centre.

#### 7.77

Cork City Council will also explore with stakeholders opportunities to introduce public realm improvements and better utilise our green and blue infrastructure particularly as part of our ambitious regeneration, compact growth and city neighbourhood proposals.

#### 7.78

In common with all other themes within this Development Plan, Cork City Council actively promotes a transition towards a more environmentally sustainable tourism sector.

## Visitor Accommodation

#### 7.79

The availability of a choice of visitor accommodation across a range of accommodation types is a key enabling factor in fostering tourism growth. The accommodation stock in Cork City, akin to cities worldwide, is weighted towards hotels. Despite limited growth pre-2018 and an under-supply of visitor bed spaces, the number of new hotel proposals and extensions to existing facilities has significantly increased in the meantime with new or expanded premises opening or construction nearing completion and more proposals in the pipeline. As the city's demographic expands with commensurate increase in economic growth, there is likely to be more demand for accommodation to support commercial and leisure tourism and this will need to be supported by visitor accommodation growth into the future.



### 7.80

In addition to hotel rooms, alternative formal visitor accommodation types are essential for providing a choice of facilities to meet the different needs of visitors. This includes exploring opportunities to provide short-term stay motorhome parking facilities with associated services.

### 7.81

In the majority of cases, hotel accommodation should be delivered within the City Centre and Urban Town Centres where public transport capacity and associated visitor services are most prevalent. In all instances, development or conversion proposals to provide visitor accommodation should be located close to existing or planned public transport corridors with greater emphasis on sustainable transport options and significant adverse impacts on residential amenity are avoided where facilities are located adjoining or close to residential development.

## Retail

### Introduction

### 7.82

This section aims to promote the vitality and viability of the main retail centres in Cork City and encourage their function as mixed-use centres into the future. Cork City Council remains committed to preparing a Cork Metropolitan Area Joint Retail Study and Strategy with Cork County Council, having regard to the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012). It may be necessary to include any policy outcomes of this process as a variation to the plan.

## Retail Trends

### 7.83

The retail market has undergone significant changes in recent years, with trends including a steady increase in online shopping evident over the past decade. There is a new focus on ‘experience’ as part of the draw of city and town centres, with a move away from mainly comparison retail (for definition see: Glossary of Terms) to a greater emphasis on leisure, culture, food and beverage.



### 7.84

The Covid-19 pandemic presented challenges in attracting people into centres with the closure of non-essential retail and more people working from home during periods of higher restriction on movement. It is currently unclear what long-term impact the pandemic will have on Irish shopping patterns, but vacancies have continued to escalate on prime high streets and in shopping centres around the country in recent months. Larger city centres have been particularly adversely affected due to the absence of students, office workers and tourists. However, despite these trends and continued global uncertainty, the Irish economy and the retail sector remained strong and competitive prior to the pandemic and are likely to recover post-pandemic. Investing in the consumer experience is anticipated to be the key to success in securing resilience in retail moving forward, with policy support playing an important role in helping to future-proof city and town centres against the ongoing uncertainty.

### 7.85

Cork City Council recognises the challenge of meeting the demand for mixed-use centres and bringing new life into our cities and towns, by supporting retail, and providing for a range of other uses including residential, leisure and recreation, employment, tourism, civic, community, cultural, health and education. The retail industry must be able to adapt to changing circumstances in order to maintain a strong post-pandemic economy.

## Retail Hierarchy

### 7.86

The retail hierarchy defines the role and importance of retail centres and forms the basis for determining the quantum and location of new retail development in the Cork Metropolitan Area. It is based on the Retail Hierarchy set out in the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan - Cork MASP Policy Objective 16 and the City’s Settlement Strategy, with the role of the various centres outlined on the next page.

**Cork Metropolitan Area Retail Hierarchy (Cork City locations shown in black, Cork County locations shown in bold blue type)**

Local Level	Type of Centre	Name of Centre
Level 1	Metropolitan Centre	Cork City Centre
Level 2	Planned District Centre	Ballyvolane
Level 2	District Centre	Blackpool
Level 2	District Centre	Douglas
Level 2	Planned District Centre	Hollyhill
Level 2	District Centre	Mahon Point
Level 2	District Centre	Wilton
Level 2	Large Urban Town Centre	Ballincollig
Level 2	Planned District Centre	Cork Docklands
Level 2	<b>Large Metropolitan Town Centre</b>	<b>Carrigaline</b>
Level 2	<b>Large Metropolitan Town Centre</b>	<b>Cobh</b>
Level 2	<b>Large Metropolitan Town Centre</b>	<b>Midleton</b>
Level 3	Small Urban Town Centre	Blarney
Level 3	Small Urban Town Centre	Glanmire
Level 3	<b>Small Metropolitan Town Centre</b>	<b>Carrigtwohill</b>
Level 3	<b>Small Metropolitan Town Centre</b>	<b>Monard</b>
Level 3	<b>Small Metropolitan Town Centre</b>	<b>Passage West</b>
Level 4	Neighbourhood / Local Centres and Large Village Centres	Identified on zoning maps

## Cork City Centre

### 7.87

Cork City Centre is the main business, retail and leisure location in the Cork Metropolitan Area and is recognised by the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) as playing a Level 1 retail role (Metropolitan Centre).

It is a focus for higher order comparison retail and caters to the needs of a wide catchment area. The City Centre is more than just a place to carry out retail activity with leisure, recreational, tourism and cultural activities also an important part of the local economy. Each of these complimentary functions will become more important to the City Centre in the future.

**7.88**

Supporting and encouraging a healthy residential population is also a means of counter-acting the increasing draw to online and out-of-centre shopping. If promoted in a managed fashion, above ground floor living in the City Centre can add significant footfall and increase vitality and viability. As outlined in the City Centre section of this Plan (see Chapter 10), comparison shopping will continue to be encouraged at ground floor level on Primary Retail Frontages (St. Patrick's Street and Opera Lane) with some complimentary uses permitted in exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that these will enhance the main retail function of these streets. A key part of achieving a sustainable mix of uses lies in taking advantage of areas that would be most appropriate for food and beverage uses that can activate the street in summer, providing outdoor seating and encouraging activity on the street. The most appropriate locations are south-facing façades and sites where two sides of a building can be activated to encourage pedestrian flow without blocking the public thoroughfare. Such sites have been identified in the Mapped Objectives. It is important to continue to support a comparison goods function, therefore these uses should support rather than dominate the provision of retail on St. Patrick's Street. Another attribute of the City Centre is the high number of independently owned shops, an important asset as 'authentic experiences', good customer services and variety, which contribute to the attractiveness of the City Centre as a place to visit.

## District Centres and Large Urban Town Centres

**7.89**

District Centres and Large Urban Town Centres are at Level 2 in the Retail Hierarchy, performing a range of retail and non-retail service functions including the provision of a range of convenience shopping (for definition see: Glossary of Terms), a range of comparison outlets and local services such as banks, post office, restaurants, public houses, community and cultural facilities. They serve a localised function and provide for the weekly shopping needs of their catchment areas.

District Centres are the centres located within the City Suburbs (Blackpool, Wilton, Mahon Point and Douglas) and Large Urban Town Centres include Ballincollig Town Centre. There are also 3 planned District Centres to cater for areas of population growth within the City (Ballyvolane and Cork Docklands), or where the range of services merits enhancement to serve its catchment (Hollyhill). It should be noted that the primary function of these centres should be mixed-use in nature, with a range of retail services, community and social facilities to meet the day-to-day needs of the local population and should not be dominated by one particular type of use.

## Small Urban Town Centres

**7.90**

Blarney and Glanmire are Small Urban Town Centres (Level 3 in the Retail Hierarchy). They have a more limited retail role and function than Level 2 District Centres and Large Urban Town Centres. Retail representation in these centres is primarily focused on local convenience and service provision, with a limited comparison offer such as small-scale hardware, retail pharmacies and clothes shops. Given the level of proposed residential growth in Blarney and Glanmire some additional retail development could be directed towards these centres in order to allow them to adequately cater for the needs of their future populations, thereby reinforcing their Small Urban Town status.



## Neighbourhood and Local Centres

### 7.91

The Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) identifies these types of centres as providing shopping at the most local level, through a mixture of neighbourhood shops in suburban areas, and village stores or post-offices in rural areas. They are included at Level 4 of the Retail Hierarchy and generally comprise a small group of shops, typically a newsagent, small supermarket or general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of local nature serving a small, localised catchment population. They are identified in the zoning maps included in Volume 2. Neighbourhood and local centres are generally anchored by a small or medium sized convenience store and tend to include a number of smaller, associated local service units that enhance the overall appeal of the centre in terms of service provision and design. It is essential that they are mixed-use centres incorporating a range of local services. In assessing applications for new centres, the Council will have regard to the proximity of nearby alternative retail facilities and the vitality and viability of these centres, the design quality of the proposed centre and its mix of uses, ensuring that the centre is not overtly dominated by one particular unit or use. This should be demonstrated through the submission of a Retail Impact Assessment (see details below).

## Small Local Shops

### 7.92

Small local shops such as corner shops selling convenience goods are generally located in residential areas serving the daily needs of nearby residents and are of such a small scale that does not merit inclusion in the Retail Hierarchy. It is recognised that these shops can play an important role in urban or village life, however any new proposals should be of a size and scale which would not be detrimental to the health of nearby centres defined within the retail hierarchy and should not have a negative impact on residential amenity. Guidance on petrol filling station shops is included in Chapter 11 Placemaking and Managing Development.

## Retail Warehousing / Bulky Goods

### 7.93

The Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) defines a Retail Warehouse as a large single-level store specialising in the sale of bulky household goods such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods, and bulky DIY items, catering mainly for car-borne customers. Existing provision includes Blackpool Retail Park, Mahon Point Retail Park and Turner's Cross Retail Park. There are also a number of locations that function as industrial estates and business parks, rather than obvious retail destinations, which host retail warehousing operators such as Kinsale Road Retail Park, Doughcloyne Industrial Estate, the Ballincollig Link Road and Northpoint Business Park. Such developments have generally been delivered in a piecemeal manner, and care must be taken to ensure that similar developments do not have negative impacts on the vitality and viability of nearby designated centres.



**7.94**

There will be a general presumption against the development of additional retail parks and further retail warehousing located in industrial estates and business parks. The preferred location for new retail warehousing / bulky goods floor space is within the District Centres and Ballincollig (Large Urban) Town Centre. Certain sites within City Docks may also be appropriate. It is important that the range of goods sold in retail parks / retail warehouses is controlled to protect the comparison shopping function of the City Centre and other comparison locations identified in the Retail Hierarchy. The Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) acknowledges that there are ancillary items associated with an otherwise bulky good but recommend that the retail floorspace devoted to such ancillary products should not exceed 20% of the total net retail floorspace of the relevant retail warehouse unit.



## The Sequential Approach to the Location of Retail

**7.95**

Any future retail floorspace should be distributed in line with national guidance on the sequential approach. The Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) confirm that the sequential approach to retail development is an overarching objective in retail planning to enhance the vitality and viability of city and town centres.

**7.96**

The Core Retail Areas (CRAs) for the City Centre, District Centres and Large Urban Town Centres (Levels 1 and 2 of the Retail Hierarchy) are the preferred locations for significant new retail development within the City. These centres are identified in the Mapped Objectives as the City Centre Core Retail Area and the areas zoned District Centre in the case of the suburban centres and Ballincollig Town Centre. The sequential approach should be applied to new development, change of use and extension applications that are of a scale that is likely to have a significant impact on the role and function of existing retail centres. The order of priority is to locate retail development in the City Centre and designated District Centres/Ballincollig Town Centre and to only allow retail development in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations where all other options have been exhausted.

There will be a general presumption against large, out-of-centre retail development in the City. Where an edge of centre site is proposed, the applicant must demonstrate that no other sites or potential sites including vacant units are suitable, available or viable within the centre. The Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) define the edge of centre area as being within easy walking distance of the identified primary retail area (usually between 300 and 400 metres of the Core Retail Area and to be confirmed in individual circumstances).

## Retail Impact Assessment

**7.97**

Significant retail proposals should be supported by a Retail Impact Assessment, in order to demonstrate compliance with the City Development Plan and that there will be no adverse effect on the vitality and viability of any existing retail centre, including its revitalisation and rejuvenation, and aligns to the principle of achieving compact growth. Retail Impact Assessments shall be in accordance with the requirements as set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012). The requirement to submit a retail impact assessment shall be determined by Cork City Council and may be done so at pre-application consultation stage or in the course of determining the application.

## Monitoring Retail Trends

### 7.98

The Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) advise the relevant planning authorities to regularly monitor trends in their area and update retail policies if appropriate. Cork City Council will monitor large retail permissions and review changes in population targets that may be carried out during the lifetime of the Plan to identify any policy adjustments required. It may also be necessary to review policy in light of the changing nature of the retail sector to ensure the vibrancy and vitality of the various centres.

## Vibrant, Mixed-use Centres

### 7.99

Enhancing the vitality and viability of the City Centre and other centres is key to maintaining vibrancy into the future. While the decline in the requirement for physical retail space was in place prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the many changes it has generated have served to help us understand how these centres should operate in the future. It is clear that the growth in online shopping will continue to increase, with new generations embracing this format.

### 7.100

Many centres have performed better than expected during the pandemic because people have stayed local. While retail will always sit at the core of these centres' function, city and town centres are turning more towards their original functions as places where people live, work, shop and socialise in the same location.

### 7.101

Cork City Centre has retained a large number of independent retailers, which is a major asset considering the decline of department stores, large multiples and certain brands. In order to be successful the physical retail offer will need to differentiate itself from that on the internet and will become heavily orientated towards providing for convenience goods and services, and fashion, with brands in their own units rather than part

of a major store, as well as local basket food shopping, local products and a properly rounded offer. This offer will likely require smaller retail units. St. Patrick's Street in particular could stand to benefit from this with a predominance of historic buildings containing smaller units. While retail sits at the core, there are many other uses that will complement it, including food and beverage, leisure, cafés from which people can work, gyms, community uses, health and wellbeing amenities. There will potentially be an increase in the amount of residential and employment space, bringing people back into the heart of our centres.

### 7.102

The development of the public realm is a key factor in creating and supporting a vibrant City Centre. Cork City Council's investment in pedestrianisation in the City Centre and the trend towards outdoor dining, brought to the fore during the pandemic, is a welcome development. Centres will need to offer a truly rounded social and cultural experience which include pop-up events, market stalls, retail promotions and street entertainment, making sure there is always something new to see when people visit. Careful thought needs to be given to how the public realm is activated, ensuring that cafés and restaurants can spill out with their tables and chairs. Live uses at ground floor level promote activity onto the public realm. New complementary uses need to be planned for those areas where retail used to exist, creating a sense of community. The ambition will be to create centres that are authentic, with their own strong sense of place which the public will respond to. Investing in the Night-time Economy, which encourages uses into the evening and that cater for all will also be encouraged. Further details on this are included in the City Centre section in Chapter 10.





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# Employment and Economy Development Objectives

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## Strategic Objective 6

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### Employment and Economy

To support Cork City's role as the economic driver for the region and the creation of a strong, resilient, diverse and innovative economy, and enable a just transition to a low carbon economy. Cork City Council will support the evolution of the innovation city by linking academia with employers and creating education and training opportunities for all. Employment growth will be focussed on the key strategic areas of the City Centre, docklands, urban towns, neighbourhoods, suburban district centres and strategic employment locations identified in this Plan. Cork City Council will support the development of a suite of property solutions in appropriate locations required for job creation in a diverse and evolving economy. Opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy will be supported in appropriate locations. Cork City as a twin-university city will continue to be a city of learning, using knowledge and talent as a key enabler for city and economic growth. Tourism is an economic contributor and Cork City Council will support sustainable tourism product development and facilities in appropriate locations.

The growth and expansion of the creative industries and the arts in Cork City is also supported and includes encouraging the delivery of new workspaces as part of mixed-use developments and supporting the potential for workspaces.

Good urban design and placemaking are increasingly critical to successful economic development. Proposals for new employment, economic, educational, retail or tourism development in Cork City will be required to demonstrate high-quality architectural, landscape and urban design and placemaking, and will integrate with sustainable transport networks. Development proposals will be supported in appropriate locations across Cork City in accordance with the retail and employment strategies set out in this Plan.



## Objective 7.1

### Strategic Economic Plans and Initiatives

To facilitate the sustainable economic growth of Cork City, the southern region and the country by:

- a. Supporting the implementation of the forthcoming National Recovery and Resilience Plan;
- b. Supporting the delivery of strategic plans and initiatives of IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, the Southern Regional Assembly, the South West Regional Skills Forum, the South West Enterprise Plan and the Cork City Local Enterprise Office;
- c. Supporting the implementation of the 'Cork City Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 – Pure Cork' and the preparation and implementation of the new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) that is currently under review.



## Objective 7.2

### Supporting Economic Growth and Diversity

Cork City Council will continue to support economic growth at all levels and the diversification of the local economy. This includes working closely with IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, UCC, MTU and business interests to make Cork a global investment capital where businesses can flourish and expand as part of an agile and diverse employment network.



## Objective 7.3

### Economic Clusters and Innovation Corridor

To facilitate strategic innovation and competitiveness by:

- a. Supporting the prominence and expansion of existing economic clusters;
- b. Encouraging and promoting opportunities to facilitate new cluster development and create spin-off opportunities outside the clusters;
- c. There is an emerging innovation corridor across the city, spanning from the Cork Science and Innovation Park to MTU, UCC, CUH, North Mall Campus, the City Centre, Cork University Business School (CUBS), Docklands and Mahon. Proposals are advancing to link these by Light Rail Transit in the long term. The City Council will consolidate the innovation ecosystem, with a view to ensuring the impacts of innovation are felt throughout the city;
- d. To support investment in strategic national innovation enabling assets within the city, specifically the expansion of Tyndall National Institute to the North Mall and the development of UCC's new Cork University Business School in the City Centre.



## Objective 7.4

### Neighbourhood Community Enterprise Hubs

Cork City Council will encourage and support provision of Community Enterprise Hubs at Neighbourhood Centres.

## Objective 7.5

### Supporting an Economically Inclusive City

Cork City Council will work with education, community support and businesses stakeholders to target investment and supports in more disadvantaged neighbourhoods to facilitate greater education/training attainment levels and supports to assist in entering and prospering in the labour force.

Encourage and support the UNESCO City of Learning and in particular expand the concept of the Learning Neighbourhoods.



## Objective 7.6

### Social Enterprise

To encourage and support social enterprise developments in the city which by their very nature seek to tackle and address social, economic and environmental challenges. This can also help the city transition to a Circular City, and bring new collaborative ways of delivering responsible entrepreneurship, underpinned by sustainable design and circularity. The benefits include the creation of significant direct economic benefits including resilient job creation, new sustainable business opportunities and true cost reductions.

## Objective 7.7

### Education & Skills

To continue supporting education, health, research, training and employment support organisations to facilitate higher levels of education attainment, research and innovation and skills development. This will be addressed by:

- Supporting the continued operation and, where appropriate, expansion of existing or new higher education; further education; research and development institutions; incubator facilities and health institutions in the city. This includes seeking investment in infrastructure that will drive the roles of these institutions;
- Working with employers and their representative organisations, education, training and other stakeholder organisations to ensure that Cork's education and skills base is aligned with the needs of existing businesses, potential new businesses and new evolving sectors;
- Support synergies between our universities and businesses to help create and foster innovation and sectors of the future;
- Working with agencies such as SOLAS and the CETB to provide support to those who are unemployed, from communities with low education participation levels or in need of re-training/re-skilling.

## Objective 7.8

### Mobility Management Plans

In addition to traffic impact assessments, Cork City Council will require all planning applications for new employment uses, or extensions to existing commercial premises, for 100 or more employees to prepare mobility management plans which promote and prioritise the use of more sustainable transport modes.

## Objective 7.9

### Cork Digital City

- a. To work with partners in implementing the Cork City Digital Strategy and any successor strategy to help communities and businesses meet emerging digital opportunities and compete internationally where digital transformation of economic functions is gaining momentum.
- b. Working with Cork Smart Gateway, Cork City Council will promote investment in the transition of Cork City and its services to a digital future.

## Objective 7.10

### New Strategic Employment Sites

To support the sustainable delivery of high quality employment facilities taking into account other Development Plan objectives relating to zoning, transport and movement, urban design and placemaking, climate action, environmental management and sustainability, biodiversity, protecting cultural and built heritage and taking into account site specific objectives below:

- a. **Blarney Business Park Extension:**  
To provide for a high-quality extension to Blarney Business Park using the existing access to the Park, subject to finalisation of the M20 route corridor design and confirmation by TII of the suitable access arrangements for the business park;
- b. **Clogheen Business Park Extension:**  
To provide for a high-quality extension to the business park where care is needed to preserve the residential amenity of nearby residential properties;

- c. **Land at Ballyvolane:**

To provide for a high-quality employment scheme that integrates with wider development, specifically the Ballyvolane expansion area to the south;

- d. **Land at Glanmire:**

To provide for a high-quality employment development that will primarily service logistics or logistics related uses on Site 4A and Light Industrial Uses on Site 4B. The overall site shall be subject to a Masterplan to ensure connectivity to adjacent uses and accessibility to planned Cork Northern Transport Project and set out the future placemaking parameters for this landbank including access to proposed public transport infrastructure (bus terminus) at Sarsfield's Court Hospital. This strategic land bank is proposed to be sub-divided into 2 parcels as follows:

1. Site 4A to provide logistics uses.
2. Site 4b to provide for light industrial uses.

- e. **Land at Hollyhill:**

To provide for a high-quality business and technology scheme capable of accommodating expansion and other strategic investment in a manner that seeks to protect the surrounding landscape setting.



## Objective 7.11

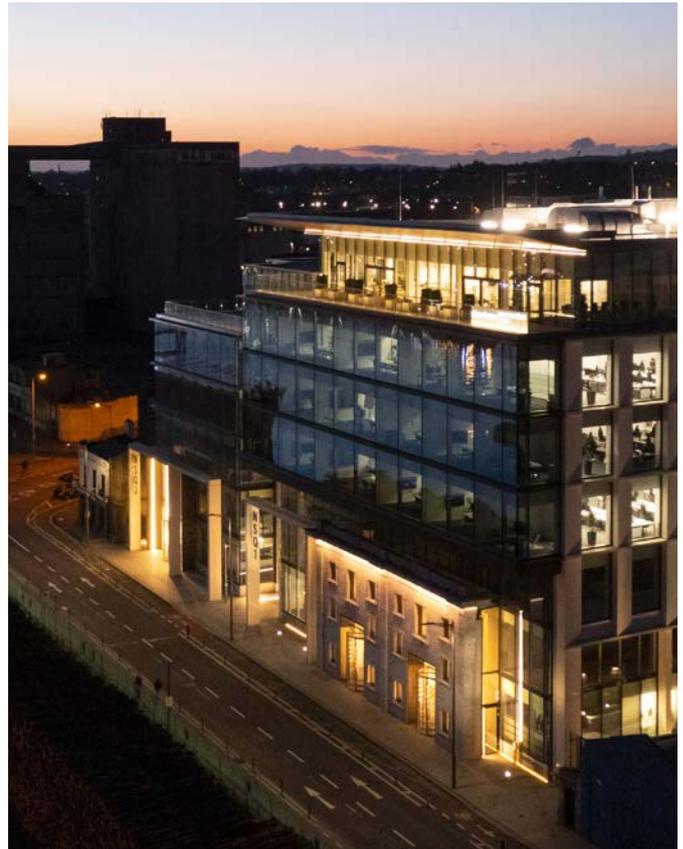
### Cork Science and Innovation Park

- a. To support the delivery of the Cork Science and Innovation Park to provide for the creation and expansion of office and laboratory-based enterprise in the areas of innovation / research and development, science, academic research and development, healthcare research and training.
- b. To support expansion of MTU for education and research uses and to incorporate sports and public open space along with some infrastructure uses.
- c. The development of the site should be in line with the best principles of placemaking, providing a sense of place, maximise opportunities to incorporate passive and active open space facilities. It should consider the best principles of sustainable development such as SUDS, carbon neutral development, and green campus concepts.
- d. In the long-term accommodate housing to the north west of the site.

## Objective 7.12

### Prime Office Locations

The City Council will support the development of the City Centre and Docklands as the primary locations for higher order general office development in the city region. Any scale of general office is acceptable in the City Centre, while general offices over 400sqm will be acceptable in Docklands mixed use zones.



## Objective 7.13

### Suburban General Offices

- a. General offices units over 1,000 sqm will be open for consideration in suburban Business and Technology Zones, with due consideration given to the employment strategy, availability of alternative suitable sites in the City Centre and adjoining mixed use areas in Docklands, and assessment of the potential impact of the development on the City Centre. Availability of high-quality public transport will also be a factor in determining the capacity of these locations to take more intensive office development.
- b. General offices will be open for consideration in District Centres provided each office unit is in excess of 1,000 sqm and the total area of offices is appropriate to the scale of the individual centre, subject to a general maximum of 20,000 sqm of offices in any one centre.



## Objective 7.14

### Technology and Office-based Industry

To support the development of high technology businesses in the Commercial Core Area of the City Centre, Docklands and Business and Technology Zones.



## Objective 7.15

### Light Industry

To protect areas zoned for light industry for such uses in order to maintain an adequate supply of light industrial space and employment in order to help ensure a diverse range of employment opportunities in the city.



## Objective 7.16

### Decanting of Industrial Uses from Regeneration Areas

To support and facilitate the decanting of industrial uses from the Cork Docklands (City Docks and Tivoli Docks) to more suitable zoned strategic employment locations. This includes supporting occupiers in existing industrial areas that are under regeneration influence close to the City Centre, such as Tramore Road, in relocating to more suitable and flexible locations elsewhere in Cork City.



## Objective 7.17

### Commercial Leisure

Encourage a broad range of commercial leisure activities in key locations and in suitable locations throughout the city.



## Objective 7.18

### Home Based Economic Activities

To permit home based economic activities where, by virtue of their nature and scale, they can be accommodated without detriment to the amenities of residential areas.



## Objective 7.19

### Live Work Units

To promote and encourage the development of 'Live work' units capable of accommodating home based economic activities in areas around the City Centre/Docklands and other sustainable development locations such as in or close to Town/District/Neighbourhood/Local Centres.

## Objective 7.20

### Maritime Economy

To support the Maritime Economy of Cork City and the wider region by:

- Supporting the migration of Port activities from Tivoli and Docklands to Cork Harbour.
- Facilitating research and development, innovation and professional services that support the maritime economy.

## Objective 7.21

### A Sustainable Rural Economy

To work with stakeholder organisations and representative groups and rural communities to promote and facilitate appropriate sustainable economic development, job creation and support services in our rural hinterland. This includes supporting the implementation of the Government's strategy; 'Our Rural Future: Government's blueprint to transform rural Ireland' (March 2021).

## Objective 7.22

### Diversification of the Rural Economy

To facilitate a more dynamic rural economy by supporting innovation and diversification in areas including, but not limited to, renewable energy generation at appropriate locations and scales, sustainable tourism, the bioeconomy, circular economy, social enterprise, craft industries and sustainable food generation.

## Objective 7.23

### Quarries and Aggregate Resources

To recognise the important role the mineral extraction and aggregate industry can play by protecting any reserves of aggregates and minerals from development that might impact on their utilisation. Extractions that would result in a reduction of the visual amenity of areas of high amenity or damage to areas of scientific importance or of geological, botanical, zoological and other natural significance including all designated European Sites or have a detrimental impact on residential amenity will not be permitted. The Planning Authority will have regard to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities for Quarries and Ancillary Activities (DoEHLG, 2004) when assessing applications relating to the extraction industry.

## Objective 7.24

### Creative Arts

To support the growth and expansion of the creative industries and the arts in Cork City that includes encouraging the delivery of new workspaces as part of mixed-use developments and supporting the potential for workspaces.



## Objective 7.25

### Sustainable Tourism

To support the sustainable growth of tourism and marketing of Cork City as a multi-faceted visitor destination and a gateway to the southern region, Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East by:

- a. Working in partnership with Fáilte Ireland, businesses and other stakeholders to support tourism investment, innovation and promotional and marketing strategies;
- b. Supporting the implementation of the Cork City Tourism Strategy 2017-2022, the Local Economic and Community Plan-2016-2021 (Pure Cork) and their successor strategies;
- c. To support the implementation of the Tourism Destination Plan for Cork City and East Cork;
- d. Develop existing tourist attractions and activities, while seeking investment in new attractions that help to diversify the tourism market;
- e. Support the development of cultural facilities such as the Crawford Art Gallery and the Cork Events Centre;
- f. Support initiatives that improve the sustainability of tourism, and support eco-tourism along with the reduction of the carbon footprint of tourist accommodation, attractions and activities;
- g. Support high quality proposals, initiatives and pilot projects that represent opportunities to provide new or enhanced visitor facilities and attractions. This also extends to proposals that utilise technology to improve visitors' experiences and aid interpretation and navigation and seek to better leverage the city's network of green and blue infrastructure as tourism attractions;
- h. Seeking to manage, where appropriate, any increase in visitor numbers to semi-natural areas in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, by ensuring that new any projects, such as greenways, are located a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian zones;

- i. Seeking to manage, where relevant, any increase in visitor numbers to key habitats and / or any change in visitor behaviour in order to avoid significant effects, including loss of habitat and disturbance, by ensuring that new projects and activities are located a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities. Visitor / Habitat Management Plans may be required for proposed projects where relevant and as appropriate.

## Objective 7.26

### Visitor Accommodation

- a. To encourage a mix of tourist accommodation including hotels, hostels, Bed and Breakfast, and Guesthouses to cater for a broad tourist market.
- b. To encourage the development of a range of new and enhanced visitor accommodation options in Cork City. This includes working with stakeholders to explore opportunities to provide motorhome parking facilities for short-term stays.





## Objective 7.27

### Strategic Retail Objectives

- a. To support the preparation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Joint Retail Study and Strategy with Cork County Council and support and implement the Retail Hierarchy in defining the role of retail centres, in preparing plans and in assessing development proposals for retail development.
- b. To maintain and strengthen the role of Cork City Centre as the primary retail centre in the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- c. To ensure the resilience of Cork City Centre to changing trends in retail demand. Appropriate opportunities to further diversify the City Centre as a place to live, work and socialise will be encouraged.
- d. To promote the vitality and viability of District Centres, Urban Town Centres and Neighbourhood/Local Centres and support their development as multifunctional centres which provide a variety of uses that meet the needs of the communities they serve.



## Objective 7.28

### City Centre

To protect and enhance the role of Cork City Centre as the primary retail centre in the Cork Metropolitan Area and the region by facilitating the continued regeneration and modernisation of existing building stock and supporting appropriate new development, coupled with a range of complimentary residential, leisure, recreational and cultural uses and investment in the public realm.



## Objective 7.29

### District Centres and Ballincollig Urban Town Centre

To support the vitality and viability of District Centres and Ballincollig Urban Town Centre by enhancing their mixed-use nature and ensuring they provide an appropriate range of retail and non-retail functions appropriate to the needs of the communities they serve. In addition to retail, these centres must include community, cultural, civic, leisure, restaurants, bars and cafes, entertainment, employment and residential uses. In terms of retail, the emphasis should be on convenience and appropriate (lower order) comparison shopping, in order to protect the primacy of Cork City Centre. The development of District Centres at Ballyvolane, South Docklands and Hollyhill will also be supported to meet the day to day needs of their existing and / or planned catchment populations.



## Objective 7.30

### Blarney and Glanmire Town Centres

To support, promote and protect the Urban Town Centres of Blarney and Glanmire, which play an important role in the local shopping role for residents and provide a range of essential day to day services and facilities. In order to support planned population growth in these centres, some additional retail development of an appropriate scale and size may be directed to these centres.



## Objective 7.31

### Neighbourhood and Local Centres

To support, promote and protect Neighbourhood and Local Centres which play an important role in the local shopping role for residents and provide a range of essential day to day services and facilities. It is also aimed to support and facilitate the designation of new Neighbourhood and Local Centres where significant additional population growth is planned or where a demonstrable gap in existing provision is identified, subject to the protection of residential amenities of the surrounding area and that they are adequately served by sustainable transport. Proposals should demonstrate the appropriateness of the site by means of a Sequential Test, demonstrate retail impact and provide for a mix of uses appropriate to the scale of the centre.



## Objective 7.32

### Small Local Shops

To support, promote and protect small local shops including corner shops which provide an important retail service at a local level. Any proposed new local shops should serve a local need only and be of a size and scale which would not be detrimental to the health of nearby centres defined within the retail hierarchy and subject to the protection of residential amenity.





## Objective 7.33

### Retail Warehousing

To improve the quality of retail warehouse / bulky goods floorspace, in accordance with the retail hierarchy and settlement strategy. Proposals for new retail warehousing / bulky goods floorspace should be located within District Centres or large Urban Town Centres or other lands zoned for retail warehousing. The development of new out-of-town retail parks or accommodating retail warehouse uses within industrial estates / business parks will generally be discouraged. The range of goods sold in retail warehouses should be restricted to the sale of bulky household items. The floorspace within retail warehouse / bulky goods units devoted to 'ancillary products' shall not exceed 20% of the total net retail floorspace of the relevant retail warehouse / bulky goods unit.

## Objective 7.34

### Retail Impact Assessments

All significant retail planning applications must be supported by a comprehensive Retail Impact Assessment as outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012). Cork City Council will determine the requirement to submit a Retail Impact Assessment prior to or during the determination of an application.

## Objective 7.35

### Assessing New Retail Development

Cork City Council will have regard to the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) and the accompanying Retail Design Manual in determining planning applications for retail development.

## Objective 7.36

### Vacant Floor Space

To encourage in the first instance that new retail floorspace be directed towards existing vacant units within existing designated centres. Cork City Council will seek to use its powers to tackle vacancy in the centres through active land management measures.

## Objective 7.37

### Vibrant and Mixed-use Centres

- a. To encourage a vibrant mix of uses, while retaining a healthy mix of retail uses within the designated centres and ensure they appropriately serve their population catchments.
- b. To invest in and activate the public realm, while promoting accessibility and encouraging sustainable modes of transport as a means to travel to designated centres. This would encourage multi-purpose shopping, business and leisure trips as part of the same journey.
- c. To support the independent retailing sector by continuing to provide financial support, skills training and education through the Local Enterprise Office and other means.
- d. To encourage the development of the Night-time Economy, ensuring that centres are vibrant throughout the day and into the evening providing a variety of leisure and entertainment uses appropriate to their location and context.
- e. It is an objective to support and promote the use of on-street / outdoor markets in appropriate City Centre locations and the suburban District Centres and to pursue the development of a Market Strategy.

## Objective 7.38

### Cork Harbour Planning Framework

Cork City Council is committed to partake as a key stakeholder and consultee in the preparation of a Cork Harbour Planning Framework Initiative, in coordination with other Local Authorities and stakeholders in the harbour area, as required under RSES Objective 79 and Cork MASP Objective 3 Cork Harbour, during the lifetime of the Plan.

Cork City Council supports the preparation of an agreed framework to guide planning policy in managing the future development of the Cork Harbour Economy (CHE) as set out in RPO79 of the RSES to ensure that the sustainable development of the area not only harnesses the economic and social benefits to the City-region but also ensures that biodiversity, flora and fauna both within and outside protected sites are considered via the appropriate SEA and AA mechanisms.

## Objective 7.39

### Wayfinding

Cork City Council will work with Fáilte Ireland, NTA and other stakeholders to improve visitor orientation and wayfinding as identified in the Visitor Orientation Strategy and Action Plan for Cork City.

