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Rathpeacon Master Plan

Submission in respect of lands at Rathpeacon, Cork
November 2025

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Executive Summary

This submission is made in response to the Section 28 NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements Guidelines 2025 requiring all Planning Authorities to review their Development Plans to increase housing targets, and to zone additional lands for residential development.

This submission relates to lands (c. 16.9ha (c. 41.76 acres)) located in the northside of, and within the development boundary of, Cork City. They are currently zoned ZO-09 for Light Industry and Related Uses.

This submission is made in the context of the National Planning Framework (NPF) First Revision (April, 2025)'s population growth targets of at least 96,000 for Cork City and its suburbs by 2040, with 50% of all new housing to be built within its existing footprint to facilitate Cork becoming a compact city of scale of transport orientated development.

Based on a net developable area of 14.9ha, the lands have capacity to deliver a density of 40.4 units/ha, total 601no. units on a phased basis to 2030, generally working with the contours, minimising cut and fill as far as possible, in a mix of apartments, terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings accommodating housing for all across 3 neighbourhoods, with a 15% open space including a north-south landscaped corridor, which also incorporates the preferred Northern Distributor Road sustainable transportation corridor and includes a widened Sweeneys Hill and access from Old Mallow Road.

The lands are serviceable and there are no environmental impediments to their development for a residential development of scale in an accessible and sustainable location to meet Cork's updated population and housing targets in the medium term.

The lands are in single ownership, owned by a developer with a track record of delivering projects of scale.



Planning

1.0 Site Location

1.1 The lands are located in the northside of, and within the development boundary of, Cork City. They measure c. 16.9ha (c. 41.76 acres) in area and comprise several agricultural fields in pasture.

1.2 The majority of the site is currently in agricultural use. The site generally slopes in a north-south direction. The upper half of the site is open and affords expansive and engaging views south towards Cork City. The lower half sits low in the landscape and is sheltered and contained Site boundaries include traditional stone walls and established hedgerows. The lands contain some mature trees and mature hedgerow field boundaries. There is an open drainage channel along the lower part of the southern and eastern boundaries. All the surfaces on the site are permeable and naturally free draining.

1.3 They are bounded to the west by Sweeneys Hill, to the east by the Cork-Dublin rail line, and to the south by existing residential uses, to the south-east by the Old Mallow Road. Mallow Road Motors, Northpoint Business Park, North Link Business Park and Gateway Business Park are located further south.

1.4 The lands are currently zoned ZO-09 for Light Industry and Related Uses in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (Figure 2). As noted in the accompanying report prepared by Savills, the typography of the lands renders an industrial development challenging, necessitating a large quantum of expensive earthworks. There remains ample existing ZO-09 zoned lands to serve the northside of the City, including Churchfield, North Blackpool, Kilbarry, Dublin Hill and Blarney, with opportunities for further ZO-09 zoned lands, including Blarney. Other vacant or undeveloped light industrial zoned lands in the northside of the City have been repurposed for residential use including Fairfield Road, Blackpool for 49no. dwellings.



Figure 1:Subject lands (generally identified in red inc. proposed distributor road).



Figure 2: Subject lands relative to the Cork City Development Plan 2022 zoning map

2.0 Planning Policy Context

2.1 The future planning strategy for the lands is guided by:

National Policy

- The National Planning Framework (NPF) First Revision (April, 2025) which sets a population growth target of at least 96,000 for Cork City and its suburbs by 2040, with 50% of all new housing to be built within its existing footprint (National Policy Objectives 4 and 8), to facilitate Cork becoming a compact city of scale, growing by twice as much to 2040 as it has over the past 25 years.
- A focus, through National Policy Objective 10, on large-scale transport orientated development at locations that can be served by high-capacity public transport.
- A government approved target of an average of over 50,000 new homes per year (National Policy Objective 42).
- The instruction by the Minister for Housing to Local Authorities to zone more land for housing.
- A general increase in densities in sustainable locations advocated in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), to include suburban areas of Cork City, where densities from 40dph (net) are encouraged.
- An emphasis on net zero emissions, biodiversity-rich sustainable development, and nature-based surface water solutions, in the context of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, the Climate Action Plan 2025, and the Cork City Climate Action Plan.
- The NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements Guidelines issued on 29th July, 2025 by the Department under Section 28 of the current Act, which provide updated housing growth requirements to planning authorities to 2040 in order to facilitate the revision and update of development plans in accordance with the NPF– First Revision (2025).
  - The S28 Guidelines require all Planning Authorities to review their Development Plans to increase housing targets by 50%, bringing the annual national housing target from 55,000 units to 82,500 units. As a result, each Council is required to zone additional lands to facilitate this uplift.
  - The housing target in the Guidelines for Cork City is 2,706 units per annum to 2034.

Regional Policy

- Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 10 of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) 2020 which prioritises development in locations within and contiguous to existing city foot¬prints which can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.
- The emphasis on compact sustainable growth in the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP).

Local Policy

- The provisions of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, including:
  - a 60% population growth in Cork City by 2040, which will result in over will result in an additional 125,000 people living in the City within 20 years.
  - Section 2.38 of the Plan, which recognises that further measures are needed to ensure the housing market in Cork City can deliver the housing stock required to meet the ambitious NPF population growth targets.
  - Section 2.35 of the Plan which finds that the Cork housing market is currently marked by a supply/demand mismatch, with under-supply remaining a serious issue.
  - Objective 2.34 of the Plan which highlights the need to facilitate housing supply within areas of existing service and public transport and also commits to monitoring the supply of land to ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced land, located close to employment, community, transport and educational services, continues to be available to meet housing demand.

3.0 Sustainable Transport

- The transportation attributes of the lands, as identified in CMATS, including its location:
  - On the 215 bus service, defined in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS) 2020 as an existing high frequency bus service, with a bus stop located approximately 500m south of the site, with buses operating every 30 minutes to/from the city centre/Mahon.
  - Less than 2km from the proposed Blackpool/Kilbarry train station included in Iarnród Éireann's Cork Area Commuter Rail Programme 2025, and the proposed BusConnects Blackpool to City Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC C), both at Blackpool Shopping Centre
  - Close to a future primary cycle network route that will cross the rail line c. 75m to the south-east, and a future secondary cycle network route to the south.
- The lands are also traversed by the proposed Northern Distributor Road (Figure 3)



Figure 3: Route of the Northern Distributor Road relative to the zoned lands

4.0 Planning Case

4.1 It is in this context, in particular in response to increase population targets of the NPF First Revision and resultant requirement to identify more opportunities to zone lands for residential use, that the suitability of the lands at Rathpeacon for future residential development for the northside of the City is presented:

- They are in single ownership.
- They are within the development boundary of Cork City and are already zoned.
- They are contiguous to the existing built-up area of the northside of the City.
- Their development will deliver additional housing in Cork City in response to the ambitious targets set for the City at national level, in line with National Policy Objectives NPOs 4 and 8 of the NPF.
- Their development will contribute to the compact and sustainable growth of Cork City and will address the current imbalance between the north and south of the City.
- They adjoin existing business parks including Northpoint Business Park, North Link Business Park, Gateway Business Park, and Mallow Road Motors, offering a range of good quality, sustainable jobs for future residents of the lands within easy reach.
- Fully aligned with the principles of transport orientated development espoused by National Policy Objective NPO10 of the NPF, the lands are close to an existing high quality bus service, as well as future sustainable transportation options including the Northern Distributor Road, with its bus and cycle/pedestrian corridors, which traverses the lands.
- They are accessible from the local road network, the capacity of which can be increased without third party lands.

4.2 Specifically, a future large-scale residential development on these lands strongly aligns and support the strategic objectives for growth in the Cork City Development Plan 2022, as follows:

a) align with the strategic objectives for growth and the 9 strategic objectives set out in section 2.16 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

- Rezoning the subject lands at Rathpeacon for residential development would facilitate compact liveable growth and ensure a high quality of life for future residents. The subject lands align strongly with the strategic objectives for growth and the nine strategic objectives of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 and the principles of transport-oriented development, as follows:
- Regarding SO 1, the rezoning of the subject lands would offer the potential to create compact liveable growth that achieves a sustainable 15-minute city of scale that integrates into the exiting community and creating a walkable neighbourhood, adjacent and connected to the City.
- SO 2 outlines the objective to provide densities that are liveable and integrated into the community. The connectivity both to and from the subject lands offers the potential for residential development on the subject site to provide and support amenities, services and community and cultural uses to enable inclusive, diverse and culturally rich neighbourhoods.
- SO 3 'Transport and Mobility' discusses the importance of improving active travel and public transport usage. A residential development on the subject lands along with BusConnects, existing bus route, the proposed Northern Distributor Road, the proposed train station at Blackpool/Kilbarry and the proposed cycle networks in the vicinity of the site all support the potential for transport-oriented development and the encouragement of sustainable modes of transport.
- Transitioning to a low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable future is the clear objective of SO 4. Residential zoning on this site will enable compact growth that implements climate mitigation and adaption measures whilst also reducing carbon footprint due to the sustainable transport connections.
- Strategic Objective 5 seeks to protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure, open space and biodiversity, the subject lands hold no natural features or biodiversity concerns. Residential development offers the capability to create high quality attractive public and private open space in the area for future residents and neighbourhoods.
- The rezoning of the lands for residential development, can enable the northside of the city to deliver a strong, resilient diverse and innovative area, supporting the existing employment locations in the vicinity and achieving Strategic objective 6.
- The lands at Rathpeacon hold no archaeological or architectural value, with no national monuments located on the site. In line with SO 7 'Heritage, Arts and Culture', a residential development on the subject lands can identify, protect and enhance the character of Cork City, North Blackpool and Rathpeacon, by creating a vibrant and inclusive place.
- To ensure environmental infrastructure is in place to be coherent with SO 8 'Environmental Infrastructure', a residential development will include nature-based solutions such as SuDS in order to ensure the efficient and sustainable use of water. Along with this air quality and noise impacts will be managed, and it will also create an opportunity for the provision of renewable energies.
- In relation to SO 9, the location of the subject lands within Cork Cit, would ensure that residential development would further enhance the goal of developing a compact liveable city based on attractive, diverse and accessible urban spaces and places, that follow a design-led approach.

b) are serviced, or due to be serviced, or serviceable within the next five-year period

- A pre-connection enquiry in relation to a water and wastewater connection for 500 no. units was submitted to Uisce Eireann, and confirmed on 17th May, 2024 that a water connection and wastewater connection was feasible subject to upgrades. The lands can be serviced with 10KV Three Phase power, which can be extended from the Gateway 10KV system; can be serviced by natural gas; and can be serviced by an extended telecoms network servicing the nearby Gateway Business Park.

c) are located in areas that contribute to transport-oriented development (TOD) by virtue of good availability and proximity to public transport

- The lands can contribute to, and achieve, Transport Oriented Development (TOD). They are served by the 215 bus service, a proposed rail corridor to the east to be developed as a 10 minute high frequency commuter rail service, with stations at Monard and Blackpool/ Kilbarry, a future primary cycle network route that will cross the rail line, and a secondary cycle network to the south of the site. The lands are also close to a BusConnects route and traversed by the proposed Northern Distributor Road.

d) contribute to sustainable compact growth and the principles of the 15-minute city (ideally located within the built-up footprint of the city) and align with sections 2.24 to 2.30 of the City Development Plan in relation to delivering compact liveable growth

- The rezoning of the lands will contribute to sustainable liveable compact growth and the principles of the 15-minute city. The lands are located within the built-up footprint of the City. Their rezoning for residential development would allow for the creation of potential mixed use walkable neighbourhoods and neighbourhoods of scale that would help ensure liveable compact growth.

e) are located in areas where market analysis shows a level of demand exists

- The accompanying report prepared by Savills indicates that housing

supply shortage has driven price pressures across the country. The shortage in Cork is particularly pronounced, with average house prices rising faster than either the Dublin or national average. With only an average of 2,500 units built per year in the South West over the past 10 years, and the likely need for almost 4,800 units each year to 2030 to close the existing housing shortfall, and to meet growing demand, efforts to support housing development need to remain strong. Cork will need to ramp up housing delivery significantly in the years ahead to support the revised NPF population targets.

f) support the development of infill housing, housing on Brownfield land or address vacancy and dereliction

- While not brownfield, vacant or derelict, the rezoning of the lands in the built footprint of the City will assist in addressing housing supply issues in Cork.

g) are located in areas with good social infrastructure and capacity in schools and community facilities, do not have significant challenges

- A Social and Community Audit of the area concludes that within an approximate 2km catchment radius of the subject lands there are excellent social and community infrastructure, including 5 no. primary schools and 2 no. secondary schools, along with extensive social and community facilities, that are accessible from the site. Additional childcare provision, as well as local services, will be provided in the scheme.

h) do not have significant challenges or impediments to the development of housing – for example legal, environmental, topographical or servicing

- The lands are in single ownership, include no natural or built heritage features that would significantly impact and impede the development of housing and are not located within a designated flood risk zone. In addition, an archaeological assessment has concluded that there is no archaeological impediment to the rezoning of the lands for residential development.

i) would not negatively impact upon achieving the objectives of the Cork City Development Plan, Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, National Planning Framework, and other relevant strategic policies such as the national Climate Action Plan 2025 and the Cork City Climate Action Plan

- The rezoning of the lands would have a positive impact on achieving the objectives of the Cork City Development Plan, the RSES, the NPF, Climate Action Plan 2025, and the Cork City Climate Action Plan by contributing to the delivery of increased population and housing in the form of liveable, compact growth, transit-oriented development, offering a high quality of life for future residents and those in the surrounding areas.

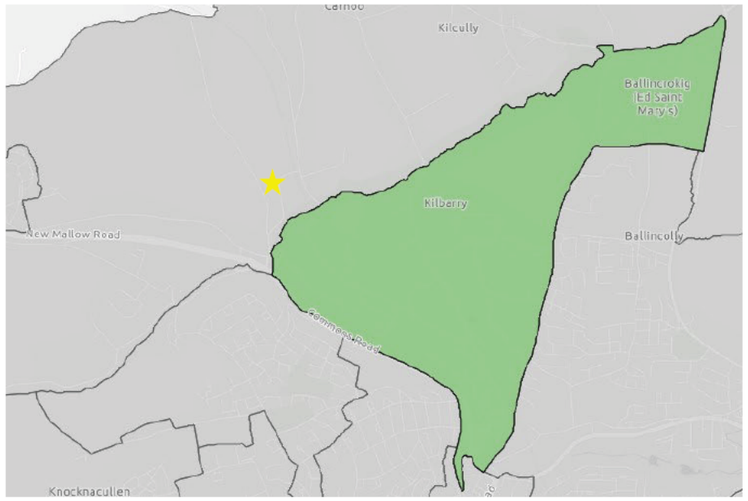


Figure 4: Location of the subject lands identified in yellow relative to the neighbourhood profile area of North Blackpool/Kilbarry (Cork City Council Neighbourhood Profiles Hub)

4.3 In relation to the Cork City Neighbourhood Profile the lands are located on the edge of the 'North Blackpool/Kilbarry' neighbourhood profile, and this neighbourhood provides a more accurate characterisation of the area.

- The area of 'North Blackpool/Kilbarry' is the closest urban area to the lands and provides infrastructure, employment, amenities and essential services.

- The neighbourhood of North Blackpool/Kilbarry has a population of 1,149, with the largest age group of this populous being 25-44. This population of young professionals and young families highlight the attractiveness and potential of the area, with the subject lands being adjacent to employment opportunities and the city, whilst also having access to important social infrastructure and connections to the wider metropolitan area.

- The housing stock of the area is 472no. dwellings, with an average household of 2.7 persons which is just above the national average. Of the current housing stock, there is a vacant stock of 8.1%, that accounts for 38 no. dwellings. Of the 472no. existing dwellings in the neighbourhood, 389no. are a house or bungalow, while 34no. are flats and apartments. Almost 300no. of these housing types are occupied by the owner, while a smaller proportion are social housing or rented from private landlords. There is an opportunity to supply a greater mix of housing typology and tenure to the area.

- The neighbourhood profile shows a labour force of 580, of which there is an unemployment rate of 5.2% which is less than the Cork City average. In the neighbourhood profile of North Blackpool/Kilbarry there is a total of 3,200 no. jobs of which 63.8% of people travel to by private transport. The majority of people working in the area are between the ages of 25-34. This significant level of employment opportunity highlights the potential of the subject lands to achieve liveable compact growth. By rezoning the land for residential development, the housing stock and type in the area can increase, resulting in workers living nearby to their places of employment thus reducing the need of private cars and encouraging the use of active travel and public transport, all of which will assist in achieving national and local policy objectives.

4.4 An indicative layout delivers a density of 40.5 units/ha, total 601no. units generally working with the contours, minimising cut and fill as far as possible, in a mix of apartments, terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings accommodating housing for all across 3 neighbourhoods, with a 15% open space including a north-south landscaped corridor, which also accommodates the Northern Distributor Road sustainable transportation corridor and includes a widened Sweeneys Hill and access from Old Mallow Road.

4.5 The proposed density accords with Table 3.1 of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Growth Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), where the density range for 'Suburban/Urban Extension Areas' is within the range of 40dph to 80dph (net), and reflects the typography, characteristics and context of the lands and their location at the edge of the built-up area of the City.

4.6 Given their configuration and extent, they are capable of being developed for 3no. diverse, sustainable neighbourhoods with a range of house types and sizes, will support local services and facilitate further local services, and will provide high quality landscaped open spaces, and facilitate nature-based solutions for surface water management.

4.7 From a landscape perspective, public open space is dispersed throughout the site, with larger green spaces occupying the flatter areas of the site. Three nature play areas are positioned in the top, middle and lower neighbourhoods of the site. The focus is on providing as much level open spaces areas as possible.

- The landscape strategy for the site is as follows:

- Place Making - working collaboratively with project architects, engineers and planners to create a strong and unique identity for the development and a distinctive sense of place.
- Retention/Enhancement of existing vegetation.
- Provision of a green framework across the site into which the proposed development will be integrated.
- Connectivity/Permeability – provision of adequate pedestrian and cycle

linkages across the development in line with principles of DMURS.
- Recreation and Amenity - provision of usable open spaces, well distributed across the site, and designed to allow ease of access, child supervision and passive surveillance.
- Child Friendly Spaces – an approach to open space design that encourages children to engage in play outdoors and allows children of all ages to move freely around their neighbourhood in a safe manner. Legibility – layout of open-spaces and walking/cycling routes that is visually coherent and can be navigated with relative ease.
- Biodiversity – bolstering habitat value of the overall site and riparian zone with a wildlife friendly tree, shrub and meadow planting strategy developed in line with the principles and recommendations of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan.
- Maintenance and Management – requiring that all specified hard and soft materials, finishes and treatments are robust, durable and can be managed / maintained with relative ease.

4.8 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Flynn Furney notes the following:

- The habitats within and adjacent to the site include improved agricultural grassland (GA1), buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3), exposed rocks (ER) and linear features such as hedgerows (WL1), and stonewalls (BL1). While these features offer limited biodiversity value in the context of the wider landscape, they do contribute to local ecological connectivity. No Annex I habitat occurs directly within the proposed development area.
- There is no hydrological connectivity to any designated site.
- Although the Glenamought and Bride Rivers are not located within the proposed development site and are not directly hydrologically connected, their proximity to the site (<110 m) and designation as “At Risk” waterbodies under the Water Framework Directive highlights their ecological sensitivity. Site-specific SuDS should be designed to manage runoff volumes and quality. The potential for indirect hydrological connections (e.g. via drains, soil seepage, or construction-related overland flow) should be assessed further at detailed design stage.
- No Flora (Protection) Order species was found to occur within the proposed development area.
- Further survey work, and mitigation measures if required, will be progressed to determine the sensitivity of the site and general area to badgers, otters, and hedgehogs.
- Bird surveys not include any wintering bird species that are qualifying interests of the Cork Harbour SPA.
- A review of National Biodiversity Data Centre records indicates no sightings of bats within the study area, however, given the nature of the site, further survey work is recommended.
- No impacts on Marsh Fritillary or its habitat are anticipated.
- No invasive species, first schedule or otherwise, were identified during the field surveys.
- A number of practical opportunities for enhancing biodiversity are proposed.


North view of the subject lands.


South view of the subject lands.


North-west view of the subject lands.

4.9 From an archaeological perspective, the Archaeological Assessment prepared by John Cronin & Associates identifies that there are no recorded archaeological sites within the subject site. There are eight archaeological sites recorded by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) within the study area of 500m from the subject site, though only two of these are extant. The lands can be considered to possess a moderate archaeological potential. There is potential for presence unrecorded sub-surface archaeological remains within the site. Therefore, it is recommended that in advance of any future development of the subject site, a programme of archaeological mitigation measures should be agreed with Cork City Council. The application of appropriate archaeological mitigation measures will allow for the identification of any archaeological remains within the site and then allow for the preservation of any archaeological resource (either by avoidance or by preservation by record (excavation)). It is concluded that there is no archaeological reason why the lands should not be zoned for residential development.

5.0 Conclusion

- Cork City is designated in the NPF First Revision and the RSES as a key driver of regional growth, and is mandated to accommodate significant additional population and housing targets by way of liveable compact growth and transport-oriented development.

- The proposed rezoning of the lands at Rathpeacon, from ‘Light Industry and Related Uses’ to residential zoning represent an appropriate and well considered use of the lands that aligns with the strategic planning objectives of national, regional and local planning policy, contributing to increased population and housing targets.

- It has been demonstrated that the proposed rezoning of the lands is aligned with the requirements of Cork City Council in respect of strategic policy objectives, transport-oriented development, the activation of lands, accessibility, natural features, enhancement of the neighbourhood, and the Housing Growth Requirements Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

- It is clear that the subject lands at Rathpeacon are suitable and viable for residential development of scale at an appropriate density. Residential development would increase the housing supply of the city, meeting population targets all while being consistent with the strategic objectives of prevailing planning policy.

- In conclusion, and in response to the clear evidence of suitability, viability and need for residential development within the City, and having regard to the NPF, RSES and the Cork City Development Plan, the proposed rezoning of the lands at Rathpeacon for residential development is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Architecture & Urban Design



Rathpeacon Masterplan - Cork City Development Plan Submission

6. Site Context
The site is located between the Old Mallow Road and Sweeneys Hill (L2786 local road) which runs between Rathpeacon and the Commons Road / Blackpool. The site is currently zoned ZO9 Light Industry and Related Uses.

The site area measures 16.9ha. (c. 41.9 acres) in area and comprises several agricultural fields in pasture. The net developable area is deemed to be in the order of approx. 14.9ha. (c.36.8 acres).

They site is bounded to the west by Sweeneys Hill, to the east by the Cork-Dublin rail line, and to the south by existing residential uses, to the south-east by the Old Mallow Road. Mallow Road Motors, Northpoint Business Park, North Link Business Park and Gateway Business Park are located further south. To the north lies agricultural fields and Rahtpeacon village (0.5km). There are no existing structures on the site however a number of one-off / ribbon development houses surround the site and its environs.

The site area comprises of 3 large fields which lend to a phased development of 3no. diverse, sustainable neighbourhoods with a range of house types and sizes, that will support local services and facilitate further local services, and will provide high quality landscaped open spaces, and facilitate nature-based solutions for surface water management.

The site is located approx. 0.5km from Rathpeacon village, 2km from Blackpool Retail Park and 4km to the city centre. It is is accessed from the Mallow Road and Sweeny's Hill and is served by an existing and extensive road network which provides easy access to local commercial, retail and civic uses.

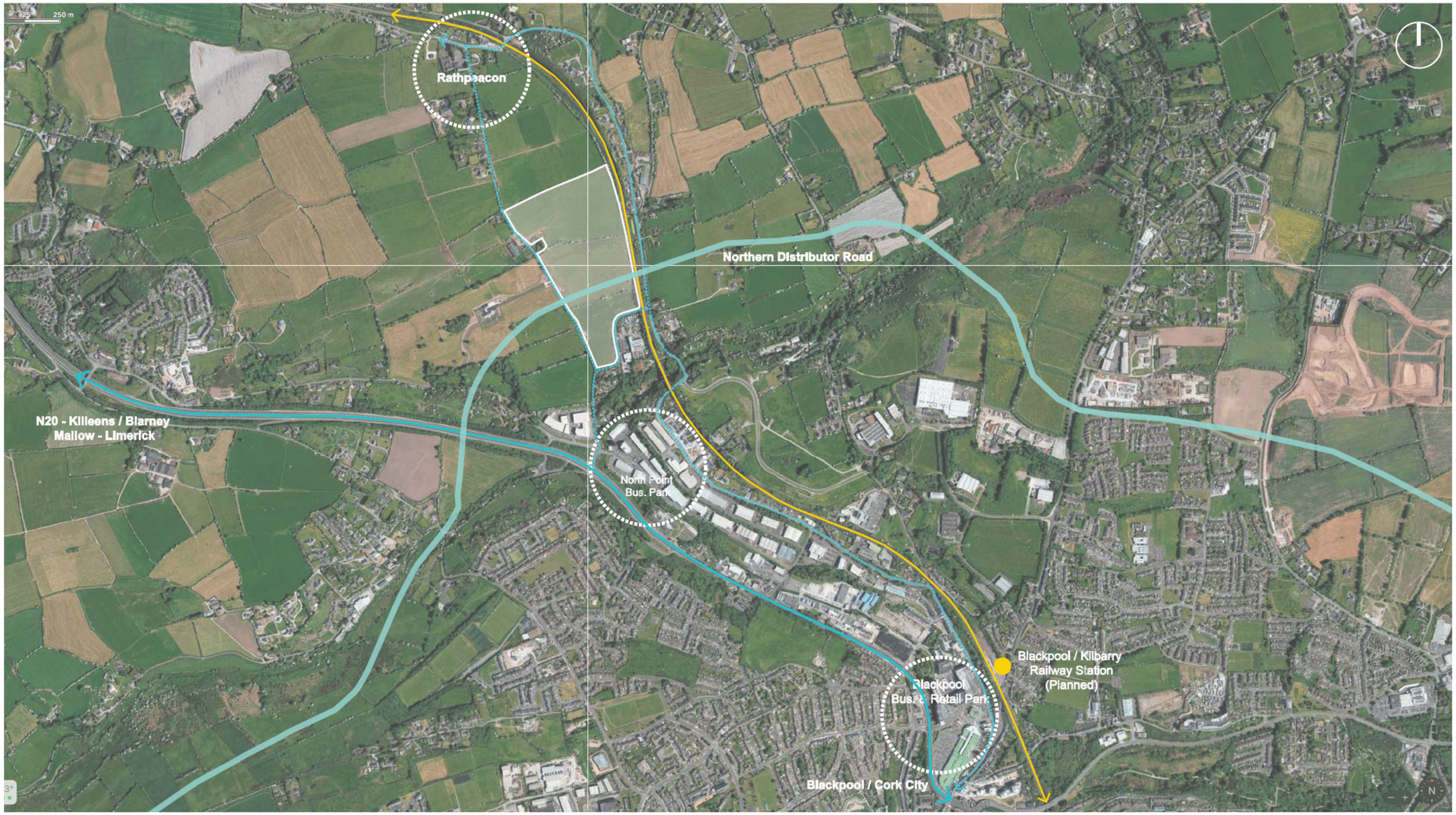
The lands are close to an existing high quality bus service, as well as future sustainable transportation options including the Northern Distributor Road, with its bus and cycle/pedestrian corridors, which traverses the lands. Additionally the lands are Infrastructure Ready - water, wastewater, power, gas, and telecoms connections are available in the area while existing roads can be upgraded without reliance on third-party lands.



Subject lands (shown red outline) and City Boundary (shown white outline).

Topography
Topographically, the terrain rises steadily to the north, with an elevation difference of approximately 45.5 meters between its southernmost and northernmost points. Cross fall rise from east to the west with elevation differences of between +1m to +6.5m to +19m in the southern, mid and northern portions of the site. The sloping site provides excellent views of the surrounding countryside and the city.

Site boundaries include traditional stone walls and established hedgerows. The lands contain some mature trees and mature hedgerow field boundaries.



Site Context Map

7. Masterplan Vision
In Urban and Architectural terms, the development has been conceived as a high quality, attractive, sustainable residential community as part of the established North-Environs which respects its natural setting. It has been designed to provide the architectural, urban and environmental conditions necessary to promote quality of life and sustain a cohesive and diverse community / where people can live, work and play, and contribute positively to the development of the city.

The masterplan strategy is underpinned by the site's proximity to a variety of local services and amenities and the wide range of existing and proposed infrastructure including the convenience of an expansive road network, and, integrated sustainable transport options including the planned Northern Distributor Road and Kilbarry railway station.

Masterplan Principles
The main masterplanning principles guiding the proposed development are:

- To promote the growth, vitality and viability of the Cork North Environs through the sustainable development at Rathpeacon by creating the framework for the development of a sustainable residential community with a supporting range of uses.

- To provide a balanced development with a supporting range of housing types that meets the variety of residential needs of those wishing to live in the area.

- To successfully link the site to neighbouring communities through improved site access - development of a new internal access road, pedestrian and bicycle paths, improved connectivity between the site and Rathpeacon / Blackpool.

- To conserve the sites existing agricultural field-pattern strategy and strengthen the sites natural edges and ensure longevity of the sites natural landscape structure.

- To use the topography of the site to the greatest advantage and work with the existing landscape features and rich bio-diversity to establish a form of development which respond to its unique setting.

- To create an environment that promotes internal pedestrian and cycle movement meeting the requirements of Smarter Travel.

- To adopt a high standard of detail and to utilise local / contextual materials in the finish of buildings and external spaces.



Masterplan site layout in context - proposed Northern Distributor Road indicated.

8. Design Response

The Rathpeacon Masterplan aims to deliver a compact, sustainable neighbourhood on Cork's northside that is attractive, liveable, diverse, safe and welcoming. It is a design-led proposal with climate-resilient placemaking at its core, providing c. 600 new homes across three character areas which includes a neighbourhood centre (local retail/health/creche) for community use.

Contemporary and contextual architecture will reinforce local identity through simple forms, durable materials and topography-led layout. The proposals aim to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport which aligns with planned strategic infrastructure (Northern Distributor Road; proximity to Kilbarry Station), and contributes positively to the receiving environment through integrated landscape, ecology and SUDS measures.

The masterplan proposes 3 distinct zones / neighbourhood character areas which are directly informed by the agricultural existing field pattern, thereby retaining existing topographical and landscape features that are characteristic of the area.

- Neighbourhood area 1 is located in the southern most part of the site. It measures 3.66ha. (c. 9 acres) and will provide approx. 169 units / 46 units/ha.
- Neighnourhood area 2 is located in the central part of the site. It measures 4.38ha. (c. 10.8 acres) and will provide approx. 144 units / 33 units/ha.
- Neighnourhood area 3 is located in the northern part of the site. It measures 7.66ha. (c. 18.93 acres) and will provide approx. 288 units / 38 units/ha.

The neighbourhood area strategy promotes a natural phasing of the development while accommodating the proposed Northern Distributor Road that is to run parallel to boundary between neighbourhood areas 1 and 2.

The development includes an appropriate mix of dwelling types to meet target residential densities informed by best practice in compliance with Planning Policy requirements.

Legend		
	Semi Detached 3 bed	194 no.units
	Detached 4 bed	10 no.units
	Terrace 3 bed	93 no.units
	Terrace 2 bed	22 no.units
	Duplex Apartment	96 no.units
	Triplex Apartment	33 no.units
	Apartment Block	153 no.units
	Commercial Centre	
	Total residential units	601 no.units



Masterplan site layout in context - proposed Northern Distributor Road indicated.

Neignbouhood / Character Areas

Neighbourhood Area 1 (Phase 1)

- Located in the southern most part of the site. It measures 3.66ha. (c. 9 acres) and will provide approx. 169 units / 46 units/ha.
- 169 units are proposed comprising of 3no. detached, 34no. semi-detached houses, 84no. duplex and 48 standard apartment units.
- 28% open green area and amenity is provided.
- Access to the site is provided from Mallow Road. The road extends north across the northern distributor road reserve as the main spine road through the site from which various clusters are accessed.
- Provision is made for road widening / pedestrian pavement along Sweeny's Hill - extending from the south to the north of the site.

Neighbourhood Area 2 (Phase 2)

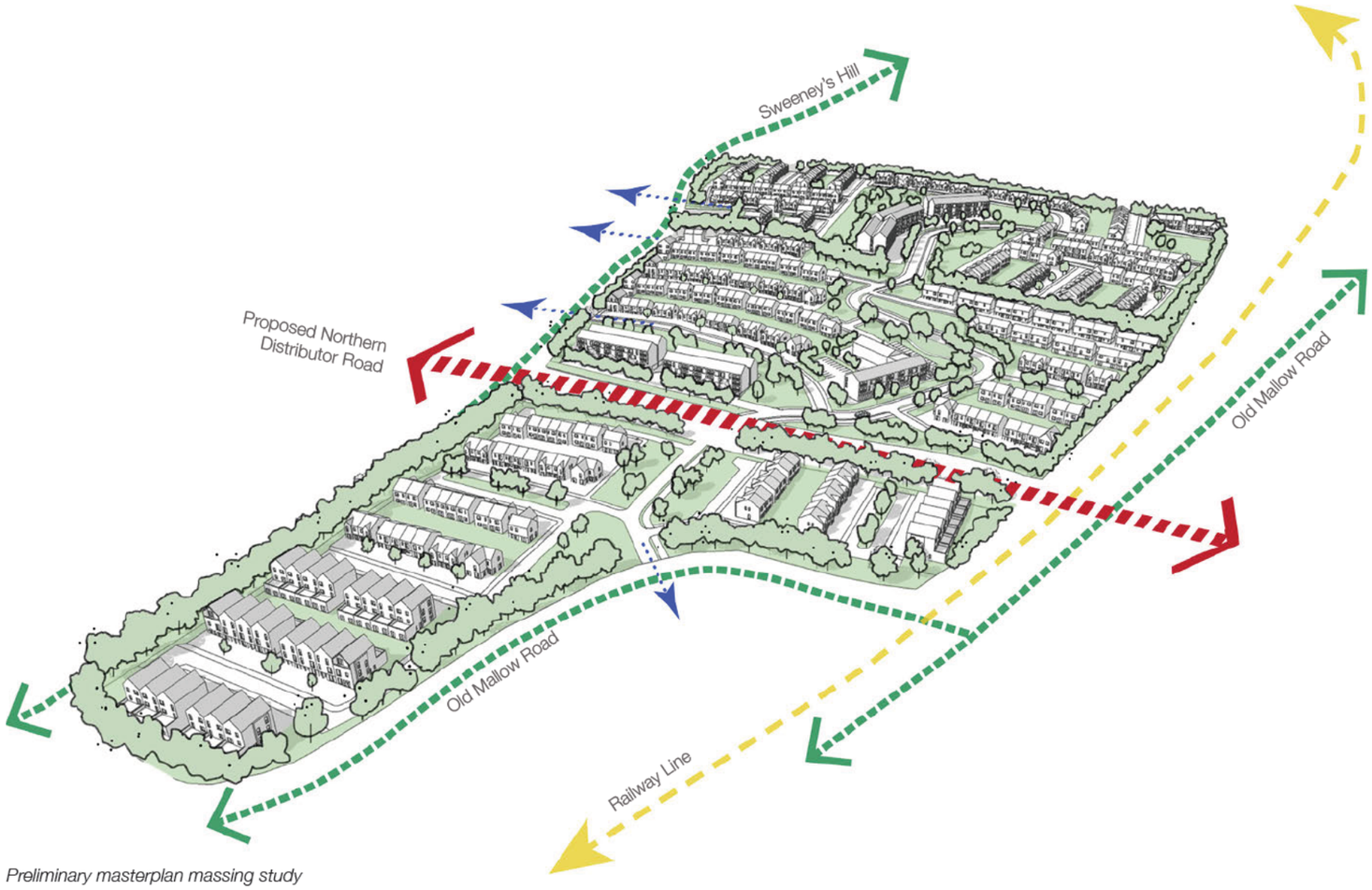
- Located in the central part of the site. It measures 4.38ha. (c. 10.8 acres) and will provide approx. 144 units / 33 units/ha.
- 144 units are proposed comprising of 2no. detached, 64no. semi-detached and 27no. terrace houses; 12no. duplex and 18no. triplex and 21no. standard apartment units.
- 2 no. 3 storey apartment blocks are located towards the southern end of the site – adjacent to the northern distributor road reserve.
- A creche and small commercial / retail unit with 2no. storeys of apartments over is also provided.
- 20% open green area and amenity is provided.
- Existing hedgerow between area 2 and 3 is retained.

Neighbourhood Area 3 (Phase 3)

- Located in the northern part of the site. It measures 7.66ha. (c. 18.93 acres) and will provide approx. 288 units / 37.5 units/ha.
- 288 units are proposed comprising of 5no. detached, 96no. semi-detached and 88no. terrace houses as well as 15no. triplex and 84no. standard apartment units.
- 3 no. 4 storey apartment blocks are located adjacent to the spine road towards the northern portion of the site- at the bottom of steep slope.
- 24% open green area and amenity is provided.
- Existing hedgerow between area 3 the adjoining site is retained.



Masterplan site layout - neighbourhood areas and development phases



Preliminary masterplan massing study











Preliminary neighbourhood area massing studies



Masterplan - Artist's impression (view to north-west with proposed Northern Distributor Road indicated).



Masterplan - Artist's impression (view south).

Housing Typology
A range of house types are proposed based on a common architectural language which aims to provide a coherent architectural aesthetic across the development. Houses are generally two storey 3-bedroom semi-detached and terrace to cater for rising demand in affordable / starter homes. 3 storey duplex and 3-4 storey mid-rise apartment buildings are also proposed.

Careful consideration has been given to the relationship of the housing to the street - houses include paved car parking areas within the curtilage, modestly scaled front gardens and generous rear gardens. Each dwelling is designed to include footpaths, parking and landscaping between the street and the dwelling. The arrangement of the front garden spaces will act as a visual privacy buffer that will enhance the public realm adding to the attractiveness of the overall scheme. The privacy buffer zone provided will enable activities to happen on the street while providing privacy to the houses by limiting direct views from the street.

Houses and ground floor units have a rear private garden while apartments include balconies. Adequate separation distances) between houses ensure privacy, sunlight and avoidance of overlooking.

Car parking is generally provided within the curtilage of each house / building, integrated visitor car parking is also provided. Cycle parking provided is in accordance with development standards.

The public realm and amenity areas are to be landscaped to a high standard appropriate to its residential setting. The development aims to encourage use of the shared surface streetscape via appropriate speed reduction and landscaping measures.

Materials and Finishes
The design and material aesthetic of the development proposal is rooted in the residential architecture of the area. Houses are traditional in form and overall appearance – this includes pitched roofs and modestly scaled terraces with rhythm of elements (entrance porch, doors, canopies etc.) to delineate individual houses.

A simple palette of robust, contemporary and complimentary materials is propsoed, including, dark slate roofs and a medium textured white painted render and brickwork for walls and feature elements, aluminium windows and rain water goods combine to create housing of quality which is striking in its simplicity while being appropriately scaled in relation to its surrounding context. The buildings will be finished and detailed to a high standard creating a high quality environment now and into the future as the development weathers and ages. Selected materials are suitable for location of the development. Secondary level fabric items such as rainwater goods will be metal aluminium, and be complimentary to the window / doorsets, and metal / clad elements including bay windows and entrance porches etc.





Housing Typologies (Typical) - Artist's impressions



Material Pallette

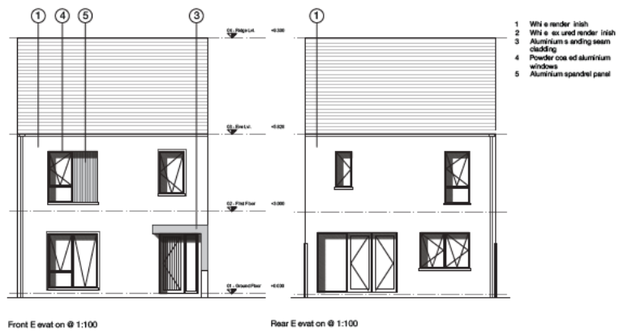


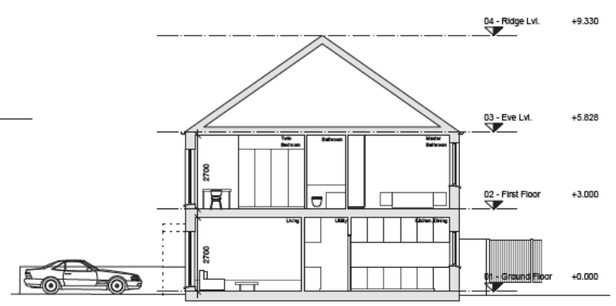


Housing Typologies (Typical) - Artist's impression

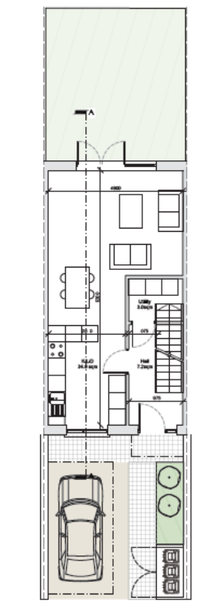
3-Bed Terrace

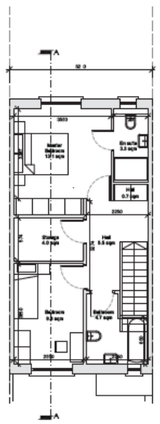


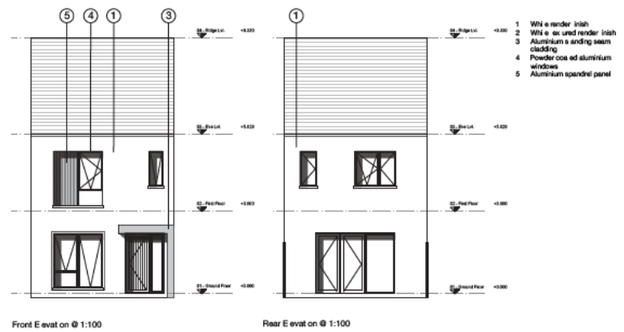


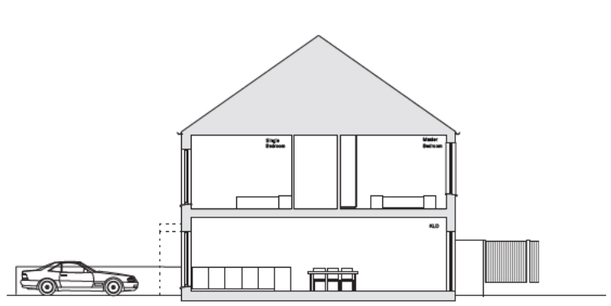


2-Bed Terrace

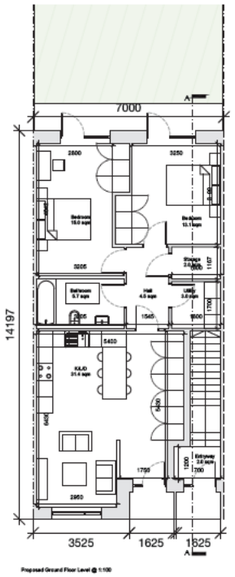


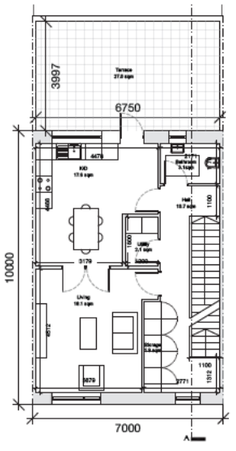


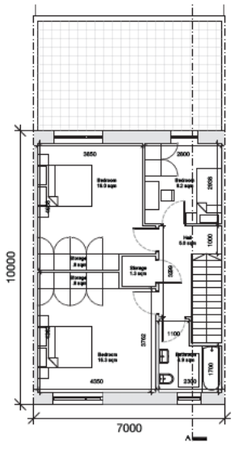




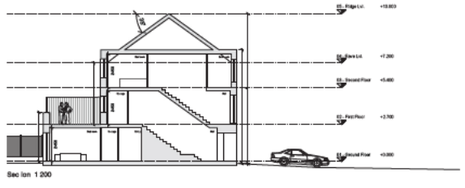
Duplex Unit













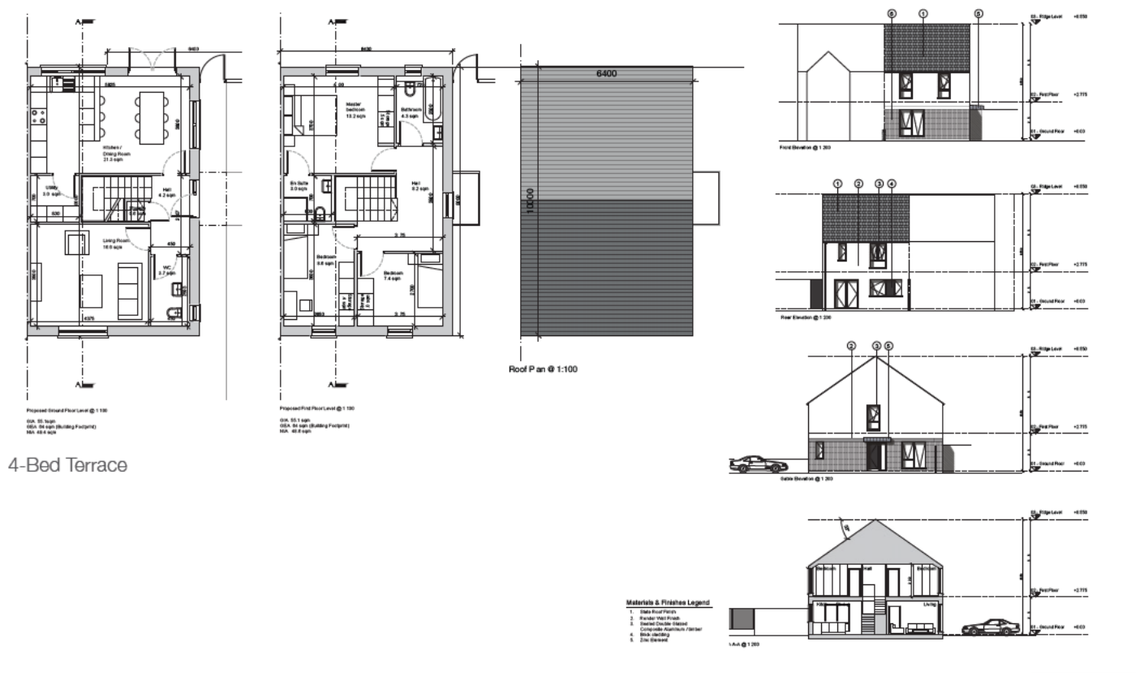
Duplex Terrace



4-Bed Detached



4-Bed Terrace



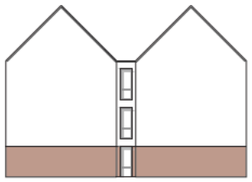
3-4-Bed Semi-Detached



Traditional Terrace







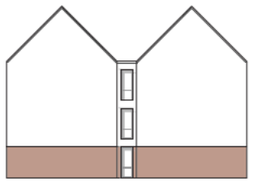
Gable Elevation



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



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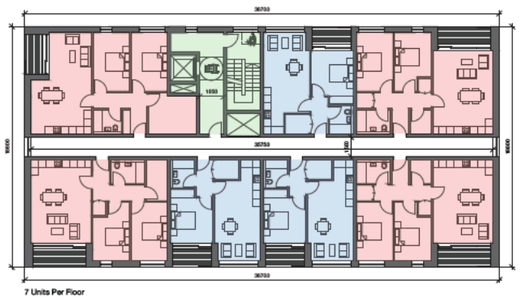


7 Units Per Floor



8 Units Per Floor

Typical Apartment Block - 3 Storey Illustrated





Apartment Block Precedents









Housing Precedents



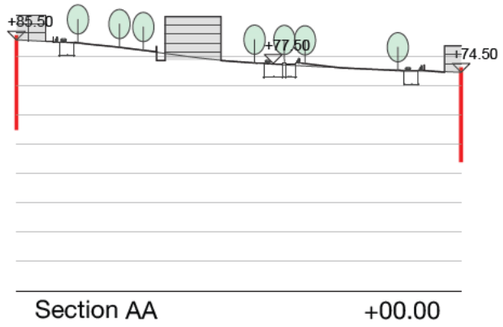
House Type A: Front (south) elevation



House Type B: Front (north) elevation

Primary materials - brick, render and slate





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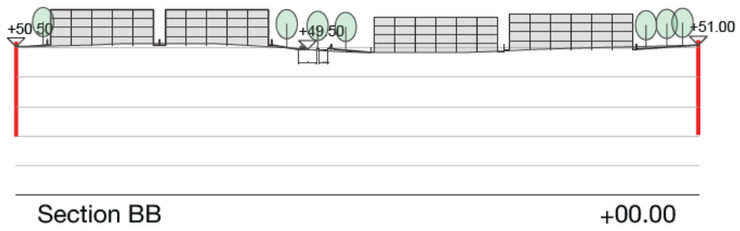

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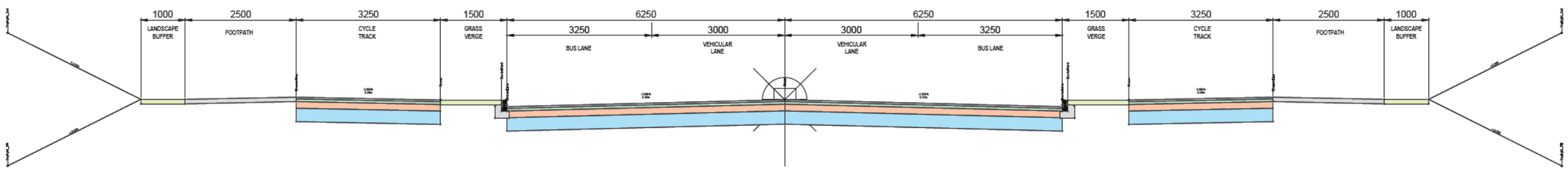
Section CC +00.00



Section DD +00.00

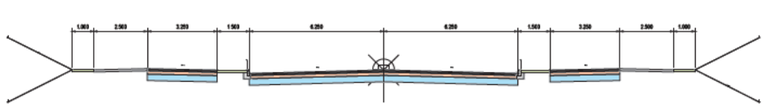


Site Sections - Typical



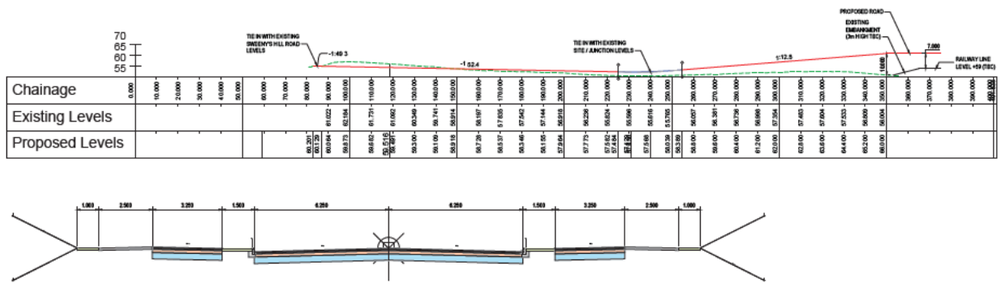
PROPOSED NEW ROAD CORRIDOR CROSS SECTION

Scale 1:50



FUTURE LINK ROAD - CROSS SECTION

Scale 1:100

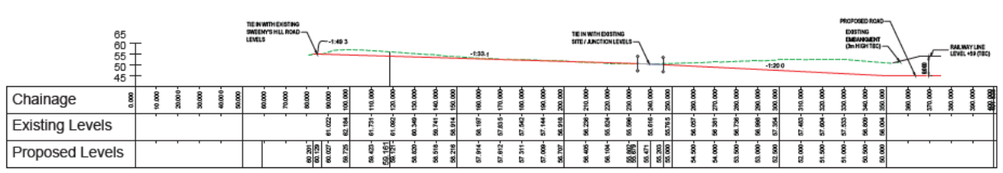


FUTURE LINK ROAD - CROSS SECTION

Scale 1:100

FUTURE LINK ROAD - CROSS SECTION

Scale 1:100



FUTURE LINK ROAD - CROSS SECTION

Scale 1:100

Rev	Sts	Description	Date
P01	S2	Issued for Information	29.10.25

MMOS
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Tel : 353 21 4317608

PROJECT
Rathpeacon Housing

CLIENT
JCD Group

TITLE
Future Link Road Corridor
Railway Crossing Sections

DRAWN BY	CHECKED BY	APPROVED BY
TOCallaghan	TOCallaghan	PMartin

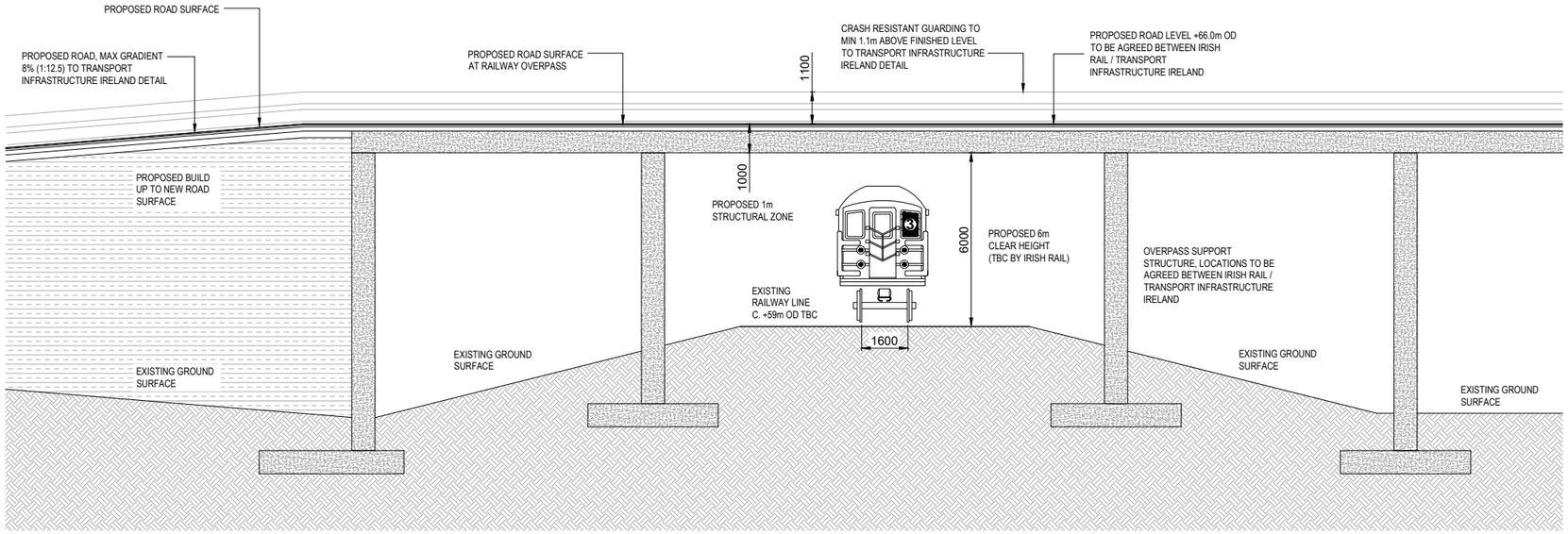
SCALE	PROJECT NUMBER
As Shown at A1	25204

DOCUMENT REFERENCE
25204-MMS-ZZ-ST-SK-C-0502

STATUS: S2
REV: P01

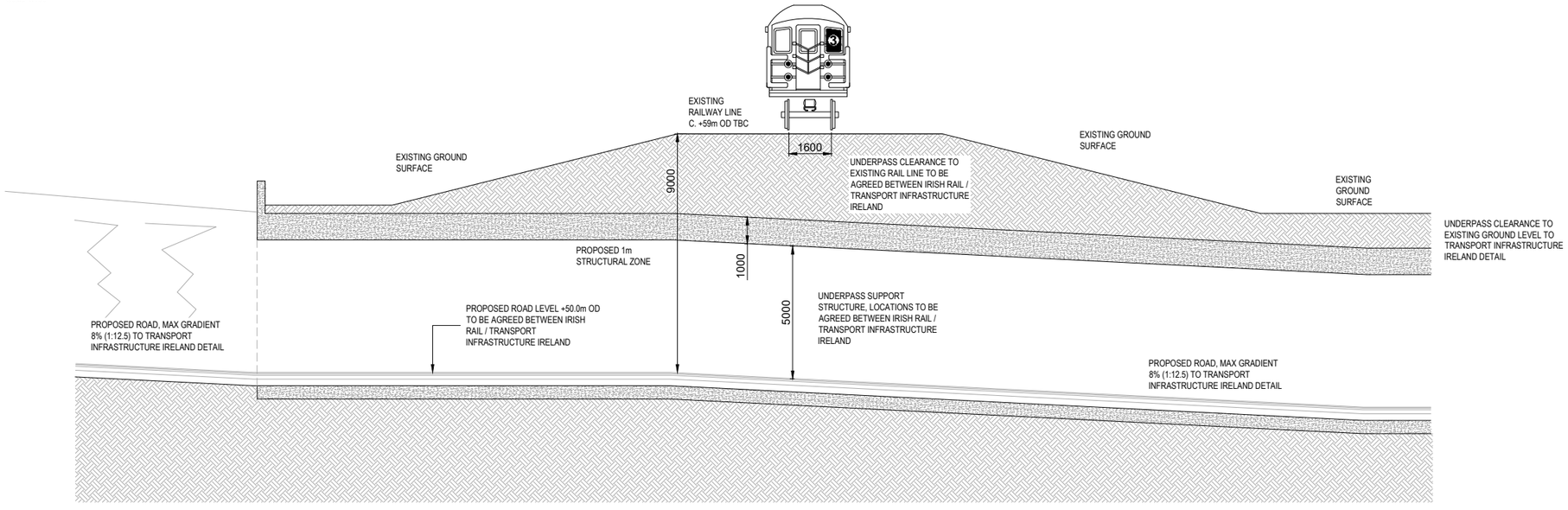
PROJECT-ORIGINATOR-ZONE-LEVEL-TYPE-DICIPLINE-NUMBER

Engineering Road Sections - Interface with propsoed Northern Distributor Road.



PROPOSED ROAD CROSSING OVER EXISTING RAILWAY

Scale 1:100



PROPOSED ROAD CROSSING BELOW EXISTING RAILWAY

Scale 1:100

Engineering Road Sections - Interface with propsoed Northern Distributor Road.

Rev	Sts	Description	Date
P01	S2	Issued for Information	29.10.25

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9. Urban Design

The Rathpeacon Masterplan has been prepared in line with key Quality Urban Design and Placemaking principles to create a legible, coherent and high-quality urban structure that is firmly rooted in local character while embracing design innovation and contemporary placemaking principles.

Legible and Coherent Urban Structure

- The Masterplan establishes a clear and easily navigable structure, organised around a primary north–south spine street that links directly to the Mallow Road and future Northern Distributor Road, creating a distinct sense of arrival. A series of secondary and tertiary streets, framed by built frontages and tree-lined corridors, generate a permeable and human-scaled movement network.

- Three distinct neighbourhood character areas provide visual variety and orientation across the site, while landmark buildings—including apartment blocks at key nodes, the neighbourhood centre, and focal buildings fronting open spaces—act as identifiable markers within the layout, enhancing legibility and place identity.

Positive Response to Established Pattern, Form and Scale

- The development responds sensitively to the established grain, topography, and landscape structure of the Cork North Environs. Building height, scale and massing have been carefully calibrated to step with the natural slope, ensuring a gentle transition from surrounding low-rise housing to more compact built form along the main spine.

- The street and block pattern reflects local development forms while introducing contemporary layout principles derived from DMURS and Urban Design Manual guidance. This ensures that the built form integrates seamlessly into its context while providing enhanced connectivity, enclosure and visual coherence.

Strengthening Urban Structure and Connectivity

- The Masterplan strengthens the local urban structure by creating new pedestrian and cycle linkages between Rathpeacon, the Mallow Road corridor and the wider city network. The layout incorporates a high degree of permeability, supporting access to public transport (including potential bus routing through the site) and aligning with the planned Northern Distributor Road and Kilbarry Rail Station.

- These strategic linkages reinforce Cork's compact growth model by enabling sustainable movement patterns and enhancing integration with adjoining lands and future phases of development.

Well-Defined Edges and Active Frontages

- Buildings are arranged to form continuous and well-defined edges to streets and public spaces, ensuring clear distinction between public and private realms. Dwellings front onto primary and secondary streets, with active elevations, doors and windows providing natural surveillance and a vibrant street environment.

- Public open spaces, green corridors and play areas are overlooked by housing, promoting safety and a sense of community ownership. Corner buildings are designed to turn the corner positively, maintaining visual continuity and reinforcing enclosure.

Good Modern Architecture and Local Distinctiveness

- The architectural language combines contemporary design principles with a sensitive response to local identity. The proposed building forms are simple and robust, echoing traditional Cork domestic architecture through pitched rooflines, balanced proportions and rhythmic façades, while introducing modern detailing and sustainable technologies.

- This approach ensures that new development is innovative and varied, yet firmly rooted in its setting. It enhances the visual character of the North Environs and contributes to the formation of a distinct, high-quality urban quarter.

High-Quality, Locally Appropriate Materials and Finishes

- Materials and finishes are selected for durability, sustainability and contextual resonance. The palette - comprising slate roofs, rendered and brick façades, and aluminium detailing, reflects the established materials of Cork's residential areas while offering a contemporary reinterpretation.

- The use of robust, low-maintenance finishes will ensure long-term quality, minimise lifecycle costs, and maintain visual coherence as the neighbourhood matures. Streetscape and public realm materials are similarly chosen for durability, ease of maintenance and aesthetic consistency, enhancing both functionality and civic character.

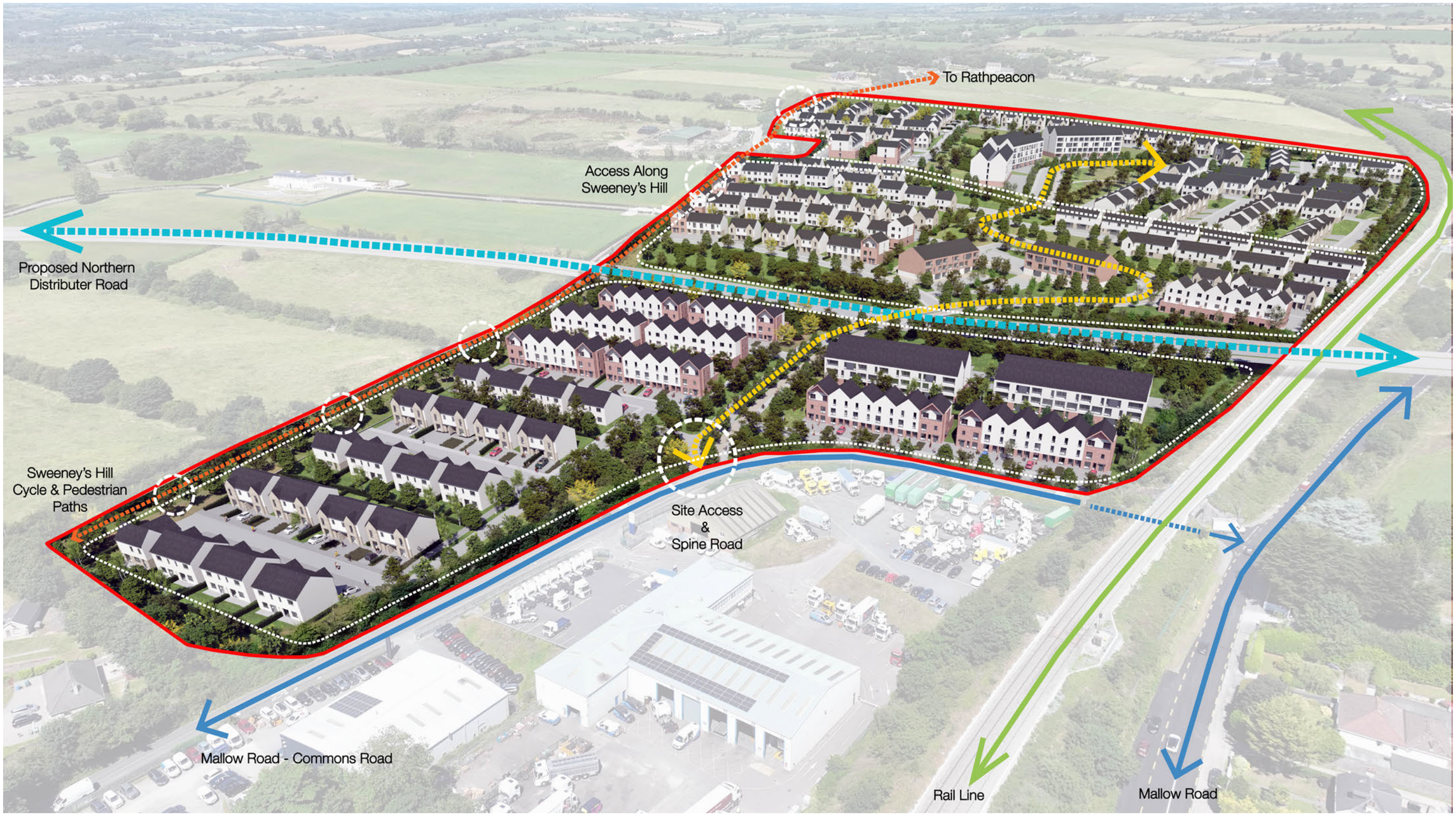
Summary

The propsoed Rathpeacon Masterplan delivers a contextually sensitive, climate-resilient and design-led urban structure that:

- Is legible, connected and distinctive;
- Respects local scale and form while promoting compact growth;
- Defines and activates the public realm through coherent built edges;
- Showcases innovative, durable and locally responsive architecture; and
- Provides a strong foundation for placemaking and long-term community identity.

Through this integrated and responsive design approach, the Masterplan can achieve compliance with the Sustainable and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), Section 4 – Quality Urban Design and Placemaking: Responsive Built Form, and reinforces Cork City's vision for sustainable, high-quality compact growth.





Masterplan Diagram - Urban Design, Context & Connectivity



Duplex Terrace - Artist's impression



Terrace Houses - Artist's impression

10. Development Schedule

Rathpeacon Masterplan - Development Schedule

Site Area: 16.9ha / 169,272 sqm
Net Developable Area: 14.9ha / 148,999 sqm
Density: 40.4 Dwellings per Hectare

Neighbourhood 1 3.66ha / 36,667 sqm Open Space Amenity: 28%

Unit Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4Bed	Total	
Semi Detached			34		34	
Detached				3	3	
Terrace					0	
Duplex		42	42		84	
Triplex					0	
Apartment	24	24			48	
Total					169	**46 dph**

Neighbourhood 2 4.38 ha / 43,795 sqm Open Space Amenity: 20%

Unit Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4Bed	Total	
Semi Detached			64		64	
Detached				2	2	
Terrace		4	23		27	
Duplex	6	6			12	
Triplex	18				18	
Apartment	21				21	
Total					144	**33 dph**

Neighbourhood 3 7.66ha / 76,667 sqm Open Space Amenity: 24%

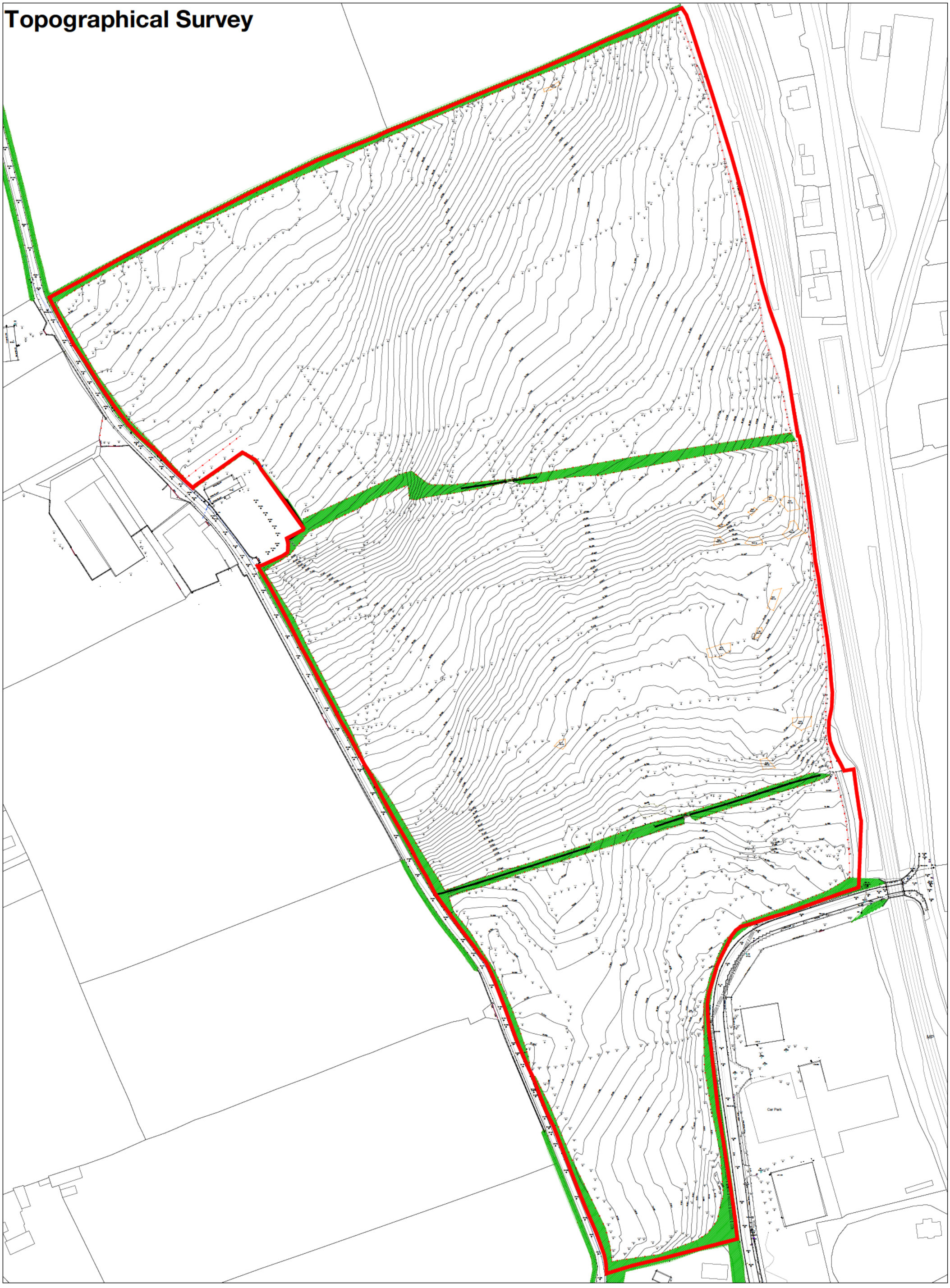
Unit Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4Bed	Total	
Semi Detached			96		96	
Detached				5	5	
Terrace		18	70		88	
Duplex					0	
Triplex	15				15	
Apartment	36	48			84	
Total					**288**	**38 dph**

Total Neighbourhoods Combined

Unit Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4Bed	Total	
Semi Detached			96		194	
Detached				5	10	
Terrace		18	70		115	
Duplex					96	
Triplex	15				33	
Apartment	36	48			153	
Total					**601**	**40.4 dph**

Appendices

Topographical Survey



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RIAI Practice Member 2025

Project name Rathpeacon Masterplan	**Project no** 25176	**Drawing** Site Survey	**Series** Planning	**Scale** 1:2000@A3	**Notes**
Client JCD		**Drawing no.** A-0001-00	**Revision** A	**Date** 2025.11.05	

Site Layout Plan



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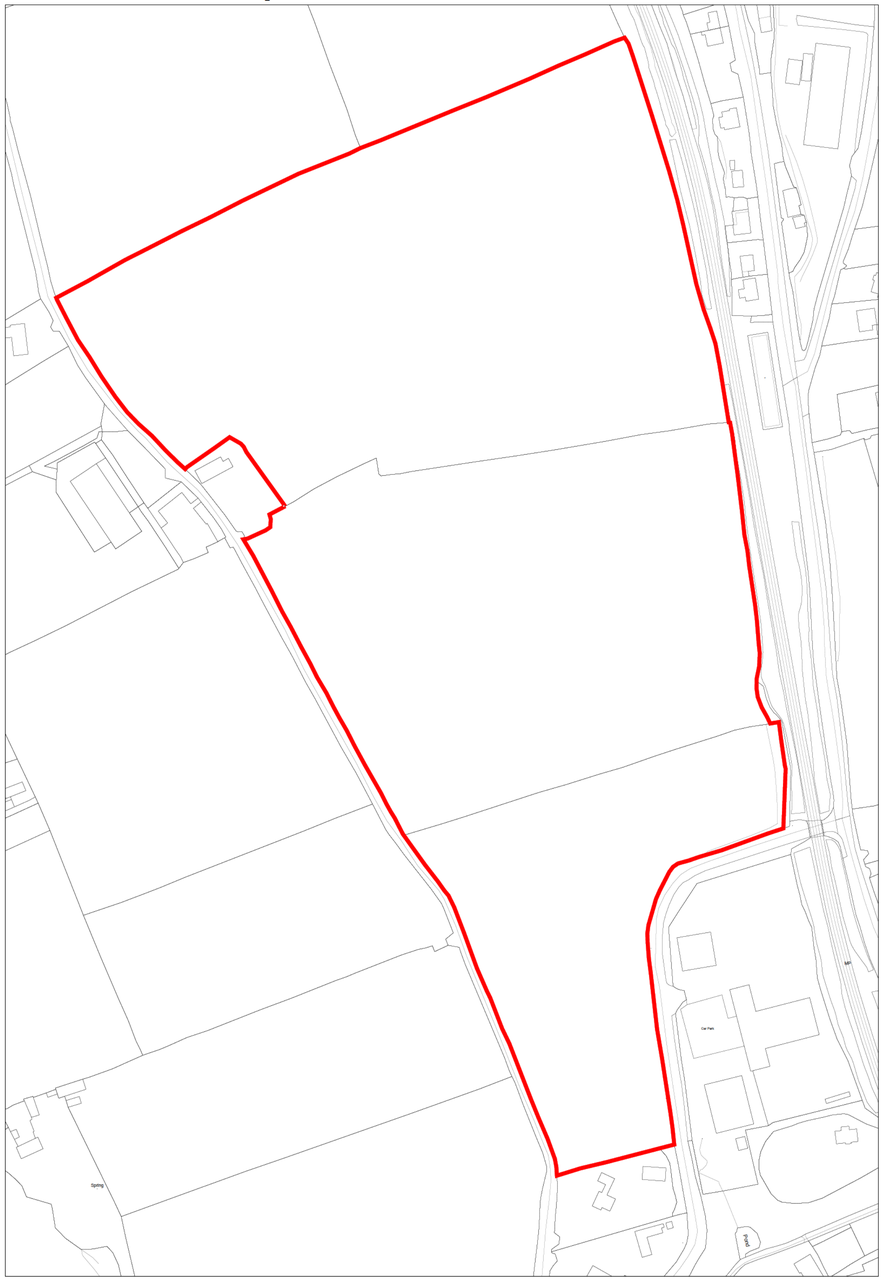
RIAI Practice Member 2025

Project name	Project no	Drawing	Series	Scale	Notes
Rathpeacon Masterplan	25176	Site Layout Plan	Planning	1:2000@A3	
Client		**Drawing no.**	**Revision**	**Date**	
JCD		A-0001-05	A	2025.11.05	

Site Location Maps



Site Location Map 1:2000

0 20 40 60 80 100m

Deve opment S te Boundary

N

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Digital Landscape Model (DLM)

Publisher / Source:
==========
Tailte Éireann

Data Source / Reference:
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PRIME2

File Format:
==========
Autodesk AutoCAD (DWG R2013)

File Name:
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v 50495757 1.dwg

Clip Extent / Area of Interest (AOI):
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Reference Index:
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Map Series Map Sheets
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Data Extraction Date:
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Date= 12-Oct-2025

Source Data Release:
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DCMLS Release V1.192.121

Product Version:
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Version= 1.4

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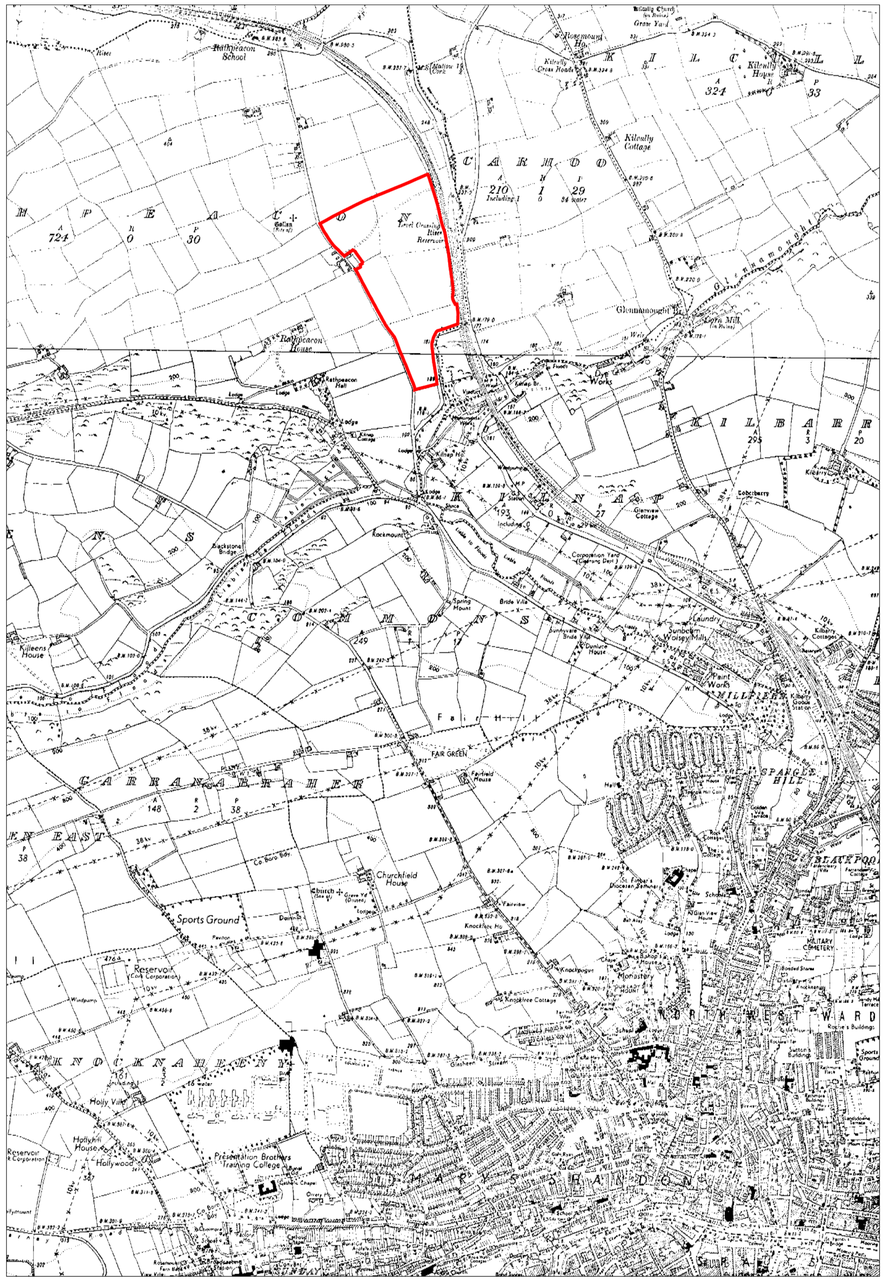
Rathpeacon School
Kilcrally Cottage
Glennanoosht
Rathpeacon House
Kilcrally Cross Roads
Kilcrally House
Kilbarry
Blackstone Bridge
Kilheens House
Cobberry
Gortnaw Cottage
Gunboro Quarry
Works
Churchfield House
Sports Ground
Reservoir
Monastery
Knocknee Cottage
Holly Villa
Holly Mt. House
Holly Wood
Presentation Brothers Training College
Fair Green
Gaelscoil
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Wall
Fence
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Trees
Scrub
Rough Grazing
Marsh
Rock
Cliff
Embankment
Cutting
Boundary Stone
Milestone
Direction Stone
Fingerpost
Telegraph Line
Overhead Line
Underground Line
Pylon
Telegraph Pole
Electricity Transformer
Electricity Substation
Telephone Kiosk
Post Box
Letter Box
Public Telephone
Public Convenience
Petrol Pump
Water Tank
Water Trough
Sluice
Weir
Lock
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Jetty
Slipway
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Boat Yard
Boat Moorings
Boat Shed
Boat House
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Boat Repair Shop

LAND PLANNING & DESIGN

CUNNANE STRATTON REYNOLDS

LAND PLANNING & DESIGN

Lands at Rathpeacon Re-zoning Application, Cork

Landscape Design Rationale

PROJECT NO. 25304

November 2025



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CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION:

CUNNANE STRATTON REYNOLDS
LAND PLANNING & DESIGN

This **Landscape Design Rationale** has been prepared by **Cunnane Stratton Reynolds** on behalf of **JCD Group Ireland** in support of a Re-zoning Submission for lands located at Rathpeacon. Cork. The site is currently zoned Light Industrial and the proposed new zoning is New Residential Neighbourhood.

The Re-zoning Submission is being brought forward by a multi-disciplinary design team which includes:

- **Butler Cammoranesi Architects** – Lead Architects
- **Coakley O'Neill Town Planning** – Planning Consultants

An indicative layout prepared by Butler Cammoranesi illustrates the potential for a density of a total 601no. units, at a density of 40.4 units/ha, generally working with the contours, minimising cut and fill as far as possible, in a mix of apartments, terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings accommodating housing for all across 3 neighbourhoods, with approximately 15% open space including a north-south landscaped corridor, which also accommodates the Northern Distributor Road sustainable transportation corridor and includes a widened Sweeneys Hill and access from Old Mallow Road.

This document sets out the landscape design approach and rationale underpinning the proposed development. It illustrates how the scheme will deliver high-quality, functional and biodiverse open spaces that contribute positively to placemaking, environmental sustainability, and community well-being.



Site Photo, taken from Western Boundary looking south east

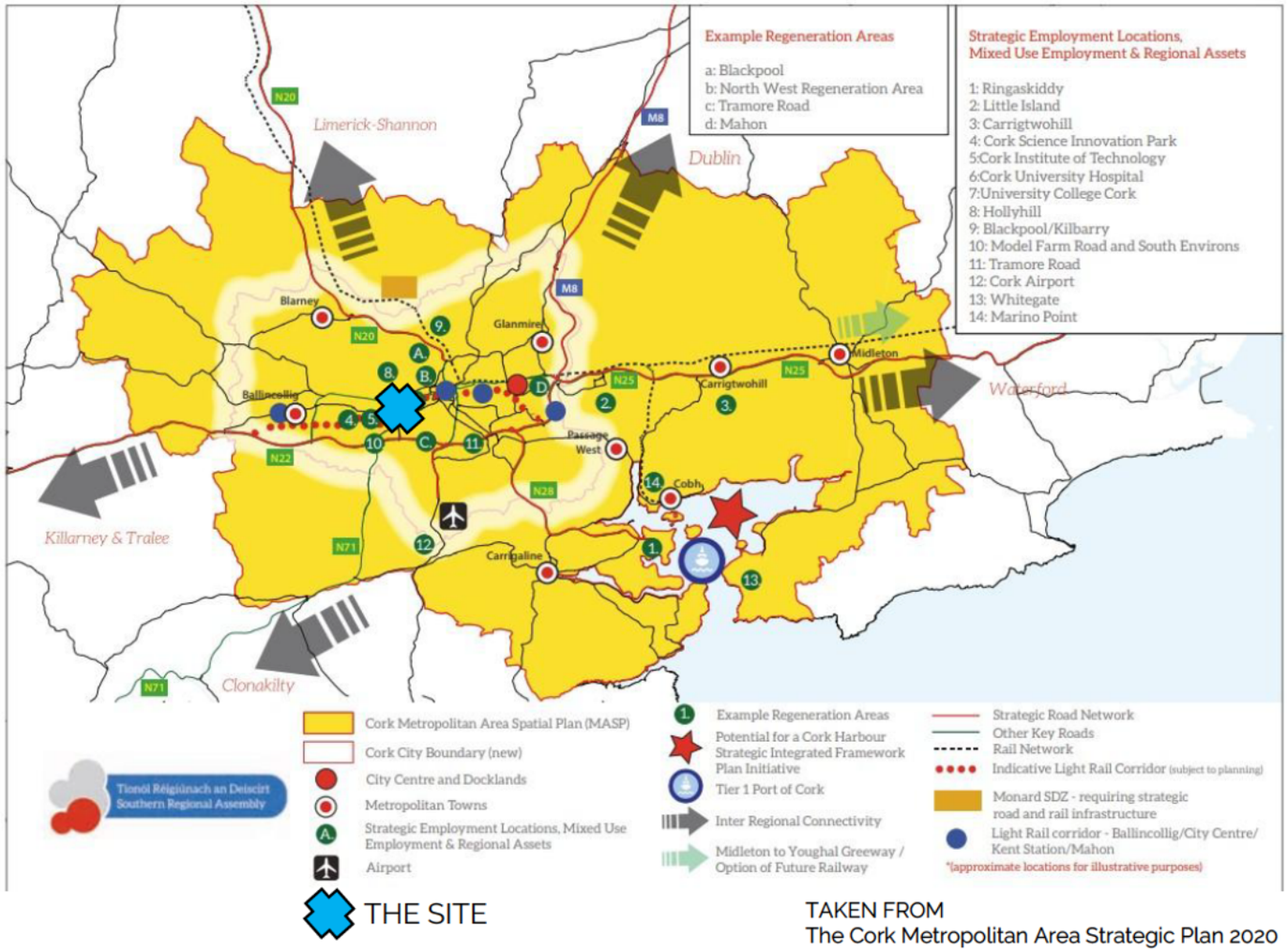
CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION: Regional Policy

The National Planning Framework 2040 positions Cork as a central hub for development in southern Ireland, highlighting its complementary role to Dublin and its emerging international significance. Cork is set to become Ireland's fastest-growing city region, with population growth projected at 50–60% by 2040. In anticipation of this expansion, the Cork Metropolitan Regional Plan and the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy were developed to address potential challenges and ensure sustainable growth in the years ahead.

Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)
As part of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region of Ireland published in 2020 the MASP sets out principles for growth in Cork City up until 2040. The site at Rathpeacon is located only 2km north of the Kilbarry/ Blackpool area earmarked for regeneration. The map adjacent shows that retail, employment and transport developments are planned for the locality.

The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, launched in 2020, was developed by the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), in collaboration with Cork City and County Councils. The strategy sets out a comprehensive policy framework and implementation plan for developing transport infrastructure across Cork City. It is designed to accommodate projected population growth and meet future transport demands.

The strategy sets out principles to improve the sustainability of transport in general way responding to efficiency, carbon reduction, safety and amenity. The strategy details the development of citywide travel in the form of walking, cycling, bus connects suburban, rail light rail and road network. The envisioned rail network is planned to have a stop in Kilbarry only 2km south of the Rathpeacon site. It will link Blarney to Middleton through Kent Station at 10 minute intervals. The northern distributor road- facilitator of bus connects and separated cycleway- will pass directly through the central area of the site connecting the site directly to the wider city. .



TAKEN FROM
The Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan 2020

Key Points from The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

- **The creation of an attractive, safe, fully permeable and accessible environment for all ages and abilities in line with DMURS and Universal Design principles**
- **Facilitate walking's role as part of linked trips, particularly with rail and bus journeys**
- **Promote a far higher standard of urban design in new developments, and in highway design, in a fashion that consistently prioritises pedestrian movement and safety over that of the private car**
- **Upgrade pedestrian network in tandem with the implementation of BusConnects, Cycle Network and Light Rail stations.**

CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION:
Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

Chapter 6: Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Space and Biodiversity focuses on protecting and enhancing Cork City's interconnected network of natural and open spaces. It outlines a series of objectives aimed at preserving biodiversity, strengthening ecological connections, and safeguarding natural habitats within the city boundaries. The overarching goal is to provide high-quality open spaces that encourage outdoor recreation and greater engagement with nature. The plan also sets out specific expectations for new development proposals, stating:

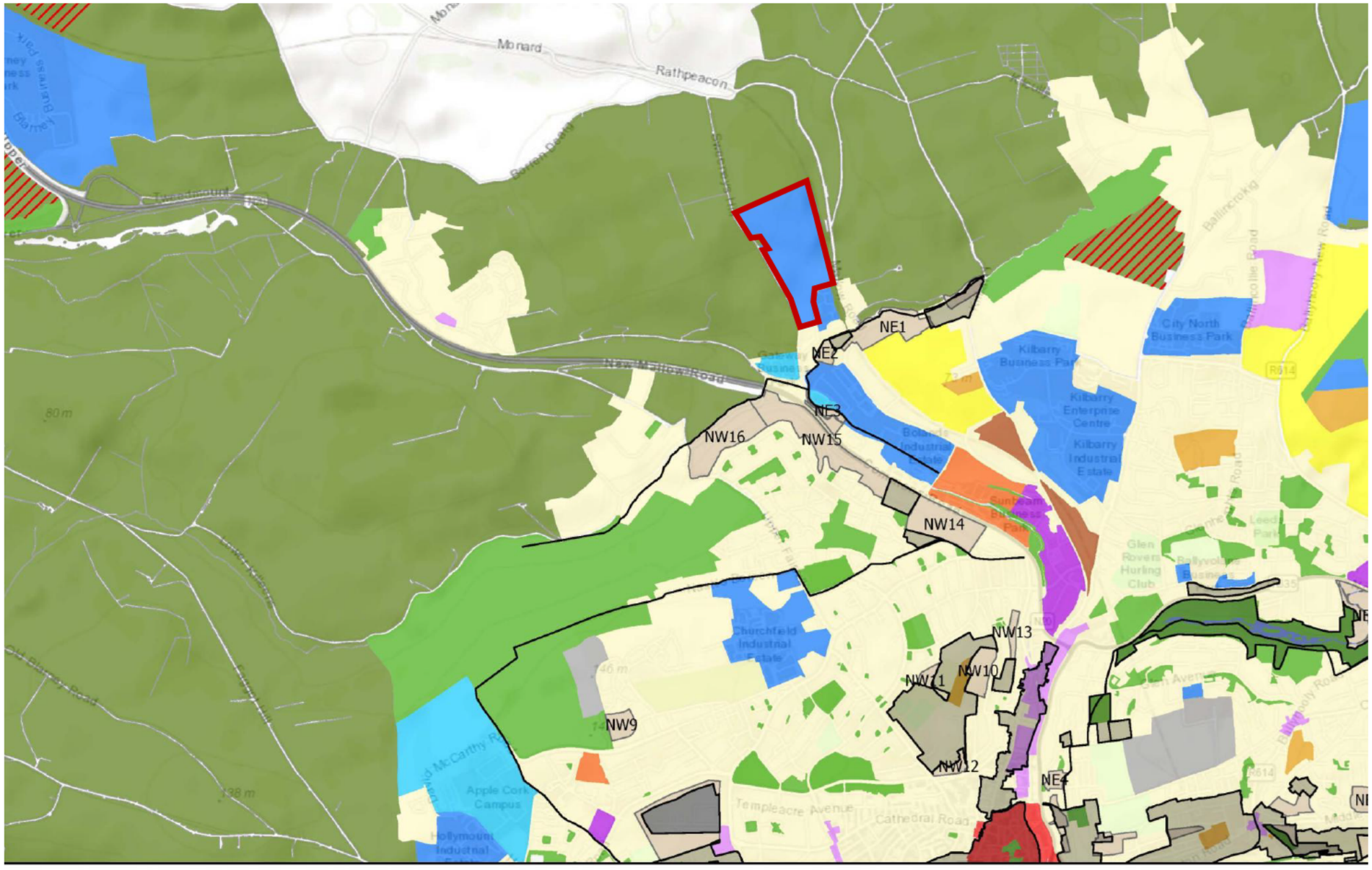
New development proposals will respect and reflect the topography, landscape and ecology of the City, and will protect and enhance the City's green and blue infrastructure by ensuring that development does not fragment existing networks of green and blue infrastructure. Proposals for new development will demonstrate how green and blue infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation, landscape and biodiversity are considered commensurate to the scale and context of the development in the development process. Large-scale developments will incorporate open spaces to contribute to the green and blue infrastructure in the City.

The Rathpeacon site is zoned for light industrial use and is situated on the outskirts of the city. However, it is surrounded by rural hinterland and designated landscape preservation zones. As such, a strong emphasis is required on a comprehensive landscape strategy that incorporates placemaking principles, green and blue infrastructure, and biodiversity. Where possible, the design should also prioritise the protection of existing mature vegetation and natural habitats. The requirements for quality open space within any new residential development, at a minimum of 15% of the development area, makes space for nature and provides scope to fulfil the objectives of the Development Plan.

Objective 6.9
Landscape
b. Landscape will be an important factor in all development proposals, ensuring that a proactive view of development is undertaken while maintaining respect for the environment and heritage generally in line with the principle of sustainability;
c. To ensure that new development meets the highest standards of placemaking, siting and design;
d. To protect those prominent open hilltops, valley sides and ridges that define the character of the Cork City Hinterland and those areas which form strategic, largely undeveloped gaps between the main Hinterland settlements from development;
e. To discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments;

Objective 6.18
Public Open Space
c.The development of open spaces should "aim to enhance and protect natural features and views and be set in safe and secure environments with the emphasis on active open spaces accessible to and enjoyed by all sectors of the community;
d. To follow an approach of qualitative as well as quantitative standards for open spaces providing high quality open spaces with high levels of access to recreation for local communities, including good practices of inclusive design;
e. Specific design outcomes should be framed in relation to the nature of spaces being created or enhanced (e.g. in relation to maintenance, nature exposure and connectivity, strategic landscape and social role).

CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION:
Cork City Council Zoning Map



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Walkways _ Cycleways
Area of High Landscape Value
Long Term Strategic Development Lands 2022
Architectural Conservation Areas 2022
LPZ2022

Zoning Map CC 2022-2028
ZO 01, Sustainable Residential Neighbourhoods
ZO 02, New Residential Neighbourhoods
ZO 03, Long-term Strategic Regeneration
ZO 04, Mixed Use Development
ZO 05, City Centre
ZO 07, District Centre
ZO 08, Neighbourhood and Local Centres
ZO 09, Light Industry and Related Uses
ZO 10, Business and Technology
ZO 12, Education
ZO 13, Institutions and Community
ZO 14, Public Infrastructure and utilities
ZO 15, Public Open Space
ZO 16, Sports Grounds and Facilities
ZO 17, Landscape Preservation Zones
ZO 19, Rivers and Water Bodies Protection
ZO 20, City Hinterland

The site has been highlighted with a red boundary in Zoning Map 12 taken from the Cork City Council Development Plan 2022-2028 Its shows that the site is currently zoned light industrial. Closely adjacent to the site are the Glenamought River Valley to the south and several associated Landscape Preservation Zones and areas of High Landscape Value. Directly north, east and west the land is zoned as City Hinterland. Cycleway and walkways are also located south of the site. There is a strong leaning towards protection of existing landscape and cultural features in the area that gives rise to an expectation for high quality, landscape driven development to enhance the urban fringe.

CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION:
Other Local Policy Documents

Cork County Draft Landscape Strategy (2007)
The Cork County Draft Landscape Strategy was prepared in 2007 to categorise the landscape character, sensitivity and value across the county with a view to establishing the extent of development potential within the county. 16 Landscape Character Types were identified in the study along with 76 Landscape Character Areas. As described in the Cork County Development Plan

'The key role of the Draft Landscape Strategy of Cork County is to assist in the achievement of sustainable development, by promoting an approach to landscape planning and management, which links objectives and recommendations for landscape character to existing planning policies. To recognise that the landscapes are dynamic and continuously evolving, the objectives do not attempt to prevent new uses or changes but to manage the change ensuring that the past remains visible for future generations.'

The site at Rathpeacon lies within the Landscape Character Type1 City Harbour and Estuary.

Cork City Trees Strategy
The Cork City Tree Strategy was prepared to support Cork City Council in the protection of existing trees, planting of new trees and future management and maintenance. The baseline part of the strategy reveals that Cork City has 16% tree canopy coverage, when including all trees 3m high or more. When compared with other EU cities of a similar size, such as Lubjana in Slovenia having 50% tree canopy coverage , Cork falls short. The majority of the trees that make up canopy coverage in Cork are in private ownership, with only 17% on public lands. Unfortunately, the general trend since 2018 has been for tree canopy loss in Cork and the 3rd main reason for this is linked with implementation of new development. The baseline study notes that there are a significant length of native hedgerow boundaries throughout the city and hinterland that make an unquantified contribution to carbon sequestration, biodivesrity and habitat networks. The Rathpeacon site falls into the category of average canopy cover of 13%, when compared with other areas in Cork City. The strategy document is presented via 5 Action areas including the following:

Public Management of Trees: Provide proactive Tree Care & Management for public trees and encourage the same for private trees.
Retain Existing Trees: Retain existing trees and integrate them into the built environment wherever feasible
Plant New Trees: Incorporate more trees into existing built-up areas, especially in areas with the lowest tree canopy cover. Plant new trees as part of new development and develop a strategy for the creation of more woodlands and ecological corridors
Plant Trees Well: Adopt and implement the 'right tree, right place' approach to tree planting
Collaborate: Work together as a community to learn about, plant, care for, and manage trees.

CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION:
Other Local Policy Documents

Cork Green Blue Infrastructure Study
The Cork Green Blue Infrastructure Study was prepared by LUC and Tobin Consulting Engineers on behalf of Cork City Council in 2022. The report was prepared to draw attention to the equal value and application of Green Blue Infrastructure against engineered grey infrastructure within the city. The study formed part of the evidence base that fed into the formation of the Cork City Council Development Plan 2022-2028. The study explains what GBI is and the benefits.
It undertakes a baseline analysis of GBI in Cork City, explores where and what the existing GBI assets are and opportunities for implementing future GBI projects in the city. An action list sets out activities with an associated timeline to deliver on the study. The document expresses key themes such as '10 minute city neighbourhoods'.

Cork City Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2021-2026
The Cork City Heritage and Biodiversity Plan presents 4 themes for action 1. Best Practice, 2. Research and Education, 3. Raising Awareness and 4. Increase the level of social cultural, economic and tourism activity

The Plan refers to The Cork Green Blue Infrastructure Study throughout and proposes a timeline against key landscape activities for delivery.
In year 1-5 under Best Practice Theme:
- Plant 1500 native Irish trees per year

Development of landscaped open space areas as part of the Rathpeacon site can help deliver on increasing the canopy cover in the northern park of the city.

Cork City Climate Action Plan 2024-2029
The Cork City Climate Action Plan was developed as part of statutory climate action requirements for participation in the EU100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission.
Acceleration of the city towards a climate neutral status that is resilient and thriving, starts by reducing emissions. The plan sets out 129 Actions to be initiated over the term of the plan that work towards the carbon neutral goal. Chapter 11 Transport and Mobility, calls for an increase in active travel routes and infrastructure throughout the city and specifically secure and covered bike parking throughout. Chapter 12 Natural Environment and Resource Management, focuses on protection and restoration of existing green infrastructure and areas of biodiversity value in the city. It promotes a green blue approach to managing the absorption of rainwater run off and flood water. The action plan communicates that the needs of nature will not be eclipsed by Economic growth, and that net Gain for nature will be a future driver for decision making. Some key performance indicators include:

- **Increase area of tree canopy cover**
- **Increase percentage of residents living within 400m of a publicly accessible green are**

CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION: Other Local Policy Documents

Of the 129 Annex of Actions from the plan, the following can be applied to our site in Rathpeacon

- No 2.10 Arts and Culture Strategic Priorities – Art in the Public Realm and Space for Art. Integrate climate action as a strategic issue.

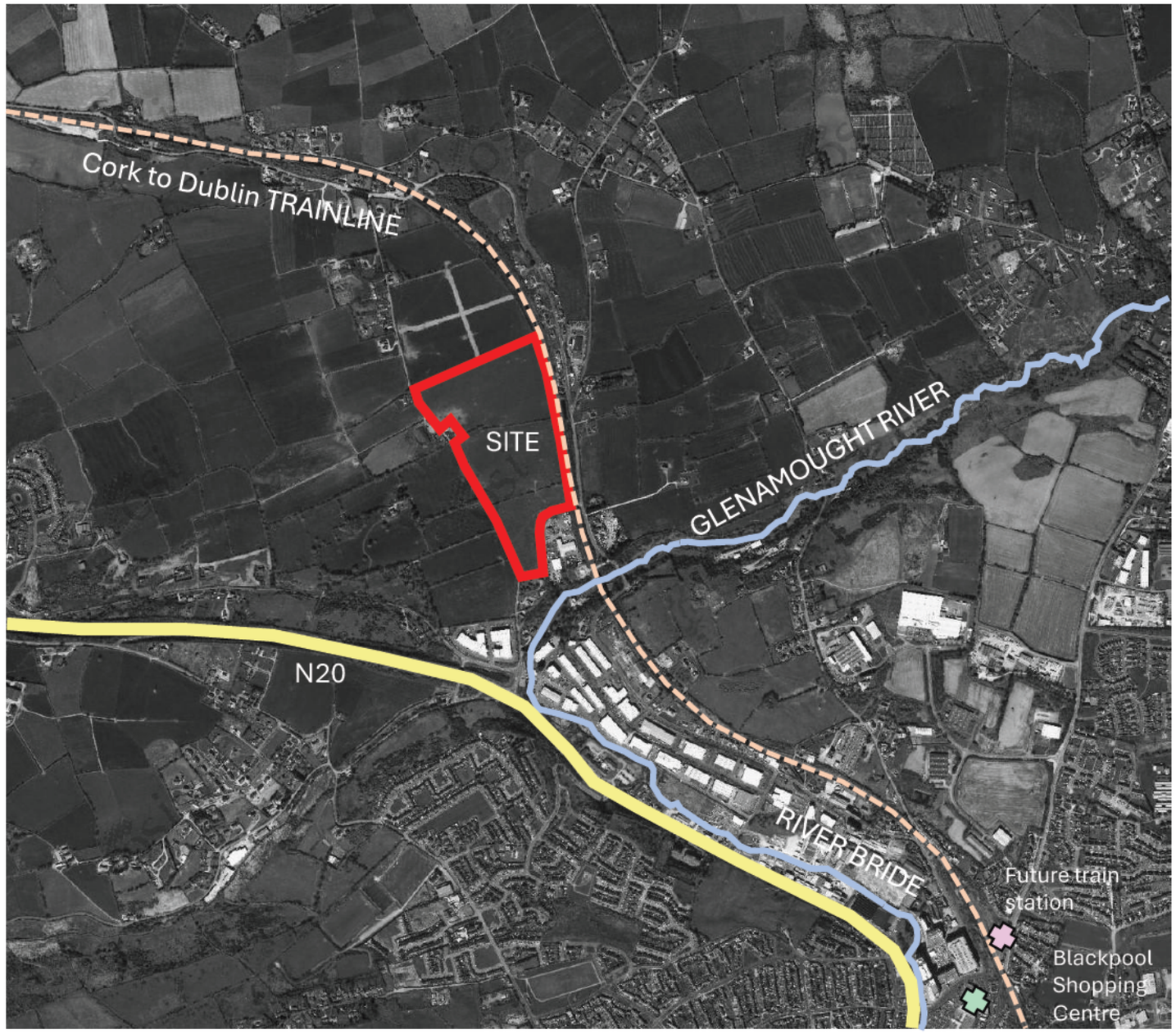
- No 2.18 Community Gardens to be promoted – enhancement of those already established and support for increased network.

- No 3.6 Protect the rural hinterland of Cork City for nature and biodiversity – rigorous application of compact growth and rural housing policy.

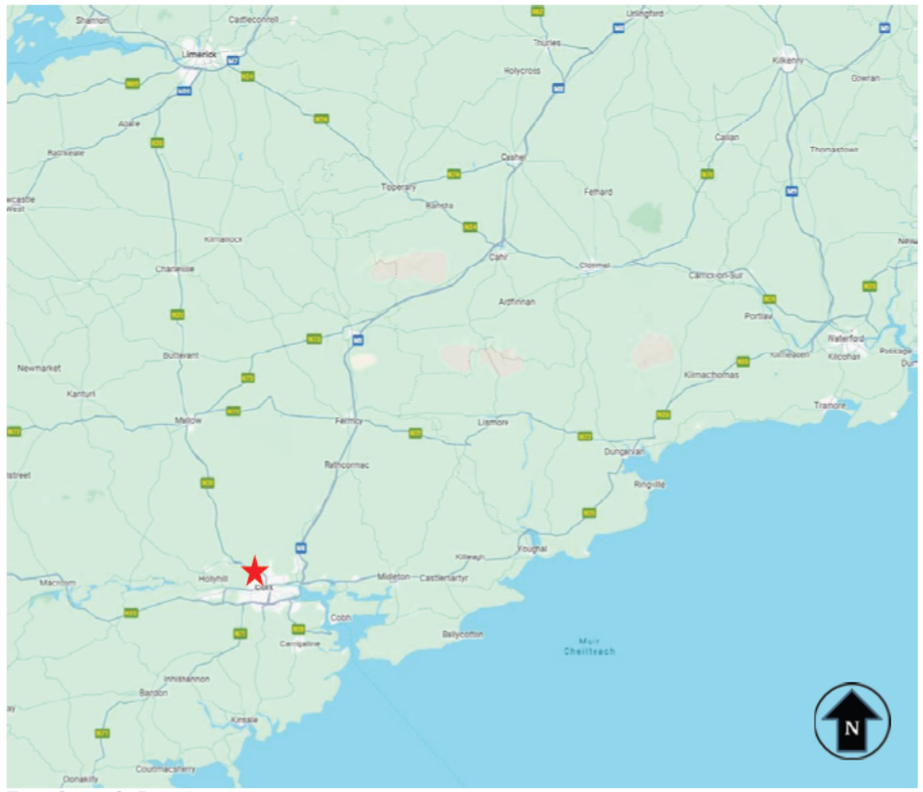
- No 3.15 Energy efficient LED lanterns for public lighting stock. Lumen, spectral range managed to avoid effects on biodiversity.

- No 3.21 Mainstream Green and Blue Infrastructure priorities into design and delivery of all built environment projects. Priority projects include new rewilding, rewetting and reafforestation. Due regard for tourism, heritage, recreation along with environmental sensitivity – water, air and biodiversity quality.

CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION:
Site Location and Setting



Local Context



Regional Context

The site is located on the northern fringe of Cork city in the southern part of Ireland. It is well connected with access to the N20 highway only 300m to the south of the site. The Cork to Dublin Trainline passes along the eastern boundary of the site. The nearest station is Kent located 5km south close to the banks of the River Lee. There are plans, however, for a new commuter station at Kilbarry located 2km to the south of the site adjacent Blackpool shopping centre. The north, west and east adjacent lands are occupied by a gently rolling landscape of agricultural fields with native hedgerow boundaries. Immediately south is an area of light industrial units. In contrast to this is the Glenamought River Valley, an area of riparian biodiversity that is relatively intact. Beyond this to the south are residential estates.

CONTEXT AND INTRODUCTION:
Photographs



The upper half of the site is open and exposed and affords expansive and engaging views south towards Cork City. The lower half sits low in the landscape and is sheltered and contained. The lands were previously part of a typical agricultural farm of rolling hills, made up of medium sized field parcels, bound by native hedgerows of varying quality. The site is on the very edge of the city where the landscape transforms rapidly from urban to rural. There are some remnant dry stone walls present on the boundary and also rock outcrop features through the middle section of the site.











02. Analysis

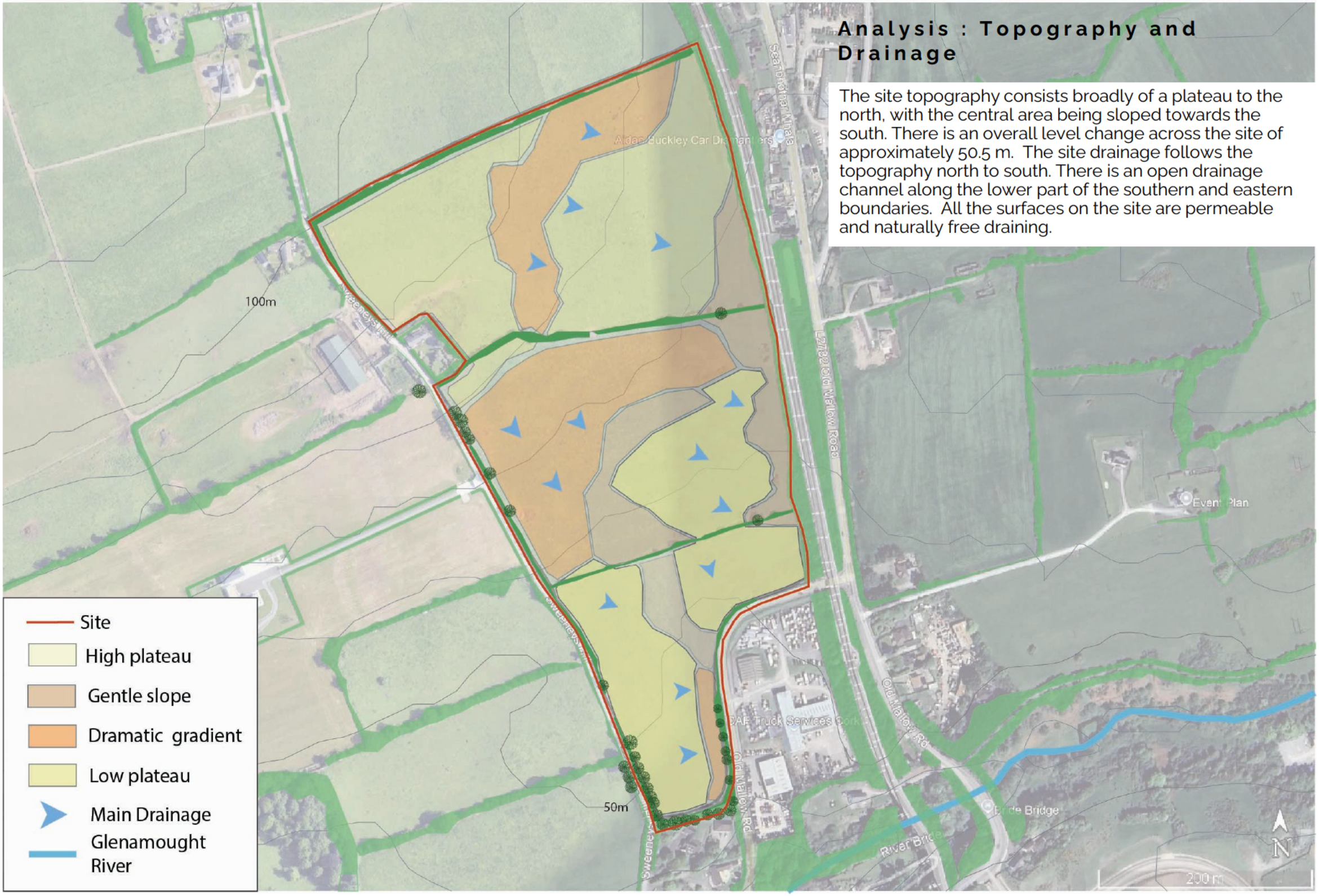
The Analysis pages cover the following aspects of the site

- Topography and drainage
- Existing Vegetation
- Boundaries
- Views
- Heritage and Features
- Green Blue Infrastructure Components

RATHPEACON SITE ANALYSIS: Topography and Drainage

Analysis : Topography and Drainage

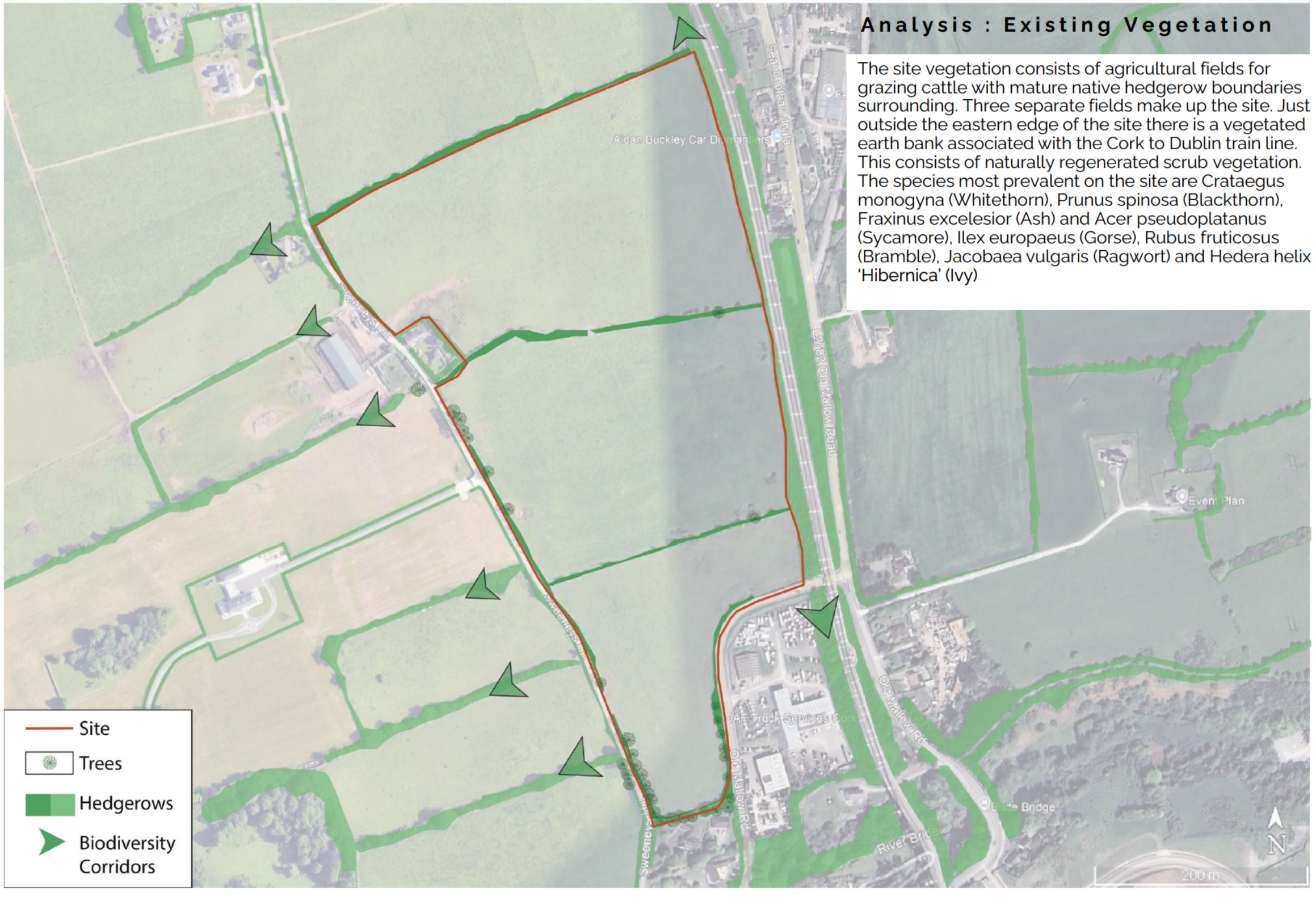
The site topography consists broadly of a plateau to the north, with the central area being sloped towards the south. There is an overall level change across the site of approximately 50.5 m. The site drainage follows the topography north to south. There is an open drainage channel along the lower part of the southern and eastern boundaries. All the surfaces on the site are permeable and naturally free draining.



RATHPEACON SITE ANALYSIS: Vegetation

Analysis : Existing Vegetation

The site vegetation consists of agricultural fields for grazing cattle with mature native hedgerow boundaries surrounding. Three separate fields make up the site. Just outside the eastern edge of the site there is a vegetated earth bank associated with the Cork to Dublin train line. This consists of naturally regenerated scrub vegetation. The species most prevalent on the site are Crataegus monogyna (Whitethorn), Prunus spinosa (Blackthorn), Fraxinus excelesior (Ash) and Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore), Ilex europaeus (Gorse), Rubus fruticosus (Bramble), Jacobaea vulgaris (Ragwort) and Hedera helix 'Hibernica' (Ivy)



RATHPEACON SITE ANALYSIS : VIEWS

Analysis : Views

The northern half of the site is elevated and has uninterrupted views of adjacent neighbourhoods such as Fairhill, Blackpool and The Glen in the distance. The existing hedgerow vegetation mitigates some of the openness of the site, however it is generally sweeping and exposed to the south. Views into and out from the southern half of the site are well contained by the lowering topography, trainline embankment to the east and existing hedgerow vegetation to the south and west.









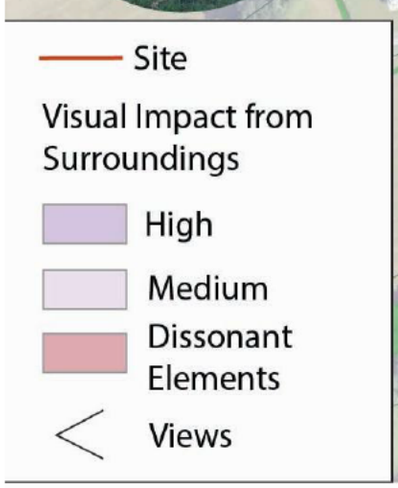


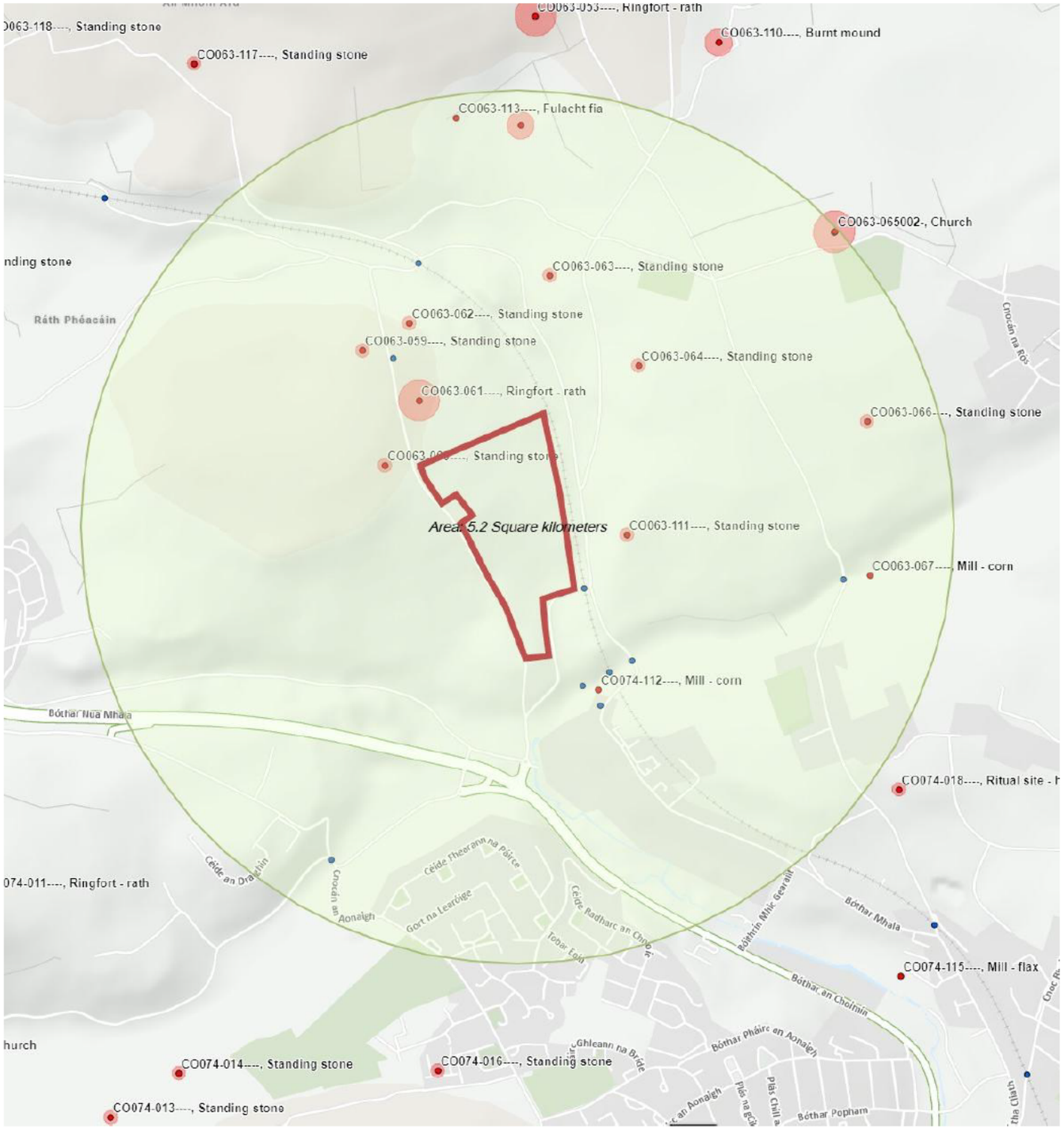












Analysis : Heritage and Features

There are no recorded monuments within the red line boundary of the site. There are 22 recorded monuments within 100m of the site, 6 of which are standing stones and 3 are remnant mill buildings. There are also 8 structures listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage within 100 metres of the site. There are several structures amongst the group that are transport infrastructure related such as Kilnap viaduct and 3 other railway bridges. The closest recorded feature to the site also falls into this category and is a stone railway underpass located close to the south east corner of the red line boundary.

Analysis : Site Boundaries

The existing boundaries consist of post and wire fencing with native hedgerow planting on earthen ditch. There are sections of drystone wall to the southern and western boundary along Sweeneys Hill and Old Mallow Road.

GREEN BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE:
EXISTING COMPONENTS:



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CONTEXT

The proposed development, set within a rich tapestry of green and blue infrastructure, will have open space, biodiversity and nature-based solutions at its heart

River
woodland
Agricultural Lands
Sports Pitches
Native Hedgerows, Heath and Scrub
Regional Roads
Train ;line

GREEN BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE: KEY COMPONENTS:

Three key components of green and blue infrastructure have been developed, that are central to the landscape design for the proposed development:

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) aim to manage stormwater effectively by reducing strain on traditional drainage networks, contribute to the minimising of flood risks, and promote sustainable water management practices. By implementing a comprehensive SUDS strategy, the development site can enhance its resilience to extreme weather events, protect water resources, and create a more sustainable and environmentally friendly living environments. SuDS proposals must be developed appropriate to local site ground conditions.

SuDS components can make a significant contribution to the biodiversity (ecological) value of an area (eg. rain gardens, swales, detention basins, trees).

SUDS EXAMPLES:

- Permeable Paving
- Rain Gardens
- Swales
- Infiltration Basins
- Wetlands

Biodiversity plays a vital role in creating sustainable and resilient housing environments. It encompasses the variety of plants, animals, and insects that interact within an ecosystem, contributing to ecological balance and overall environmental health. In residential areas, increased biodiversity improves air and water quality, supports pollination, enhances soil health, and promotes residents' well-being by providing green, life-filled spaces. These benefits also help mitigate climate impacts such as the urban heat island effect.

Our approach supports biodiversity through the use of native plant species suited to local conditions, alongside pollinator-friendly non-natives to attract bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects. This careful planting design promotes layered habitats and ecological connectivity, supporting a broad range of wildlife. The result is a vibrant, attractive landscape that benefits both nature and the people who live among it.

Open spaces and recreation are integral components of green infrastructure in housing developments. Prioritising the preservation of existing habitats and the establishment of new ones within amenity spaces is essential.

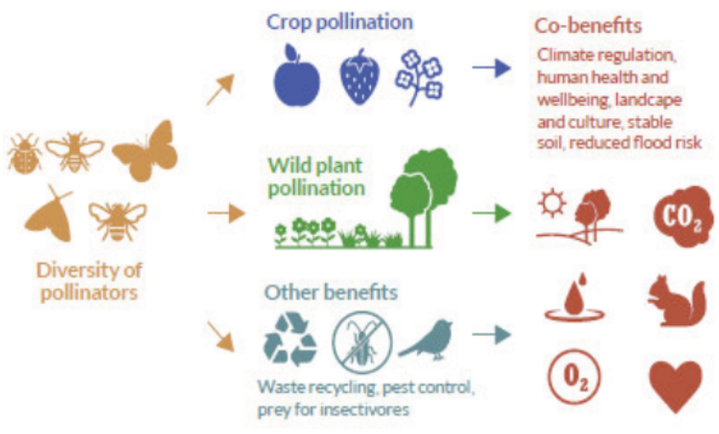
This approach promotes biodiversity and enhances the overall ecological balance. Ensuring robust connectivity between all green spaces contributes to a cohesive and well-integrated environment.

Beyond providing areas for leisure and physical activity, this systematic incorporation of green infrastructure elevates the quality of life for residents.

It also underscores a commitment to sustainable urban planning, creating neighbourhoods that harmoniously blend with nature while offering residents accessible and thriving green environments.



SuDs example



The benefits of protecting pollinators



Variety of use and function within open spaces

GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE: PRINCIPLES AND THEMES

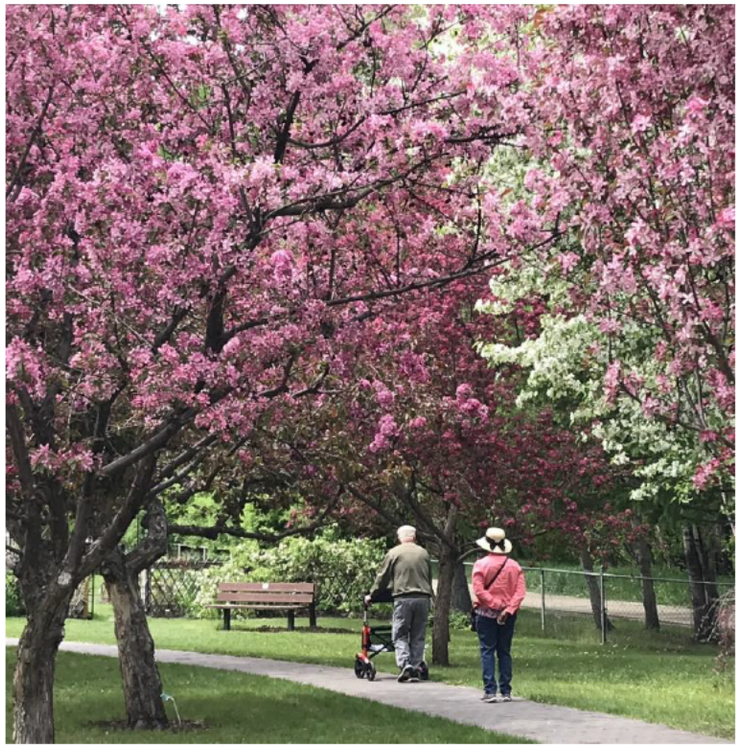
This development will benefit from proactive management of both green and blue infrastructure to provide benefits to the environment and residents alike.

A green infrastructure strategy typically prioritizes the incorporation of plants, trees, and green spaces into the development, while a blue infrastructure strategy focuses on managing water resources, such as watercourses, wetlands and swales.

By combining green and blue infrastructure, this development can become more sustainable, promote biodiversity and ecosystem health, and improve human well-being. This approach requires careful planning, collaboration with stakeholders, and the use of innovative design techniques to integrate green and blue infrastructure into the development's fabric.

Ultimately, a green and blue infrastructure strategy can help create healthier and more resilient communities, reduce the environmental impacts, and enhance the quality of life for residents.

Overall, blue and green infrastructure strategies aim to create sustainable, resilient, and liveable communities that benefit both the environment and the people who inhabit them.







03.LANDSCAPE DESIGN CONCEPT

DESIGN CONCEPT: AIMS & OBJECTIVES











The landscape strategy for the project site at Rathpeacon aims to deliver the following:

- **Place Making -** working collaboratively with project architects, engineers and planners to create a strong and unique identity for the development and a distinctive sense of place.
- **Retention/Enhancement** of existing vegetation.
- Provision of a **green framework** across the site into which the proposed development will be integrated.
- **Connectivity/Permeability** – provision of adequate pedestrian and cycle linkages across the development in line with principles of DMURS.
- **Recreation and Amenity** - provision of usable open spaces, well distributed across the site, and designed to allow ease of access, child supervision and passive surveillance.
- **Child Friendly Spaces** – an approach to open space design that encourages children to engage in play outdoors and allows children of all ages to move freely around their neighbourhood in a safe manner.
- **Legibility** – layout of open-spaces and walking/cycling routes that is visually coherent and can be navigated with relative ease.
- **Biodiversity** – bolstering habitat value of the overall site and riparian zone with a wildlife friendly tree, shrub and meadow planting strategy developed in line with the principles and recommendations of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan.
- **Maintenance and Management** – requiring that all specified hard and soft materials, finishes and treatments are robust, durable and can be managed / maintained with relative ease.

DESIGN CONCEPT: MASTERPLAN



Legend:

- PUBLIC OPEN SPACES TREES
- EXISTING TREES TO RETAIN
- GROUNDCOVER, PERENNIALS AND SHRUBS FOR POLLINATORS
- EXISTING NATIVE HEDGEROW TO RETAIN
- PROPOSED NATIVE HEDGEROW
- HEDGEROW TO REMOVE
- PUBLIC AMENITY GRASS
- PRIVATE GARDENS
- PREFERRED ROUTE NORTH CORK DISTRIBUTOR ROAD
- RAINGARDENS/ ATTENUATION BASINS (SUDS)
- Rock NATURAL ROCK OUTCROPS TO RETAIN
- 1 NATURAL PLAY AREA WITH MOUNDS AND BOULDERS
- 2 KICKABOUT AREA
- 3 AMPHITHEATER AREA
- PUBLIC ART SCULPTURE
- FOOTPATHS
- PERMEABLE PAVING
- CYCLEPATH
- PROPOSED VEHICULAR ACCESS
- PROPOSED OPTIONS FOR PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
- SITE BOUNDARY



Conceptual masterplan

DESIGN CONCEPT: SPACES STRATEGY







The masterplan establishes distinct spaces and defines their intended functions

Legend:

- Public Open Spaces
- Central Lawn
- Green Streets
- Private Gardens
- Biodiversity Corridor





DESIGN CONCEPT: CONCEPT PLAN



Nature Play Space



Legend:

- Public Open Spaces Trees
- Public Amenity Grass
- Private Gardens
- Permeable pathway
- Natural Play Area with Mounds and Boulders
- Seating
- Public Art

DESIGN CONCEPT: INSPIRING IMAGES



Neighbourhood amenity spaces for use by all age groups



Optimising the use of site topography



Biodiversity enhancement areas



Active travel routes



Natural Play



Maintaining & enhancing existing vegetation

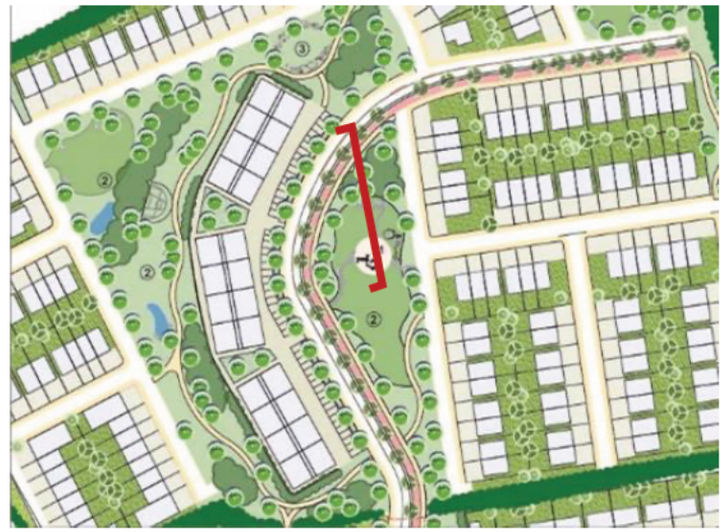


Section A-A Location Plan



Section through central open space network

DESIGN CONCEPT: LANDSCAPE SECTION

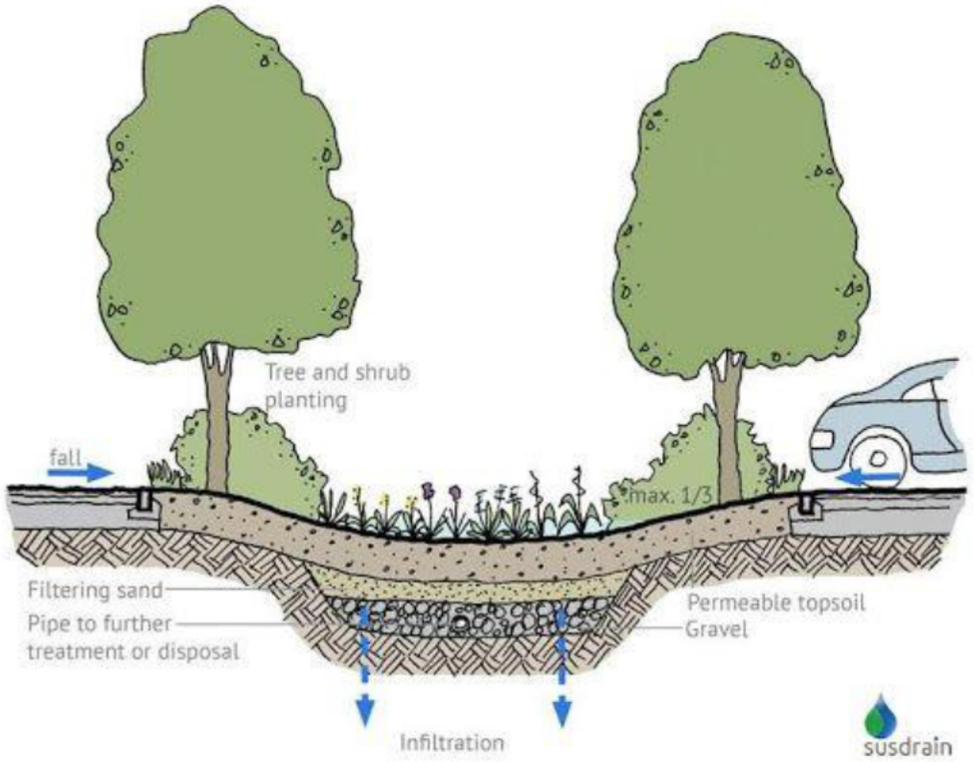


Section B-B Location Plan



Section through open space for play and recreation




Tree and shrub planting
fall
max. 1/3
Filtering sand
Pipe to further treatment or disposal
Permeable topsoil
Gravel
Infiltration
susdrain



Lands at Rathpeacon, Co. Cork

Engineering Services Report

Prepared for:	Progressive Commercial Construction Ltd
Prepared by:	MMOS Engineers
Date:	05.11.2025
Document Reference:	25204-MMS-XX-XX-RP-C-0001

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Prepared for: Progressive Commercial Construction Ltd

Report Title: Engineering Services Report

Project Title: Lands at Rathpeacon, Co. Cork

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Document reference: 25204-MMS-XX-XX-RP-C-0001

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1 INTRODUCTION

MMOS Consulting Engineers were requested to undertake this report on behalf of Progressive Commercial Construction Ltd to form part of a residential zoning consultation for the lands at Rathpeacon Co. Cork.

1.1 SITE LOCATION

The proposed development site is located in Rathpeacon and bound by the Old Mallow Road to the south, Sweeney's Hill to the west and the railway line to the east. The site masterplan is shown in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1 – Site Masterplan

1.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

A total of c. 601 no. residential units is proposed for the development. The site is split north and south of the proposed North Ring Road corridor.

The proposed development also includes the provision of open spaces, internal roads, footpaths, car parking, public lighting, bin stores, boundary treatments, tree removal and planning, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), and all associated and ancillary development and servicing works above and below ground to facilitate the construction and operation of the development.

Please refer to the architect's drawings attached to this application for full site details and unit elevations.

1.3 SCOPE OF REPORT

This report describes the existing civil engineering infrastructure serving the area. This report has been prepared by reviewing available data from the client, design team, local authority sources, national bodies and through onsite surveys completed to date, and it addresses the following:

- Storm Drainage & SUDS Strategy
- Foul Drainage
- Potable Water Supply

1.4 CONSULTATION

In advance of preparing this report, we have consulted with Uisce Éireann and the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028.

The Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 advises on the discharge of surface water into the public system and SuDS to be implemented in all future developments.

An Uisce Eireann preconnection application was made for the site based on the site masterplan prepared by Butler Cammoranesi for the lands. The confirmation of feasibilty for a 600 unit scheme can be found in Appendix A of this report.

2 EXISTING SERVICES

2.1 WATERMAIN CONNECTION

A Pre-Connection Enquiry has been submitted to Uisce Éireann and a Confirmation of Feasibility has been received. Existing infrastructure asset mapping within the vicinity of the development was received from Uisce Éireann.

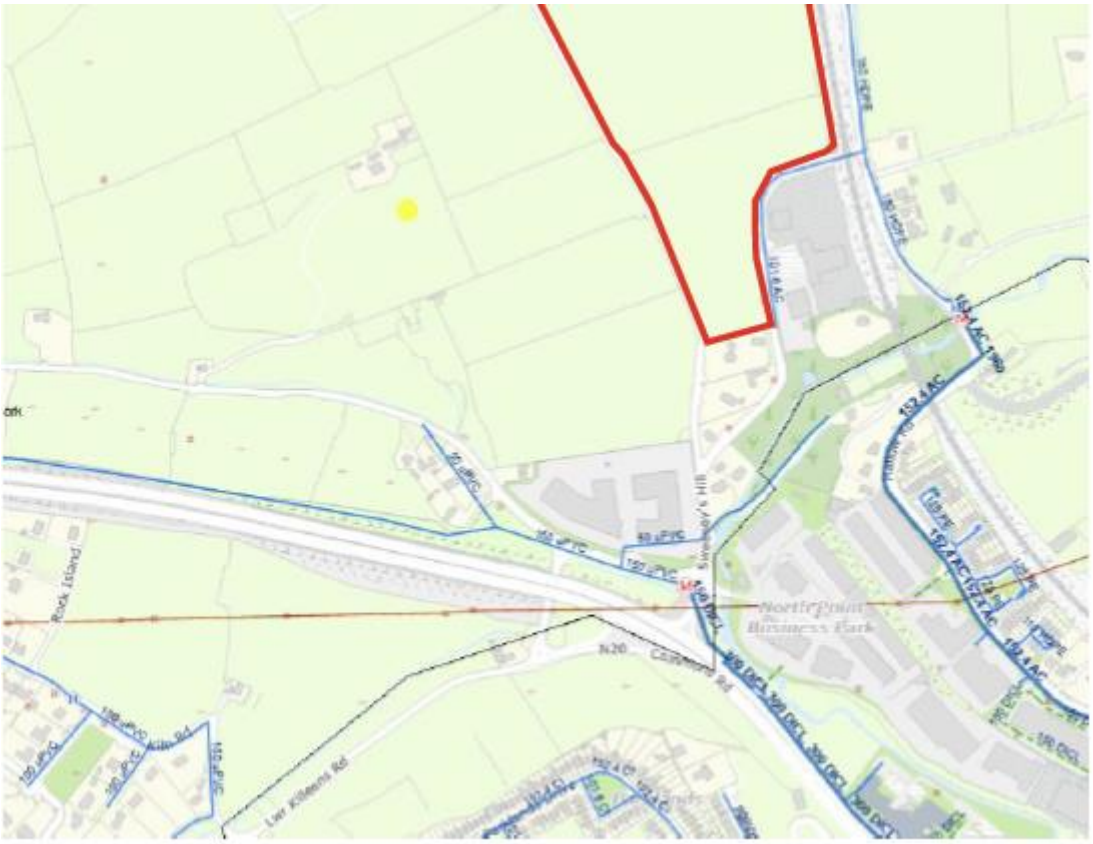


Figure 2 – Watermain record map (Uisce Éireann)

Uisce Éireann have confirmed that the water connection for the site is feasible subject to upgrades. To facilitate the proposed connection, it will be necessary to extend the Uisce Éireann water network by approximately 750 metres to connect to the existing 300 mm diameter DICL watermain located to the south-east, along the N20 road.

2.2 WASTEWATER CONNECTION

A Pre-Connection Enquiry has been submitted to Uisce Éireann and a Confirmation of Feasibility has been received. Existing infrastructure asset mapping within the vicinity of the development was received from Uisce Éireann.

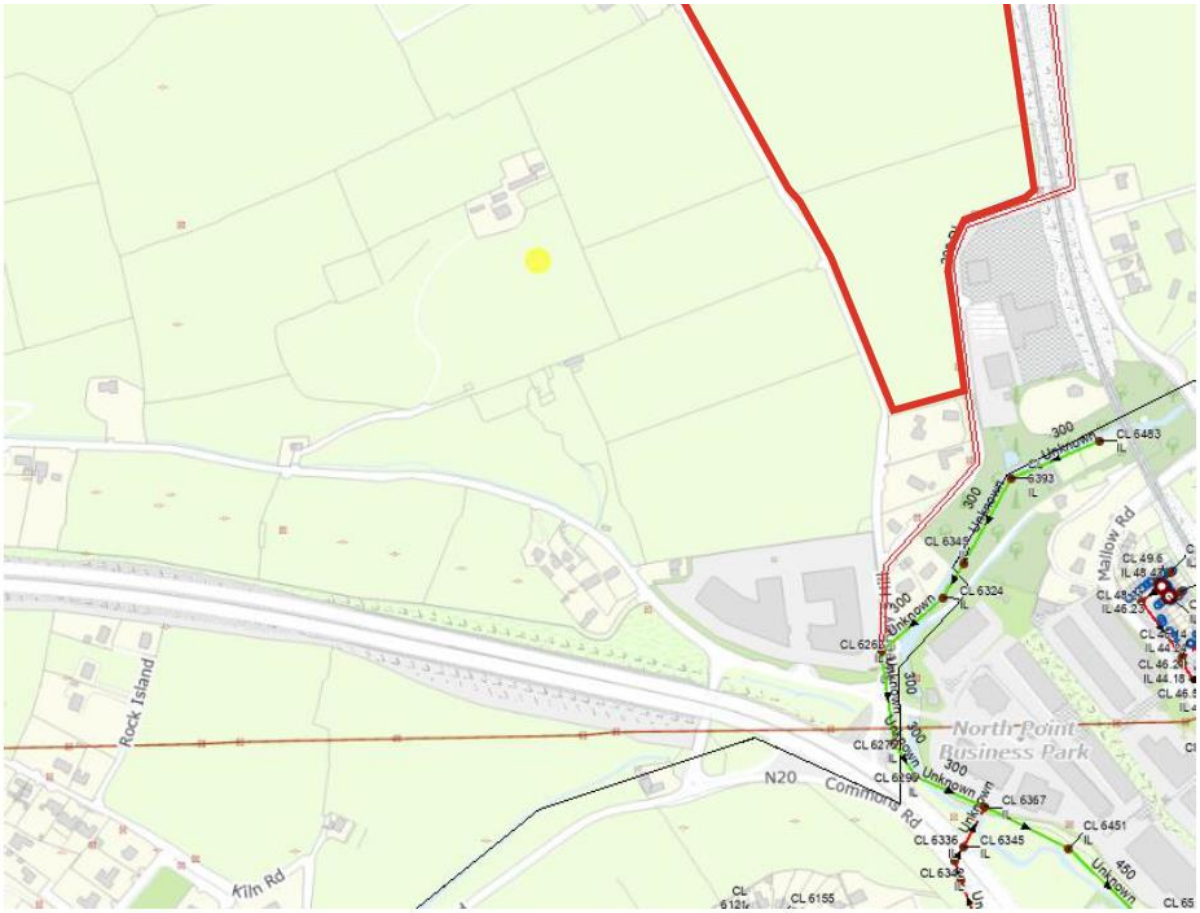


Figure 3 – Wastewater record map (Uisce Éireann)

Uisce Éireann have confirmed that the water connection for the site is feasible subject to upgrades. The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP) currently has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development. However, potential upgrades to the water network may be required to facilitate the proposed connection at the Premises. To complete the proposed foul connection, the Uisce Éireann sewer network will need to be extended by approximately 650 metres to connect to the existing 300 mm diameter combined foul sewer located to the south-east of the development, near the N20 road.

2.3 SURFACE WATER CONNECTION

There is an existing stormwater network along the Old Mallow Road, which flows southward and connects to a 300 mm diameter combined sewer. It is proposed to restrict the stormwater discharge from the site to the greenfield runoff rate using a hydrobrake. Attenuation will be provided within the development to accommodate stormwater from a 1-in-200-year storm event, including a 20% allowance for climate change.

In developing the Surface Water Management Plan for the proposed development the following documents will be used as a point of reference:

- Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

- Ciria C724 : Creating Water Sensitive Places
- DMURS Advice Note 5: Road and Street Drainage using Nature Based Solutions
- Blue Green Infrastructure and Nature-based Solutions Framework (Southern Regional Assembly)
- Cork County Council CDP Advice Note 1: Surface Water Management

Objective 11.10.4 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022 specifies that "The Council will continue to require the provision of SuDS in residential and industrial developments." Where SuDS measures are being proposed, the chosen solution should be fully justified and having regard to a hierarchy of nature-based solutions. Such proposals shall be accompanied by a comprehensive SuDS assessment including run-off quantity, run off quality and impacts on habitat and water quality.

2.4 EXISTING TELECOM SERVICES

The telecom services are available in the area where small residential area is located. The Telecom services can be extended from the Gateway telecom system.

2.5 EXISTING ESB SERVICES

The ESB and Fiber Network map where 10KV Three Phase power, which can be extended from the Gateway 10KV system are present. It can be noted that there is no ESB line running through the site as highlighted in red boundary line.

APPENDIX A - Uisce Eireann COF

CONFIRMATION OF FEASIBILITY

[redacted]

Uisce Éireann
Bosca OP 448
Oifig Sheachadta na
Cathrach Theas
Cathair Chorcaí

Uisce Éireann
PO Box 448
South City
Delivery Office
Cork City

www.water.ie

4 November 2025

Our Ref: CDS25006774 Pre-Connection Enquiry
Site at, Rathpeacon, Cork City

Dear Applicant/Agent,

We have completed the review of the Pre-Connection Enquiry.

Uisce Éireann has reviewed the pre-connection enquiry in relation to a Water & Wastewater connection for a Housing Development of 600 unit(s) at Site at, Rathpeacon, Cork City, (the **Development)**.

Based upon the details provided we can advise the following regarding connecting to the networks;

- **Water Connection** - Feasible Subject to upgrades

  The Water Treatment Plant (WTP) has currently sufficient capacity to accommodate this development. However please note Uisce Éireann have issued a large volume of COF's for this area. Should a sufficient number of these developments connect to the network in the interim prior to you receiving a connection offer there may be insufficient capacity.
  In order to complete the proposed connection at the Premises, the Uisce Éireann water network will have to be extended by approximately 750m upto existing 300 mm dia DICL WDN to the South-East to the Development on N20 road. Uisce Éireann currently does not have any plans to extend its network in this area. Should you wish to consider to extending the public network to your site please make contact with Uisce Éireann. These works will be carried out by Uisce Éireann and the costs for this will be included in your connection fee.
  Please see www.water.ie/connections/ for information on connection charges.
  Uisce Éireann can provide a source of water to you, the available water head is suitable for a maximum elevation of 65 m AOD. water pressure may be low if the development will have houses above 65m AOD. Low water pressures can be solved by the client fitting a Storage Vessel/Tank

Stiúrthóirí / Directors: Niall Gleeson (POF / CEO), Jerry Grant (Cathaoirleach / Chairperson), Gerard Britchfield, Liz Joyce, Michael Nolan, Patricia King, Eileen Maher, Cathy Mannion, Paul Reid, Michael Walsh.
Oifig Chláraithe / Registered Office: Teach Colvill, 24-26 Sráid Thalbóid, Baile Átha Cliath 1, D01 NP86 / Colvill House, 24-26 Talbot Street, Dublin, Ireland D01NP86
Is cuideachta ghníomhaíochta ainmnithe atá faoi theorainn scaireanna é Uisce Éireann / Uisce Éireann is a designated activity company, limited by shares.
Cláraithe in Éirinn Uimh.: 530363 / Registered in Ireland No.: 530363.

and pump on the private side of the property, should the requirement be needed. This shall remain private infrastructure.
Please refer to www.water.ie/connections/information/ for guidance to the Connection Process.
Additionally, The connection agreement to connect to the Uisce Éireann infrastructure does not extend to your fire flow requirements. Uisce Éireann cannot guarantee that the flow rates and residual pressures will meet the requirements of the Fire Authority.

- **Wastewater Connection** - Feasible Subject to upgrades

  The wastewater Treatment Plant (WwTP) has currently sufficient capacity to accommodate this development. However please note Uisce Éireann have issued a large volume of COF's for this area. Should a sufficient number of these developments connect to the network in the interim prior to you receiving a connection offer there may be insufficient capacity.
  In order to complete the proposed connection at the premises, potential upgrades are required to the water network. The extents of the upgrades would need to be modelled in more detail at application stage. These upgrade works are not currently on Uisce Éireann investment plan therefore, the applicant may be required to provide a contribution towards the costs for the required upgrades in conjunction with other developments in the area, as part of a future connection agreement for this site.
  Also, In order to complete the proposed connection at the Premises, the Uisce Éireann sewer network will have to be extended by approximately 650m to connect to existing 300 dia combined foul network to the South-East of the proposed development near N20 Road. Uisce Éireann currently does not have any plans to extend its network in this area. Should you wish to consider to extending the public network to your site please make contact with Uisce Éireann. These works will be carried out by Uisce Éireann and the costs for this will be included in your connection fee.
  Please see www.water.ie/connections/ for information on connection charges.
  No stormwater shall be permitted to enter the IW wastewater network. Applicant to show at application stage how they intend to deal with stormwater on site.

This letter does not constitute an offer, in whole or in part, to provide a connection to any Uisce Éireann infrastructure. Before the Development can be connected to our network(s) you must submit a connection application and be granted and sign a connection agreement with Uisce Éireann.

As the network capacity changes constantly, this review is only valid at the time of its completion. As soon as planning permission has been granted for the Development, a completed connection application should be submitted. The connection application is available at www.water.ie/connections/get-connected/

Where can you find more information?

- **Section A -** What is important to know?
- **Section B -** Details of Uisce Éireann's Network(s)

This letter is issued to provide information about the current feasibility of the proposed connection(s) to Uisce Éireann's network(s). This is not a connection offer and capacity in Uisce Éireann's network(s) may only be secured by entering into a connection agreement with Uisce Éireann.

For any further information, visit **www.water.ie/connections**, **email** **newconnections@water.ie** or contact 1800 278 278**.**

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Connections Delivery Manager

Section A - What is important to know?

What is important to know?	Why is this important?
Do you need a contract to connect?	• Yes, a contract is required to connect. This letter does not constitute a contract or an offer in whole or in part to provide a connection to Uisce Éireann's network(s). • Before the Development can connect to Uisce Éireann's network(s), you must submit a connection application and be granted and sign a connection agreement with Uisce Éireann.
When should I submit a Connection Application?	• A connection application should only be submitted after planning permission has been granted.
Where can I find information on connection charges?	• Uisce Éireann connection charges can be found at: https://www.water.ie/connections/information/charges/
Who will carry out the connection work?	• All works to Uisce Éireann's network(s), including works in the public space, must be carried out by Uisce Éireann*. *Where a Developer has been granted specific permission and has been issued a connection offer for Self-Lay in the Public Road/Area, they may complete the relevant connection works
Fire flow Requirements	• The Confirmation of Feasibility does not extend to fire flow requirements for the Development. Fire flow requirements are a matter for the Developer to determine. • **What to do?** - Contact the relevant Local Fire Authority
Plan for disposal of storm water	• The Confirmation of Feasibility does not extend to the management or disposal of storm water or ground waters. • **What to do?** - Contact the relevant Local Authority to discuss the management or disposal of proposed storm water or ground water discharges.
Where do I find details of Uisce Éireann's network(s)?	• Requests for maps showing Uisce Éireann's network(s) can be submitted to: datarequests@water.ie

What are the design requirements for the connection(s)?	• The design and construction of the Water & Wastewater pipes and related infrastructure to be installed in this Development shall comply with ***the Uisce Éireann Connections and Developer Services Standard Details and Codes of Practice,*** available at www.water.ie/connections
Trade Effluent Licensing	• Any person discharging trade effluent** to a sewer, must have a Trade Effluent Licence issued pursuant to section 16 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977 (as amended). • More information and an application form for a Trade Effluent License can be found at the following link: https://www.water.ie/business/trade-effluent/about/ **trade effluent is defined in the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977 (as amended)

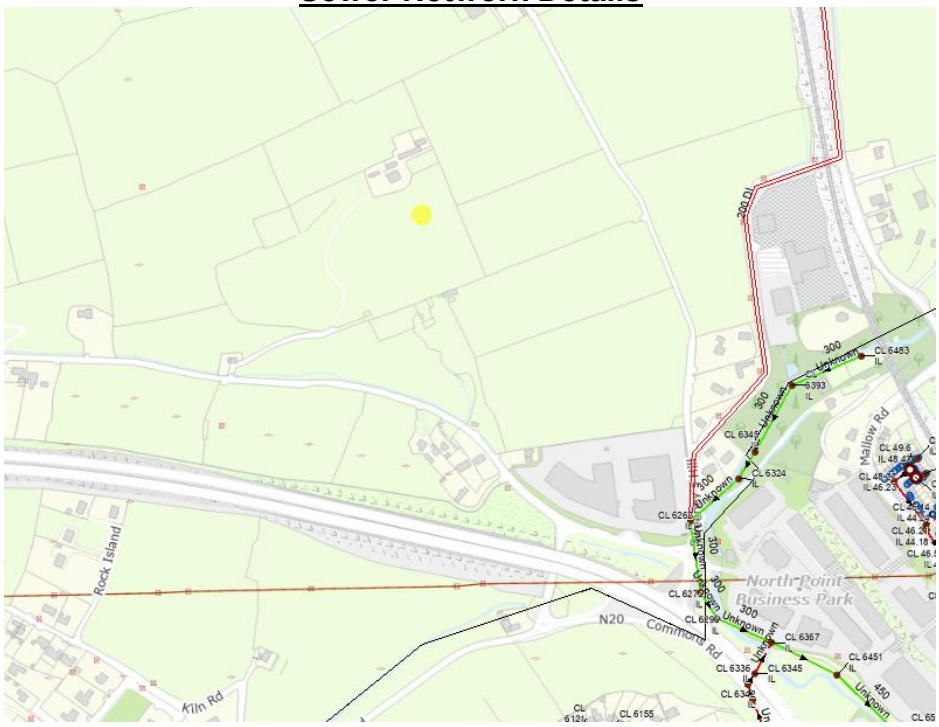
Section B – Details of Uisce Éireann's Network(s)

The map included below outlines the current Uisce Éireann infrastructure adjacent the Development: To access Uisce Éireann Maps email datarequests@water.ie

Water Distribution Network



Sewer Network Details



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey of Ireland by Permission of the Government. License No. 3-3-34

Note: The information provided on the included maps as to the position of Uisce Éireann's underground network(s) is provided as a general guide only. The information is based on the best available information provided by each Local Authority in Ireland to Uisce Éireann.

Whilst every care has been taken in respect of the information on Uisce Éireann's network(s), Uisce Éireann assumes no responsibility for and gives no guarantees, undertakings or warranties concerning the accuracy, completeness or up to date nature of the information provided, nor does it accept any liability whatsoever arising from or out of any errors or omissions. This information should not be solely relied upon in the event of excavations or any other works being carried out in the vicinity of Uisce Éireann's underground network(s). The onus is on the parties carrying out excavations or any other works to ensure the exact location of Uisce Éireann's underground network(s) is identified prior to excavations or any other works being carried out. Service connection pipes are not generally shown but their presence should be anticipated.

JOHN CRONIN & ASSOCIATES
ARCHAEOLOGY | CONSERVATION | HERITAGE | PLANNING

Archaeological Assessment

Lands at Rathpeacon, Cork City

Prepared by
John Cronin & Associates
3a Westpoint Trade Centre
Link Road
Ballincollig
County Cork

On behalf of
JCD Group
c/o Coakley O'Neill Town Planning Ltd
NSC Campus
Mahon
Cork City

August 2025

Document Control Sheet

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01	Issue	Paul Fingleton & John Cronin	Peter Looney	John Cronin	Cork	29/08/2025

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1. Introduction

John Cronin & Associates have been commissioned by JCD Group to undertake a desktop archaeological study of a land parcel in the townland of Rathpeacon on the northwest outskirts of Cork City. JCD Group are making a submission in response to the 'NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements Guidelines' issued on 29th July, 2025 by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under Section 28 of the current Planning Act, which provide updated housing growth requirements to planning authorities to 2040 in order to facilitate the revision and update of development plans in accordance with the National Planning Framework – First Revision (2025).

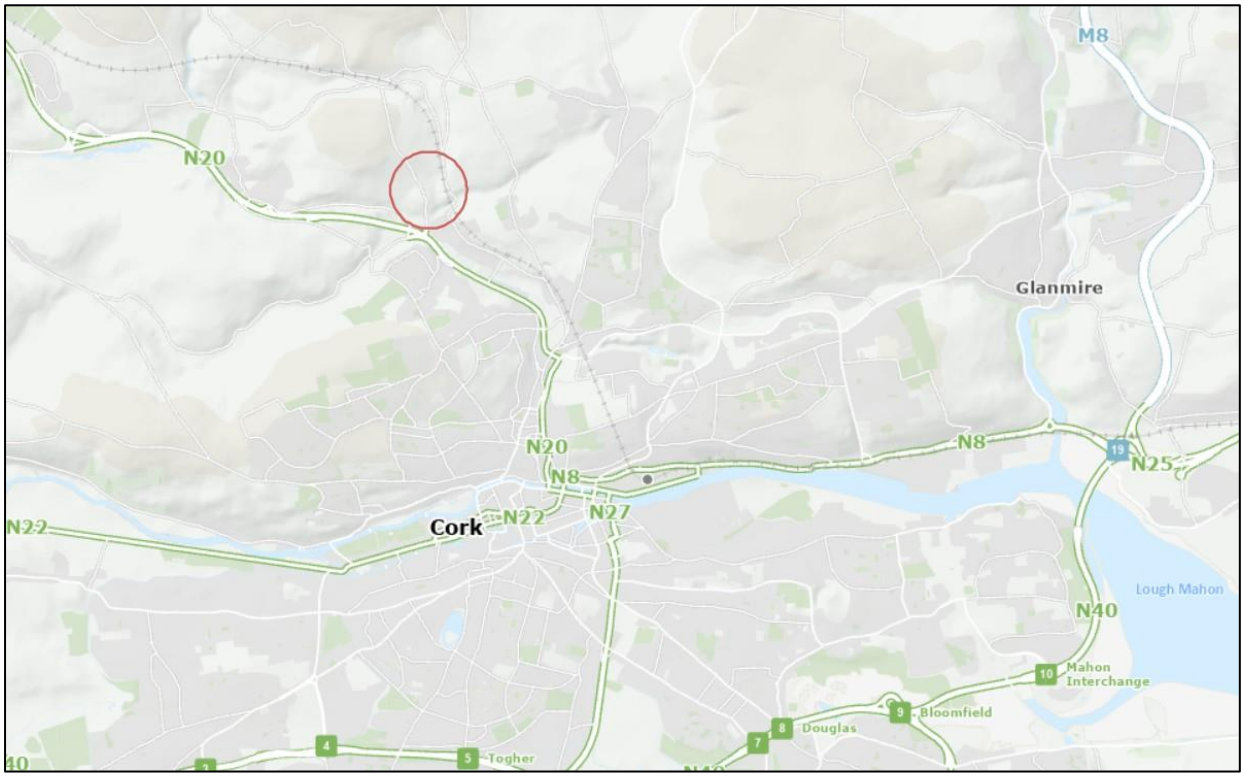

***Figure 1**: General location of subject site circled in red (Source: Government of Ireland)*

The subject site has a gross site area of 16.9 hectares (ha) located approximately 3.5km northeast of Cork city centre. The land parcel encompasses three fields located with the townland of Rathpeacon and is bounded to the east by the Cork-Dublin railway line and Sweeneys Hill Road to the west. The River Bride runs *c.*85m from the southern border of the subject lands.

This report presents summary details on the locations of recorded elements of the archaeological heritage resource within the environs of the subject site and aims to identify any previously unknown archaeological constraints. The study area for this assessment comprised the internal area of the subject lands combined with a wider 500m study area.

There are **no archaeological sites** recorded by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI), within the subject site, while there are eight such examples recorded in the study area of 500m from the site.

2. Methodology

A desktop study assessment has been carried out to identify all known archaeological sites within the study area. The principal sources reviewed for this assessment of the known archaeological resource are (a) the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland and (b) Cork City Council's City Development Plan.

Between 1984 and 1992, the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) issued a series of county SMRs which lists known archaeological sites and places and this record formed the basis for the statutory RMP established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. Similar in format to the SMRs (comprising a list and set of maps), the RMPs were issued for each county in the State between 1995 and 1998. Archaeological monuments included in the statutory RMP are legally protected and are generally referred to as 'Recorded Monuments.' The ASI has continued to record and add entries to the SMR and has developed an online database and web viewer known as 'Historic Environment Viewer.' This has been developed to enhance the user's experience by facilitating access to the database of the National Monuments Service's Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) in a seamless one stop point of access for both data resources (Source: www.archaeology.ie).

In addition, the following sources were consulted as part of the desktop study:

- *Cartographic Sources* - The detail on cartographic sources can indicate past settlement and land use patterns in recent centuries and can also highlight the impact of modern developments and agricultural practices. This information can aid in the identification of the location and extent of unrecorded, or partially levelled, features of archaeological or architectural heritage interest.

- *Aerial photography* – In parallel with the cartographic study, a review of publicly-accessible aerial photographic sources from the Ordnance Survey, Google and Bing Maps was undertaken.

- *Development Plans* - The local authority development plan relevant to the study area was consulted as part of this assessment. These plans outline the local authorities' policies for the conservation of the archaeological record. The relevant development plan for the study area is the *Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028.*

- *Database of Irish Excavation Reports* - The Database of Irish Excavation Reports contains summary accounts of all licensed archaeological excavations carried out in Ireland from 1960s to present.

- Placenames Database of Ireland - The Placenames Branch (Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media provides a comprehensive management system for data, archival records and place name research conducted by the State. Its primary function is to undertake research in order to establish the correct Irish language forms of the place names of Ireland and to publish them on a public website (www.logainm.ie).

- *UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Tentative List* - There are two world heritage sites in Ireland and a number of other significant sites are included in a Tentative List that has been put forward by Ireland for inclusion.

3. Context

Location

The subject site comprises one land parcel encompassing three adjoining fields with a total area of 16.9 hectares (ha.). These are lands zoned for 'Light Industry and Related Uses' in the Cork City Development Plan. The land parcel is located, approximately 3.5km northwest of Cork City centre, it is bounded to the east by the main Cork to Dublin railway line and Sweeneys Hill road to the west.

The subject site is located within the townland of Rathpeacon, though a small portion was within the townland of Carhoo (Cork By.) prior to realignment following the construction of the railway line (*c.*1850). The soil profiles of this area consist of fine loamy drift with siliceous stones, while the underlying geology is composed of Old Red Sandstone; sandstone, conglomerate & mudstone (gis.teagasc.ie).



Figure 2: *General location of subject site on the northern side of Cork city (outlined) (Source: Bing maps)*

Legal & Policy Framework

The management and protection of cultural heritage in Ireland is achieved through a framework of national laws and policies which are in accordance with the provisions of the Valetta Treaty (1995) (formally the *European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, 1992*) ratified by Ireland in 1997*;* the *European Convention on the Protection of Architectural Heritage* (Granada Convention, 1985), ratified by Ireland in 1997; and the *UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003*, ratified by Ireland in 2015.

The locations of World Heritage Sites (Ireland) and the Tentative List of World Heritage Sites submitted by the Irish State to UNESCO were reviewed. The Skellig Michael World Heritage Site is located approximately 140km to the west of the subject site. Cashel, part of the group of Royal Sites of Ireland on the Tentative List is located 80km to the northeast of the site.
The national legal statutes and guidelines relevant to this assessment include:

- National Monuments Act (1930) (and amendments in 1954, 1987, 1994 and 2004);
- Heritage Act (1995);
- National Cultural Institutions Act (1997);
- Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (1999);
- Planning and Development Act (2000);
- *Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, Department of Arts, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht (2011); and
- *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage*, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, 1999.

Archaeological Heritage

The administration of national policy in relation to archaeological heritage management is the responsibility of the National Monuments Service (NMS) which is currently based in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The National Monuments Act of 1930, and its Amendments, are the primary means of ensuring the satisfactory protection of the archaeological resource. They include a number of provisions that are applied to secure the protection of archaeological monuments. These include the designations of nationally significant sites as National Monuments, the Register of Historic Monuments (RHM), the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), and the placing of Preservation Orders and Temporary Preservation Orders on endangered sites.

Section 2 of the National Monuments Act, 1930 defines a National Monument as *'a monument or the remains of a monument, the preservation of which is a matter of national importance'*. The State may acquire or assume guardianship of examples through agreement with landowners or under compulsory orders. Archaeological sites within the ownership of local authorities are also deemed to be National Monuments. There are **no** National Monuments located within the study area.

The National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 made provision for the establishment of the RMP, which comprises the known archaeological sites within the State. The RMP, which is based on the earlier Register of Historic Monuments (RHM) and Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), provides county-based lists of all recorded archaeological sites with accompanying maps. All RMP sites receive statutory protection under the National Monuments Act 1994 and the NMS must be given two months' notice in advance of any work proposed at their locations. There are **no recorded archaeological sites,** within the subject lands and 8 sites within the 500m study area surrounding the subject lands. Each of these recorded archaeological sites is detailed in **Table 1** with their location mapped in **Figure 3.**

On the 13th of October 2023, the Historic and Archaeological Heritage and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill 2023 was signed into law by President Michael D. Higgins. The new Act will repeal existing legislation and institute new provisions equipped to cater for the protection of historic heritage in a modern era.

The Act will repeal the National Monuments Acts 1930 to 2014 and replace those Acts with provisions for the protection of historic heritage, provisions for the protection of archaeological heritage, provisions for the regulation of certain activities in the interests of such protection and provisions enabling the State to ratify or accede to certain international conventions which relate to such protection or regulation; to give effect to the EIA Directive and the Habitats Directive in relation to the carrying out of works at, on, in, under, to, or within the immediate surroundings of monuments; to give further effect to the Valletta Convention; to consequentially repeal or amend certain other enactments; to make miscellaneous amendments to the Foreshore Act 1933, the Lough Corrib Navigation Act 1945, the Planning and Development Act 2000, the Valuation Act 2001, the Local Government Act 2001, the Local Government Rates and other Matters Act 2019 and the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021; and to provide for related matters

The Act introduces the following innovative measures:

- newly discovered archaeological sites are afforded immediate legal protection, mirroring the existing system for archaeological objects and historic wrecks that are automatically protected without a need for formal designation or registration;
- a statutory reporting scheme for finds of monuments;
- a new 'Register of Monuments' will be established, replacing several overlapping designation and registration systems hitherto in operation;
- "World Heritage Property" is defined for the first time in Irish legislation;
- subject to certain exceptions, archaeological objects with no known owner will automatically become the property of the State;
- the Act provides the necessary provisions to allow for the ratification of two important international treaties, the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects;
- the Act enables the State to ratify the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage;
- an integrated licensing system whereby one licence can authorise a range of activities will be introduced, and, for the first time, a statutory appeals process will be established to review licensing decisions, and
- a new civil enforcement procedure can be used as an alternative to, or to supplement, criminal proceedings.

The Act defines archaeology as "the study of past human societies of all periods, either as a whole or of various aspects of them, through the material remains of all forms, moveable and immoveable, left by those societies and the evidence of their environment, and includes the study of climatological, ecological, geological, geomorphological or pedological factors relevant to understanding the nature or context of those societies or the distribution or nature of their material remains, and "archaeological interest" shall be construed accordingly".

Section 14 of the Act provides for the establishment of a register to be known as the Register of Monuments. The Act sets out transitional provisions applicable to Register of Historic Monuments, Record of Monuments and Places and National Monuments.

The *Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028* includes the following relevant objectives in relation to the protection of the archaeological resource:

Objective 8.1: Strategic Archaeology Objective
a. To protect and preserve archaeological monuments as listed in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Wreck Inventory of Ireland Database (WIID). The National Monuments Service will be informed of all development proposals which relate to Sites and Zones of Archaeological Interest.

b. Cork City Council will have regard to the relevant national statutory policies and guidelines, including Frameworks and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage and to best practice guidance documents published by the Heritage Council and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland.

d. To promote the retention, reuse, and enhancement of buildings and other elements of architectural, archaeological and other significance.

e. To ensure that development reflects and is sensitive to the historical importance and character of the city and its hinterland, in particular the street layout and pattern, plot sizes, building heights and scales.

f. To improve and encourage access to and understanding of the architectural and archaeological heritage of the city.

Objective 8.2: Protection of the Archaeological Resource
a. Cork City Council will protect and enhance the archaeological value of the sites (and their settings) listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Historic Environment Viewer.

b. Cork City Council will ensure that development proposals will protect and preserve archaeological sites discovered since the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP).

c. To ensure the preservation of archaeological remains in-situ, in accordance with national policy (and in the interests of sustainability), impacts on the buried archaeological environment should be avoided where possible.

Objective 8.3: The Value of Archaeological Knowledge
To require that all appropriate archaeological excavation should be undertaken to the highest possible standards and the information made publicly available. The acquisition and dissemination of knowledge is a core principle for the protection of the archaeological heritage of the city. Cork City Council will endeavour to ensure public dissemination through publications and public lectures.

Archaeological & historical background

There are no recorded archaeological sites within the subject area, while 8 archaeological sites recorded by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) are located within the 500m study area surrounding the subject lands (**Table 1**). The location of each of these recorded sites is shown in **Figure 3** below. A full description of each archaeological site (as per the ASI) is given in **Appendix 1.**

***Table 1**: Recorded archaeological sites within the study area of 500m from the subject lands*

SMR Number	*Class*	*Townland*	*ITM (E)*	*ITM (N)*
CO063-059----	Standing stone	Rathpeacon	565744	576019
CO063-060----	Standing stone	Rathpeacon	565809	575682
CO063-061----	Ringfort - rath	Rathpeacon	565910	575872
CO063-062----	Standing stone	Rathpeacon	565881	576100
CO063-063----	Standing stone	Carhoo	566295	576241
CO063-064----	Standing stone	Carhoo	566555	575976
CO063-111----	Standing stone	Carhoo	566521	575478
CO074-112----	Mill- corn	Carhoo	567235	575360



***Figure 3:** Location of sites within the environs of the subject site (red outline) (Source: Government of Ireland)*

Early Prehistoric periods

Traditionally, the earliest recorded evidence for human settlement in Ireland dates to the Mesolithic period (7000–4000 BC) when groups of hunter-gatherers arrived on the island, however recent evidence in the form of a butchered bear patella found in Alice and Gwendoline Cave near Ennis in Co. Clare now suggests that humans were present in Ireland during the Palaeolithic period between 12,800 to 12,600 cal BC (Dowd and Carden, 2016, 161). While the Mesolithic settlers did not construct any settlements or monuments that leave any above ground traces, their presence in an area can often be identified by scatters of worked flints in ploughed fields or shell middens adjacent to the coastline. There are no recorded sites dating to the Mesolithic period within the study area. The Neolithic period (4000-2400 BC) began with the arrival and establishment of agriculture as the principal form of economic subsistence, which resulted in more permanent settlement patterns. As a consequence of the more settled nature of agrarian life, new site-types, such as more substantial rectangular timber houses and various types of megalithic tombs, begin to appear in the archaeological record during this period. **There are no recorded sites dating to the Neolithic period within the study area.**

Late Prehistoric periods

Metalworking arrived in Ireland with the advent of the Bronze Age period (c. 2400–500 BC). This period was also associated with the construction of new monument types such as standing stones, stone rows, stone circles and fulachta fia. Fulacht fia translates as cooking places of the wild (or of deer), they are often interpreted as the remains of cooking sites and are the most numerous archaeological site type in Ireland, radiocarbon dating of excavated examples has generally produced dates in the Bronze Age (c.2400-500BC). The development of new burial practices saw the construction of funerary monuments such as cairns, barrows, boulder burials and cists. The later first millennium BC and the early centuries AD comprise the Irish Iron Age, which is the most obscure period in the Irish archaeological record. While there is general agreement that the introduction of an iron technology was a significant factor in the eventual demise of bronze working on a large scale, but how, why and when this came about in Ireland is far from clear. **There are six recorded standing stones (CO063-059----, CO063-060----, CO063-062----, CO063-063----, CO063-064----, and CO063-111----) within the study area which may date to this period.**

Six of the eight sites within the study area are standing stones, the closest of which (**CO063-060----**) is located *c.*90m west of the northwest corner of the subject land parcel. Of these six standing stones, five have *no visible surface trace,* as per their ASI description (**Appendix 1**). These standing stone were recorded based on their depiction on the first edition (1:10,560 or 6-inch) Ordnance Survey map. One of these (**CO063-060----**) was labelled as *Gallaun* and was the only of these standing stones to have been depicted on the later 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map. The only extant standing stone in the study area (**CO063-111----**) was not depicted on either of those historic Ordnance Survey maps, this is located 160m to the west of the site.

Standing stones would have functioned as prehistoric burial markers, commemorative monuments, indicators of routeways or boundaries and date from the Bronze and Iron Ages (*c.*2400 BC - AD 500), with some associated with early medieval ecclesiastical and burial contexts (*c.*5th-12th centuries) (National Monuments Service, *Monument Class and Scope Notes).*

Early Medieval period

This period began with the introduction of Christianity in Ireland and continued up to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans during the 12th-century (c. 400–1169 AD). The establishment of the Irish church was to have profound implications for political, social and economic life and is attested to in the archaeological record by the presence of church sites, associated places for burial and holy wells. The early medieval church sites were morphologically similar to ringforts but are often differentiated by the presence of features such as church buildings, graves, stone crosses and shrines. This period saw the emergence of the first phases of urbanisation around the large monasteries and the Hiberno- Norse ports. However, the dominant settlement pattern of the period continued to be rural based in sites such as ringforts, which comprise roughly circular enclosures delimited by roughly circular earthen banks formed of material thrown up from a concentric external ditch. Ringforts are one of the most numerous monuments in the Irish landscape and the early medieval terms for these sites – rath/lios/dun these still form some of the most common place-name elements in the country. Archaeological excavations indicate that many ringforts were early medieval farmsteads with internal timber buildings and were surrounded by associated field systems. **There is a recorded ringfort - rath (CO063-061----) located *c.*150m to the north of the subject site which may date to the early medieval period.** This ringfort is described by the ASI as *In pasture, on E-facing slope. Roughly circular area (58m N-S; 55.5m E-W) defined by low rise SW->SE; stone-faced earthen field fence SE->SW.* A review of

aerial images from recent years has shown that the portion of the ringfort that was incorporated into *a stone-faced earthen field fence SE->SW* was levelled between the years 2013 and 2017. In all of the post-2018 aerial images viewed, there was no visible trace of the ringfort.

Late and post-medieval periods

The arrival and conquest of large parts of Ireland by the Anglo-Normans in the late 12th-century broadly marks the advent of the Irish late medieval period, which continued up until the beginning of the post-medieval period in *c.*1550. Within the late medieval period, towns, markets, and fairs were established and change and reform was attempted in the Irish church. By the 15th-century the native Irish chieftains and lords began to establish tower houses and smaller castles as centres of territorial control. The post-medieval period (1550+) saw the development of high and low status stone houses throughout the Irish country. During this period any given settlement cluster is likely to have consisted primarily of single-storey thatched cottages with associated farm buildings while two-storey farmhouses became more common in the 19th-century. In the latter half of the 20th-century, there was a radical change in the nature and character of Irish domestic architecture manifested by the replacement of older stone-built structures with modern bungalows of concrete blockwork construction. **The recorded mill (CO074-112----), located beyond the southern boundary of the subject site was built in the 1830s (ASI description).**

The Excavations Database

The Database of Irish Excavation Reports (www.excavations.ie) contains summary accounts of archaeological investigations carried out in Ireland (North and South) from 1969 to present. Since the introduction of the licensing system in 1993, licence holders are obliged to submit a summary to the Excavations Database as a condition of the issuing of the excavation licence. The Database gives access to over 30,000 reports and can be browsed or searched using multiple fields, including year, county, site type, grid reference, licence number, Sites and Monuments Record number and author.

There is no record of any excavations having taken place within the subject area. Beyond the immediate extent of the subject site a number of entries were identified. In 1999, licensed archaeological investigation (License Number 99E0352) in the townland of Rathpeacon. Here, a programme of test excavations was undertaken in the vicinity of the recorded site of standing stone (**CO063-063----**) ahead of a gas pipeline installation. No archaeological remains were identified during excavations.

In 2016 an underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment (UAIA) of the River Bride and its tributary the Glenamought River was undertaken (License Numbers 16D0044 and 16R0044) beyond the southern boundary of the subject site. The work was carried out as part of pre-planning conditions associated with the River Bride (Blackpool) Certified Drainage Scheme. The UAIA identified a series of sixteen known or previously unrecorded features of historic significance within the original courses of the two river channels. An addendum to this work was carried out in 2017 (License Numbers 17D0067 and 17R0160) with a further thirteen known or previously unrecorded features of historic significance being recorded.

A table of all relevant entries from the excavation database is included within **Appendix 2.**

Cartographic review

The detail on historic cartographic sources demonstrates the nature of past settlements and land use patterns in recent centuries and can also highlight the impacts of modern developments and agricultural practices. This information can aid in the identification of the location and extent of unrecorded or partially levelled features of archaeological or architectural heritage interest. The cartographic sources examined for the study areas include the first edition of the 1:10,560 (or 6-inch) OS map (this area published in 1845) (**Figure 4**) and the 1:2500 (or 25-inch) OS maps (this area published in 1901-02) (**Figure 5**).

The first edition of the 6-inch OS map (**Figure 4**) depicted the subject site as enclosed farmland, divided into a patchwork of small fields, bounded by hedges. The eastern side of the site was different from its current layout in advance of the construction of the rail line that now bounds the site. A portion of a road, a townland boundary and two houses were within the eastern side of the field, in addition to two structure were depicted towards the centre, south of the northern boundary. A small circular feature (see the insert of **Figure 4**) was depicted close to the eastern boundary; this was not labelled but may have been a kiln or a well.

This map depicted a '*Gallaun*' at the location of standing stone (**CO063-060----**), to the west of the site. The ringfort (**CO063-061----**) located to the north of the subject site was depicted as fully extant. The flour mill depicted to the south of the subject lands corresponds to the present day location of mill (**CO074-112----**).

The Great Southern & Western Railway line had been constructed by the time the 25-inch edition OS map (**Figure 5**) was surveyed; the rail line still bounds the site to the east. With the construction of the railway line, the road and townland boundary were moved to the south and out of the subject site, while the two houses were not depicted. Other minor changes in the layout of field boundaries, and the buildings in the north of the site were not depicted

A review of these historic cartographic sources has revealed that no potential archaeological features were documented within the subject site. The buildings at the northern boundary and in the southeast of the subject area depicted in the early mapping were not depicted on the 25-inch map or visible on modern aerial images (**Figure 6 & 7**) suggesting that they were removed. An archaeological inspection would determine whether these features have any surface expression.

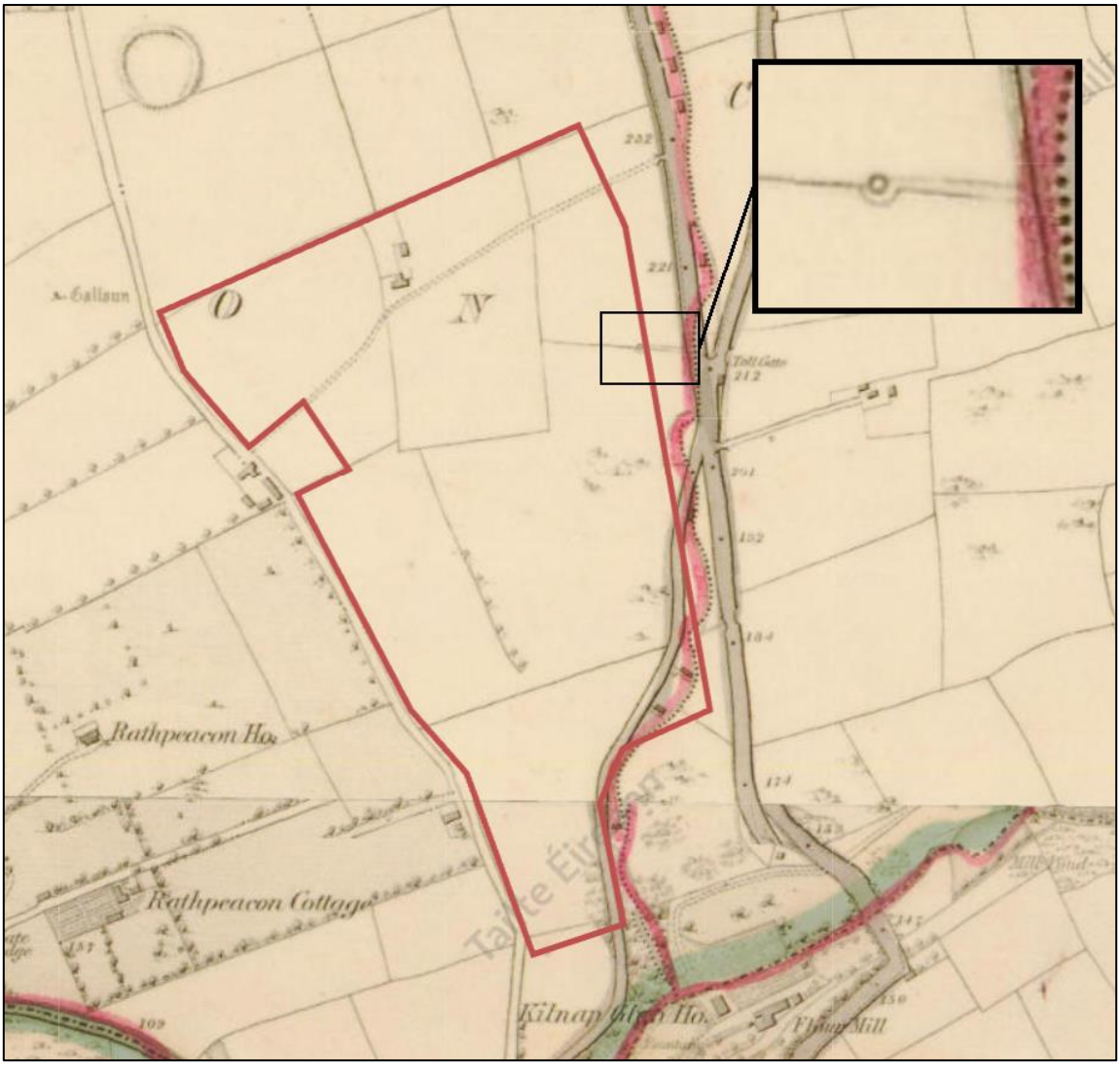

Figure 4: *Extract from the first edition 6-inch OS map with outline of subject site overlayed in red line. (Source: Government of Ireland, Historic Environment Viewer)*

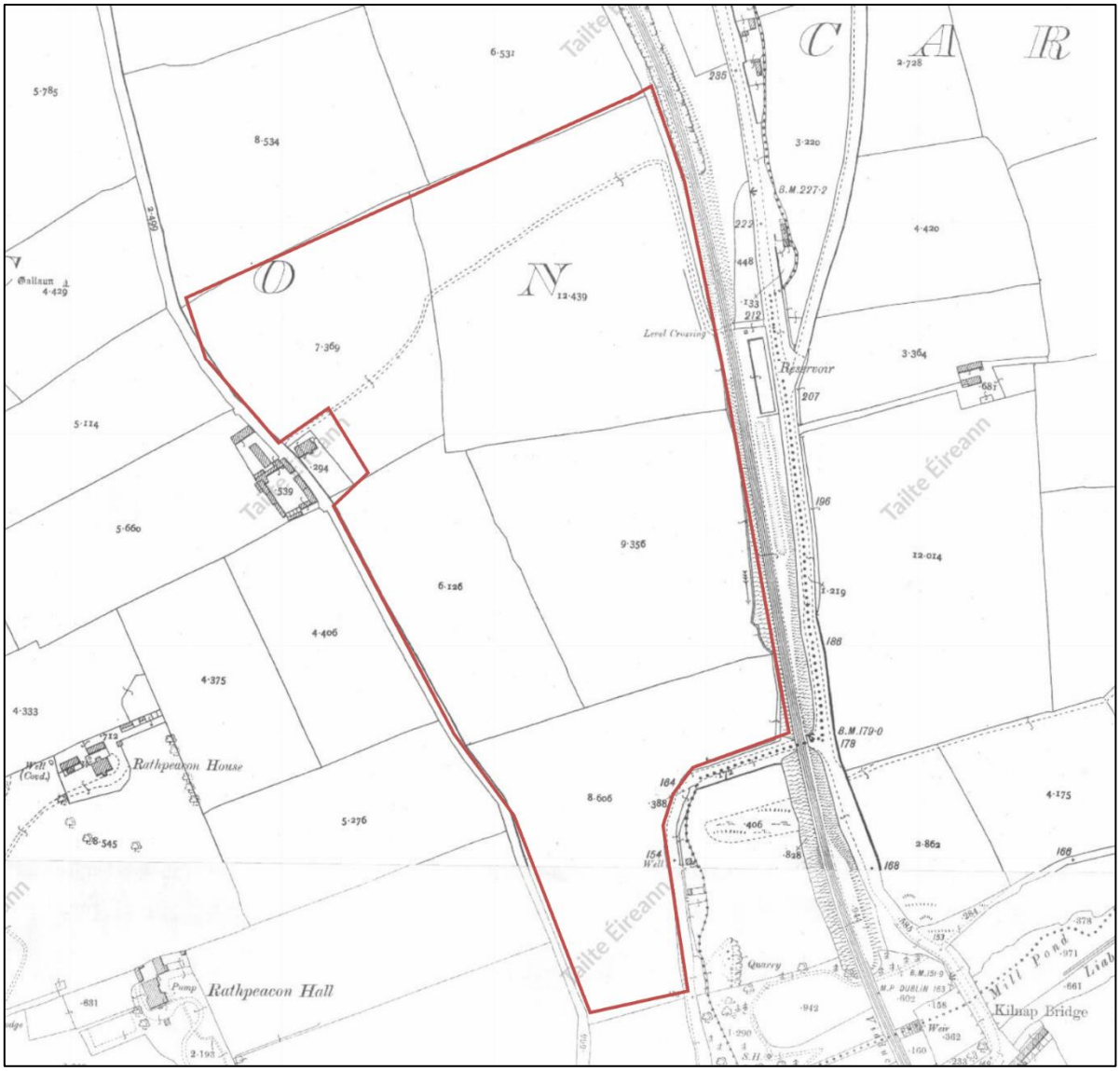

Figure 5: *Extract from the second edition 6-inch OS map with outline of subject site overlayed in red line. (Source: Government of Ireland, Historic Environment Viewer)*

Aerial photography

An examination of Ordnance Survey aerial photography (including **Figures 7** & **8**) was undertaken. These images show that the landscape remained largely unchanged from the 25-inch edition OS map. These images show no indication of unrecorded archaeological features and indicate that the subject site has been largely undisturbed and has remained under agricultural use.



Figure 6: *Segment of 1995 OS aerial survey image of subject site outlined in red (Source: Ordnance Survey of Ireland)*

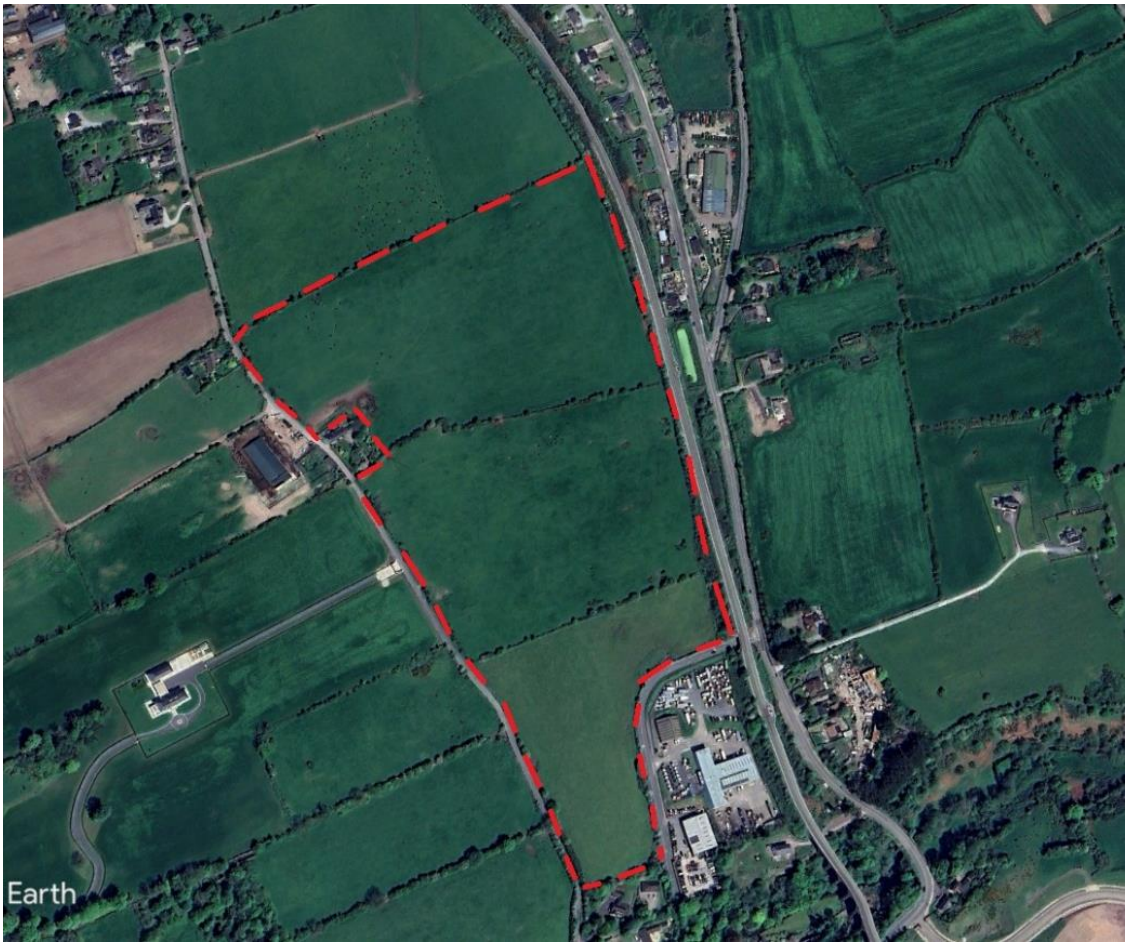

Figure 7: *Aerial image of subject site and surrounding area (Source: Google Earth Pro)*

Placenames

Townlands are the smallest unit of land division in the Irish landscape and many preserve early Gaelic territorial boundaries that pre-date the Anglo-Norman conquest. The layout and nomenclature of Irish townlands was recorded and standardised by the work of the Ordnance Survey in the 19th century. The Irish translations of the townlands names often refer to natural topographical features, but name elements may also give an indication of the presence of past human activity within the townland, e.g. *dun*, *lios* or *ráth* indicate the presence of a ringfort while *temple*, *saggart*, *termon* or *kill* record an association with a church site.

A review of placename evidence for the townland associated with the subject lands show that Rathpeacon is indicative of an archaeological feature; a rath - ringfort. A outlined in an earlier section, there is a ringfort - rath (**CO063-061----**) located within the townland, to the north of the subject site.

4. Assessment of constraints

There are **no recorded archaeological sites** within the boundaries of subject site. There are eight recorded archaeological sites within the study area, six of these are standing stones, of which only one is extant, the other sites are a ringfort which appears to have been levelled in recent years and a mill that was built in the 1830s. Any development within this site would have no predicted impact on the recorded archaeological resource.

Due to the relative concentration of archaeological sites, particularly standing stones, within the immediate environs, the landscape of the subject site should be viewed in its wider prehistoric significance. Standing stones are the most commonly occurring megalithic monuments found in Ireland with 1,506 such examples recorded in County Cork. The function of these monuments is not singular, with some being used as burial markers in both the Bronze and Iron Age while others have been used to mark boundaries or routeways.

The concentration of this type of site both within the immediate and wider landscape of the subject lands suggest that this area was an area of prehistoric activity. The historic morphology of this landscape is evident from presence of later archaeological sites such as ringfort (CO063-061----) recorded to the north of the subject lands. The mill (CO074-112----), while later in date, underscores the continuity of settlement and use within the landscape into and beyond the post medieval period.

There are no recorded archaeological sites within the lands comprising the subject site, though there is potential for the presence of previously unrecorded archaeological features to be present under the surface.

5. Conclusions

This desktop study was undertaken in order to assess archaeological constraints associated with a land parcel situated located within the townland of Rathpeacon, to the north of Cork city centre. Desk based research has revealed that there are **no recorded archaeological sites within the subject site.** There are **eight** archaeological sites recorded by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland (ASI) within the study area of 500m from the subject site, though only two of these are extant.

Following consultation of the available and relevant datasets, historic documentary and cartographic sources, the subject lands have been under agricultural use for several centuries and this assessment has concluded that they can be considered to possess a **moderate archaeological potential**. There is potential for presence unrecorded sub-surface archaeological remains within the site. Therefore, it is recommended that in advance of any future development of the subject site, a programme of archaeological mitigation measures should be agreed with Cork City Council. The application of appropriate archaeological mitigation measures will allow for the identification of any archaeological remains within the site and then allow for the preservation of any archaeological resource (either by avoidance or by preservation by record (excavation)).

On the basis of this desktop study, it is clear that there is no archaeological reason why the lands should not be zoned for residential development.

6. References/sources

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Appendix 1: Relevant Inventory Entries

The following is data taken from the Archaeological Survey of Ireland's online database (available at www.archaeology.ie).

SMR No.	*Classification*	*Townland*	*ITM E, N*	*Description*
CO063-059----	Standing stone	Rathpeacon	565744, 576019	In pasture, on E-facing slope. No visible surface trace.
CO063-060----	Standing stone	Rathpeacon	565809, 575682	In pasture, on SE-facing slope. No visible surface trace.
CO063-061----	Ringfort - rath	Rathpeacon	565910, 575872	In pasture, on E-facing slope. Roughly circular area (58m N-S; 55.5m E-W) defined by low rise SW->SE; stone-faced earthen field fence SE->SW.
CO063-062----	Standing stone	Rathpeacon	565881, 576100	In pasture, on E-facing slope. No visible surface trace.
CO063-063----	Standing stone	Carhoo	566295, 576241	In pasture, on W-facing slope. No visible surface trace.
CO063-064----	Standing stone	Carhoo	566555, 575976	In pasture, on W-facing slope. No visible surface trace.
CO063-111----	Standing stone	Carhoo	566521, 575478	In pasture, on a break in a SE-facing slope, just below the crest of a hill and commanding extensive views across the valley to Cork City. This standing stone (0.7m x 0.2m; H 1.65m) leans slightly to the N and is orientated N-S. There ground around the base of the stone is largely denuded and eroded by cattle. The top of a small slab (0.3m x 0.03m; H 0.08m) protrudes above the ground c. 0.8m to the W of the S end of the standing stone.
CO074-112----	Mill- corn	Carhoo	567235, 575360	On S side of Kilnap Glen, site of Shaw's flour mills, built in 1830s, replaced in late 19th century by present mill, marked 'Corn Mill (disused) 'on 1902 OS 6-inch map, taken over shortly thereafter as sculpture works. Roofless square 2-storey red sandstone building with rusticated limestone quoins. N elevation of 6 bays, camber-headed brick-arched window opes, wide arched ope at N end of E wall with date '1871'. W wall removed when 2-storey addition built onto W side. Earth-filled pit in narrow yard outside E face; probably housing downward axial flow or pelton wheel turbine (Rynne pers. comm.) fed by cylindrical vertical duct. Iron water tank above shaft fed by brick-lined head race via lintelled culvert. To S, bed for cross compound steam engine; flywheel attached to crank driven eccentric rod which transmitted power to well preserved stone saw to N (Rynne pers. comm.). Arch at base of W wall of pit probably channeled tail race under mill. Interior of mill filled with rubble. S wall of earlier structure (long axis E-W) survives to S, revetting hillside; low brick-arched ope at E end leads at angle into earth-filled tunnel; according to local information flue led to octagonal brick chimney (H c. 10m) atop hill c. 50m to S. Second arch may be for boiler. One-storey gabled structure (long axis E-W) to E of mill, 6 bays on N elevation; second steam engine bed and remains of saw to E. Parts of retaining wall to S date from pre-1842 mill; no trace of wheel pits for two water wheels in use in 1860s (Rynne pers. comm.). Mill pond to E, substantially enlarged in late 19th century. Massive rusticated stone railway viaduct (constructed c. 1849) crosses E edge of site.

Appendix 2: Excavation Database Entries

The following data is taken from the Database of Irish Archaeological Excavations (available at www.excavations.ie).

License No. & Director	*Townland*	*Results*
99E0352 Tim Coughlan	Rathpeacon	Test-trenching was carried out in the vicinity of the site of a standing stone at Rathpeacon, Co. Cork. The site was close to the proposed route of the Caherlag to Ballincollig Bord Gáis Éireann pipeline. The standing stone had not been located, but the route of the pipeline ran within 10m of the site, according to the environmental impact statement prepared by Dominic Delaney. Three test-tenches were opened by mechanical digger and then cleaned by hand before topsoil-stripping along the wayleave of the pipeline. The trenches were between 32m and 39m long. No archaeological remains were identified in the trenches or in the area of the wayleave after the stripping of topsoil for the pipeline.
16D0044 & 16R0044	River bridge and Glenamought river, Cork	Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment (UAIA) of the River Bride and its tributary the Glenamought River. The work was carried out as part of pre-planning conditions associated with the River Bride (Blackpool) Certified Drainage Scheme. The in-water archaeological assessment comprised a 2.5km stretch of the River Bride and a 500m section of the Glenamought River, extending from Kilnap Bridge in the north (upstream extent of study area) to the southern end of the Blackpool Architectural Conservation Area in the south (downstream extent). The assessment recorded riverbed topography and provided a detailed account of the existing riverside environment. On-site work comprised systematic non-disturbance waded inspection of the two river channels, their attendant bank structures, and any associated riverine features, including bridge structures (piers and foundations), weirs, culverts, river-walling, and any natural features encountered. Particular attention was paid to the assessment of two masonry bridge structures, located at Kilnap Glen and Fitz's Boreen, which are to be removed as part of the proposed drainage scheme. On-site work was carried out between the 3rd and 8th of April 2016, under licence from the DAHRRGA; licence numbers 16D0044 and 16R0044. The River Bride, including its tributary the Glenamought River, has witnessed successive alteration/adaption of the waterways with the development of milling and other industrial activity in the nineteenth-century. In addition, the area has undergone extensive modern alterations as a result of the twentieth-century development of the surrounding landscape. Cartographic evidence supports the findings from the in-water survey that two substantial sections of the present day River Bride, running adjacent to the Commons Road, are created watercourses of twentieth-century date; running northwest to southeast at a distance of between c. 10m to c. 70m from the original line of river. The historic watercourse has been maintained along the southernmost section of the river, as it flows through Blackpool Village itself. The Glenamought River remains largely unaltered by twentieth-century intervention. The UAIA identified a series of sixteen known or previously unrecorded features of historic significance within the original courses of the two river channels (Features F01-F16). The features include: four bridge structures (F01, F03, F07, and F09); multiple sections of river walling (F04A/F04B, F08, F10, and F15A/F15B); three masonry culverts (F13, F14/F14B, F16); a rubble stone weir (F05); section of a bridge arch (F11); a masonry culvert arch (F12); a millrace (F07) and the remains of a dam/ weir structure (F02). In addition, numerous cut-stone pieces (CS01-15) were encountered in the riverbed, along the upstream section of the Glenamought River survey area. The masonry pieces are associated with the construction of the Railway Viaduct in 1849 (Feature F03) and other stone-cutting activity that took

License No. & Director	*Townland*	*Results*
		place within the grounds of Kilnap Glen House in the nineteenth-century. Two further cut-stone pieces were also identified at separate locations along the River Bride (CS16 and CS17).
17D0067, 17R0160 Rex Bangerter	Glenamought river, Cork	Underwater archaeological impact assessment (UAIA) took place of a 940m-long section of the Glannamought River, an upstream tributary of the River Bride. This work is an addendum to the archaeological assessment previously undertaken by ADCO in 2016, as part of the EIS for the River Bride (Blackpool) Certified Drainage Scheme, the drainage scheme having been subsequently extended (June 2017) to include flood relief measures along the upstream section of the Glennamought River. The additional flood defence measures comprise: a continuation of channel maintenance works (C08_G01) upstream; the insertion of a roughing screen (C08_T01) upstream of Kilnap Bridge; insertion of an associated access trackway (C08_R02); construction of two sections of flood defence wall (C08_L02, & L03), located adjacent to Glen Mills; and construction of a flood defence wall and embankment (C08_L01 and C08_E01) upstream of Glennamought Bridge. The UAIA assessment covered a 1km-long section of the Glennamought River, extending from Kilnap Viaduct to a point 106m upstream of Glennamought Bridge, ITM: 566471E, 575091N to ITM: 567248E, 575418N. An overlap with ADCO's previous archaeological assessment was included as part of the current survey. This overlap comprised a 60m-long section of the river, running between Kilnap Viaduct and Kilnap Bridge. The assessment recorded riverbed and bankside topography, assessed the potential of riverbed deposits to retain archaeological material, and identified any features/structures of archaeological or historic significance that were present. In addition, targeted metal-detection was employed to help assess the riverbed and highlight any metallic concentrations present within those deposits. On-site work was carried out on 29 and 30 August 2017. The UAIA identified a series of thirteen known or previously unrecorded features of historic significance (Features F17–F29). These features comprise: five sections of river walling (F18, F21, F23, F26 and F28), the remains of a millpond (F17), a tailrace and associated culvert structure (F20), a mill boundary wall (F22), a section of masonry wall (F24), the remains of two weirs (F19 and F27), and two bridge structures (F25 and F29). An additional feature (F02A), not visible during the previous (2016) assessment, was also recorded upstream of Kilnap Bridge. The feature is thought to be the remains of a weir/sluice structure associated with a dam (F02) that once crossed the river at that location.

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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

Rathpeacon Masterplan, Cork City

Document Details

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Report

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was carried out for the Rathpeacon Draft Masterplan, Co. Cork. PEAs are used to provide a high-level assessment of the ecological features present, or potentially present, within a site and its surrounding area. This PEA comprised a desk study of data available. A survey of the proposed development area was carried on the 11th of July 2025. The Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal are based on the guidelines provided by CIEMM.

The key objectives of this PEA are to:

- Identify the likely ecological constraints associated with a project.
- Identify protected sites locally, particularly those that may interact with and have connectivity to the proposed site of works.
- Identify key habitat areas within the site, its surrounds and access routes.
- Identify if any protected species are known to occur within the site, its surroundings and access routes.
- Identify any additional surveys that may be required.

1.2 Details of Proposed Works

The proposed residential development site is located in Rathpeacon, County Cork, at Grid Reference W 66242 75442. The development will comprise a large-scale residential masterplan, encompassing the construction of 601 residential units across three neighbourhoods, with associated green infrastructure and internal access roads. The 16.9 ha site is situated on the northern fringe of Cork City, in a landscape characterised by a mix of existing residential development, agricultural fields, and road infrastructure.

Habitats within and adjacent to the site include improved agricultural grassland (GA1), buildings and artificial surfaces (BL3), exposed rocks (ER) and linear features such as hedgerows (WL1), and stonewalls (BL1). The project includes a mix of housing types, such as semi-detached units, terraced homes, duplexes, and apartment blocks. The site will be divided into three neighbourhoods: Neighbourhood 01 (169 units), Neighbourhood 02 (144 units), and Neighbourhood 03 (288 units). Internal amenity spaces and landscaped green areas are integrated throughout the design. The proposed development also includes the provision of new roads, footpaths, lighting, and utilities. Vegetation clearance will be required in advance of development.

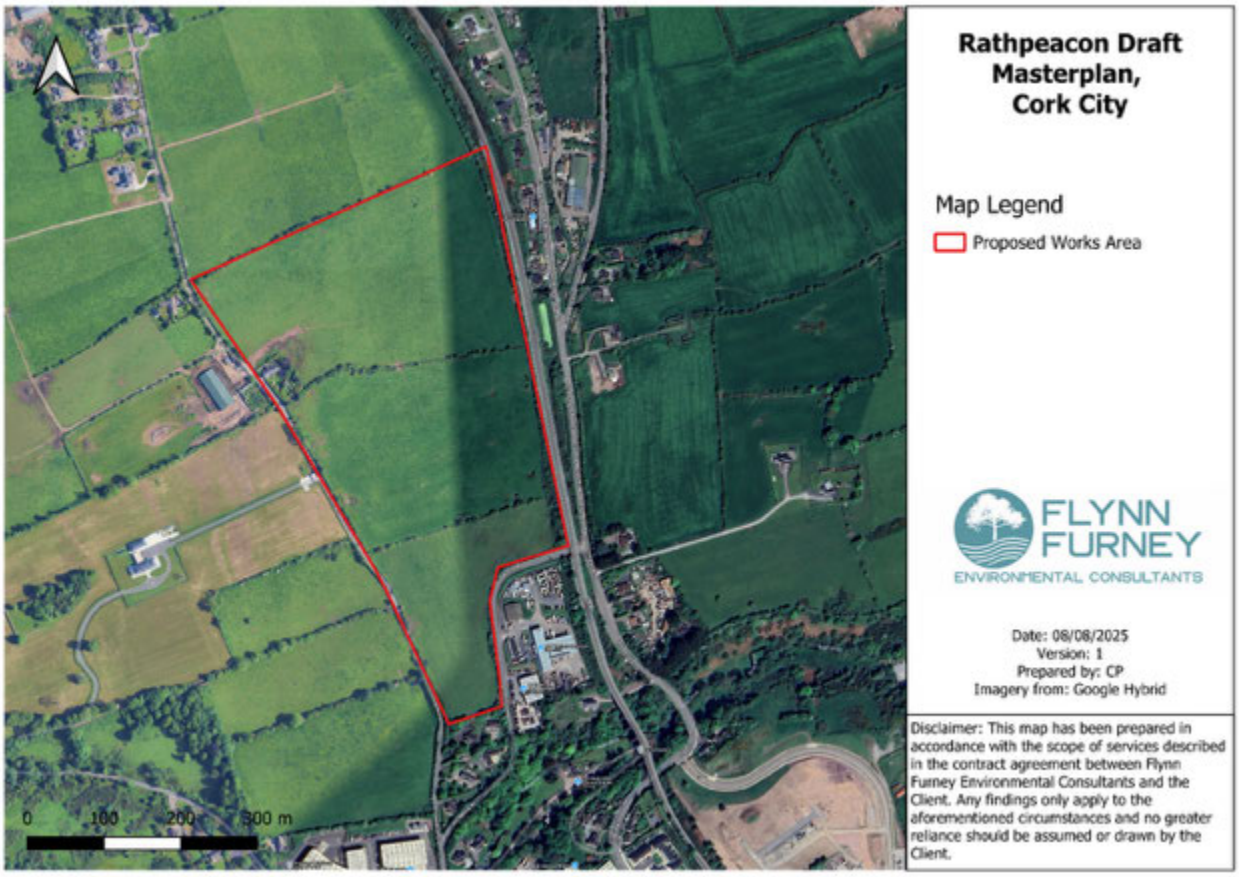

Figure 1: Overview of the proposed works area.

2. Legislation

The EU and Irish law which aims to ensure biodiversity by conserving natural habitats and wild flora and fauna are as follows:

The Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC) on the conservation of wild birds) has 3 main elements:

- It provides for habitat conservation, including a requirement to designate Special Protected Areas (SPAs) for migratory and other vulnerable wild bird species
- It bans activities that directly threaten birds (such as the deliberate destruction of nests and the taking of eggs) and associated activities such as trading in live or dead birds
- It establishes rules that limit the number of species that can be hunted, the periods during which they can be hunted and the permitted methods of hunting.

The Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna) provides for the creation of a network of protected sites known as Natura 2000. These sites include SPAs (under the Birds Directive) and other sites proposed by EU member states which meet specific scientific criteria. The designated sites must then all be run in accordance with the safeguards set out in the Directive. This means that there must be:

- Prior assessment of potentially damaging plans and projects
- A requirement that these plans and projects be approved only if they represent an overriding interest and only if no alternative solution exists
- Measures for providing compensatory habitats in the event of damage.

The Directive also provides for a ban on the downgrading of breeding and resting places for certain animal species. This legislation is implemented in Ireland by the Wildlife Act 1976, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

Protected sites protected under European and national legislation are published by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). These include:

- Special Protected Areas (SPAs) under the Birds Directive;
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the Habitats Directive;
- and National Heritage Areas (NHAs) designated under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.

The European Commission has adopted the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030. The strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030:

- **Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at sea**
- **Launching an EU nature restoration plan**
- **Introducing measures to enable the necessary transformative change**
- **Introducing measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge**

The EU is a party to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. This commits the parties (among other things) to creating a network of nature protection and conservation areas to safeguard biodiversity.

The EU is also a party to a number of other Conventions, including the Convention on migratory species (Bonn Convention), the Convention on the conservation of European Wildlife and habitats (Bern Convention) and the Agreement on the conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA).

Fisheries (Consolidation) Act 1959 and Amendments: This Act protects fish species and their habitats, particularly in rivers and estuaries. Developers must consider potential impacts on fish populations and aquatic ecosystems, with special attention to spawning grounds.

EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC): Requires the protection and improvement of water quality in rivers, lakes, groundwater, and estuaries. Developments must prevent pollution, such as sediment or hydrocarbons, from entering watercourses and ensure compliance with waterbody status objectives.

EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation (1143/2014): Requires measures to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, such as Japanese knotweed. Developers must identify and manage invasive species on-site to prevent ecological harm.

Legislation Governing EIAs:

EU EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU): Establishes thresholds and criteria for projects requiring an EIA.

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended): Transposes the directive into Irish law and sets out the requirements for EIAs.

Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended): Lists projects subject to mandatory EIA and those requiring screening.

3. Methodology

3.1 Desktop Analysis

A desktop survey of available information sources was carried out. These included:

- The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) Online Database
- The NPWS data Protected Species and Designated Sites and Online Mapping
- The Heritage Maps data base from the Heritage Council of Ireland.
- Taillte Eireann, GeoHive Map Viewer.
- Flora (Protection) Order 2022 Map Viewer.
- Data on waterbodies, available for download and interrogation from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) web map service (Environmental Protection Agency, 2018);
- Information on the location, nature and design of the proposed development supplied by the applicant's design team.
- Data from NGO's or government bodies available online.

3.2 Field Surveys

A survey of the proposed development area was carried out during daylight hours of the 11th of July 2025. A survey for invasive alien plant species (IAPS) was carried out as per published guidelines by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII, 2020). This involved a direct search of all of the proposed works areas. Surveys for protected mammals were carried out as per TII/NRA guidance (2006, 2009). Mammal surveys involved direct observation (during daylight hours) of signs of mammalian activity which included prints, tracks, hairs, droppings, odour, digging and evidence of feeding, setts, holts and dens. Adjacent habitats were assessed for evidence of nesting by breeding bird species. Any potential areas for breeding birds such as hedgerows or treelines were also assessed.

3.3 Guidance Documents

The desktop survey also took note of the following guidance documentation:

The **Cork City Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029** builds on the earlier Climate Adaptation **Strategy 2019-2024** but expands its scope to include both climate mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (preparing for climate impacts). While the Adaptation Strategy primarily focused on building resilience to climate change, such as improving flood defences and protecting ecosystems, the Climate Action Plan is more comprehensive. It aligns with national and EU climate targets, such as achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, and incorporates specific actions to decarbonize sectors like energy, transport, and buildings.

The **Cork City Council Climate Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024** serves as a framework for addressing the challenges posed by climate change at the local level. The strategy aligns with Ireland's National Adaptation Framework and identifies key actions to enhance resilience across infrastructure, ecosystems, and communities. It outlines four thematic areas: governance and leadership, critical infrastructure, natural and cultural capital, and community resilience. Key measures include improving flood defences, integrating climate considerations into planning processes, promoting biodiversity, and increasing public

awareness. The strategy aims to future-proof Cork City against climate impacts while fostering sustainable development and climate action.

The **All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025** is a collaborative initiative aimed at addressing the decline of pollinators, such as bees, butterflies, and other insects, which are critical for biodiversity, agriculture, and ecosystems. Building on the success of the 2015-2020 plan, this updated framework includes 186 actions across five objectives: farmland, public land, private land, and transport corridors pollinator-friendly, as well as promoting education, research, and awareness. The plan encourages habitat creation, reduced pesticide use, and sustainable land management practices to support pollinator populations. It emphasizes cross-sector collaboration, with contributions from government, businesses, communities, and individuals, making it a cornerstone of biodiversity conservation efforts across Ireland. This plan's principles are highly relevant for integrating pollinator-friendly measures into ecological management and land-use planning.

The **National Biodiversity Plan 2023-2030** sets a strategic framework for reversing biodiversity loss in Ireland and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. The plan aligns with international commitments, including the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, and outlines ambitious targets to restore ecosystems, protect endangered species, and enhance climate resilience. Key objectives include expanding Ireland’s network of protected areas, improving habitat connectivity, addressing invasive species, and integrating biodiversity considerations into all sectors of society. It emphasizes community engagement, enhanced funding mechanisms, and stronger enforcement of environmental regulations. The plan serves as a roadmap to achieve a sustainable coexistence with nature, highlighting the importance of biodiversity for environmental, economic, and social well-being.

The **Cork City Biodiversity Action Plan 2009-2014** outlined a strategic framework for conserving and enhancing biodiversity within Cork City, aligning with national and international commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The plan emphasized the importance of integrating biodiversity into urban planning and community initiatives while protecting key habitats and species.

The **Cork City Council Tree Strategy**, adopted in April 2024, outlines a comprehensive plan to enhance and manage the city's urban forest through to 2028, aligning with the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. The strategy emphasizes increasing tree cover to improve air quality, as highlighted in the Cork City Air Quality Strategy 2021-2026, and preserving biodiversity, in line with the Cork City Heritage and Biodiversity Plan 2021-2026. It sets forth 13 internal policies and 33 actions focusing on public tree management, retention of existing trees, and new tree planting initiatives. The plan also underscores the importance of community collaboration in planting, caring for, and managing the city's trees, aiming to more than double Cork's tree cover to 30% by 2028.

4. Results and Recommendations

4.1 Designated Sites

Sites designated for protection by the EU are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). SACs are sites of international importance due to the presence of Annex I habitats and/or Annex II species listed under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). SPAs are designated for the protection of bird species listed on Annex I of the Bird Directive (2009/147/EC), regularly occurring populations of migratory species, and areas of international importance for migratory birds. These form the *Natura 2000* network of sites. Natura 2000 is a network that legally protects areas of special conservation value. It accounts for both protected species and habitats. Furthermore, sites designated for the conservation of nature include Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) which are designated for the protection of species, habitats and geological interests that are of national importance.

The nearest designated sites to the works area are listed below in table 1 along with their connectivity to the project. Designated Natura 2000 sites were identified using both the NPWS database and shapefiles and, the EPA map viewer online tool.

Table 1. List of designated sites in proximity of the proposed works area

	Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas	**Connectivity to the project**
1	Cork Harbour SPA - 004030	No
2	Great Island Channel SAC - 001058	No
	Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas	
3	Blarney Bog - 001857	No
4	Lee Valley - 000094	No
5	Ardamadane Wood - 001799	No
6	Blarney Castle Woods - 001039	No
7	Blarney Lake - 001798	No
8	Blarney Bog - 001857	No
9	Shournagh Valley - 000103	No
10	Glanmire Wood - 001054	No
11	Dunkettle Shore - 001082	No
12	Douglas River Estuary - 001046	No
13	Cork Lough - 001081	No

Recommendation: This is a preliminary overview and would depend on several factors specific to a particular proposed project. Consequently, it is likely that an Appropriate Assessment Screening would be required for projects within the study area to evaluate potential sources of impact and ensure compliance with environmental regulations.

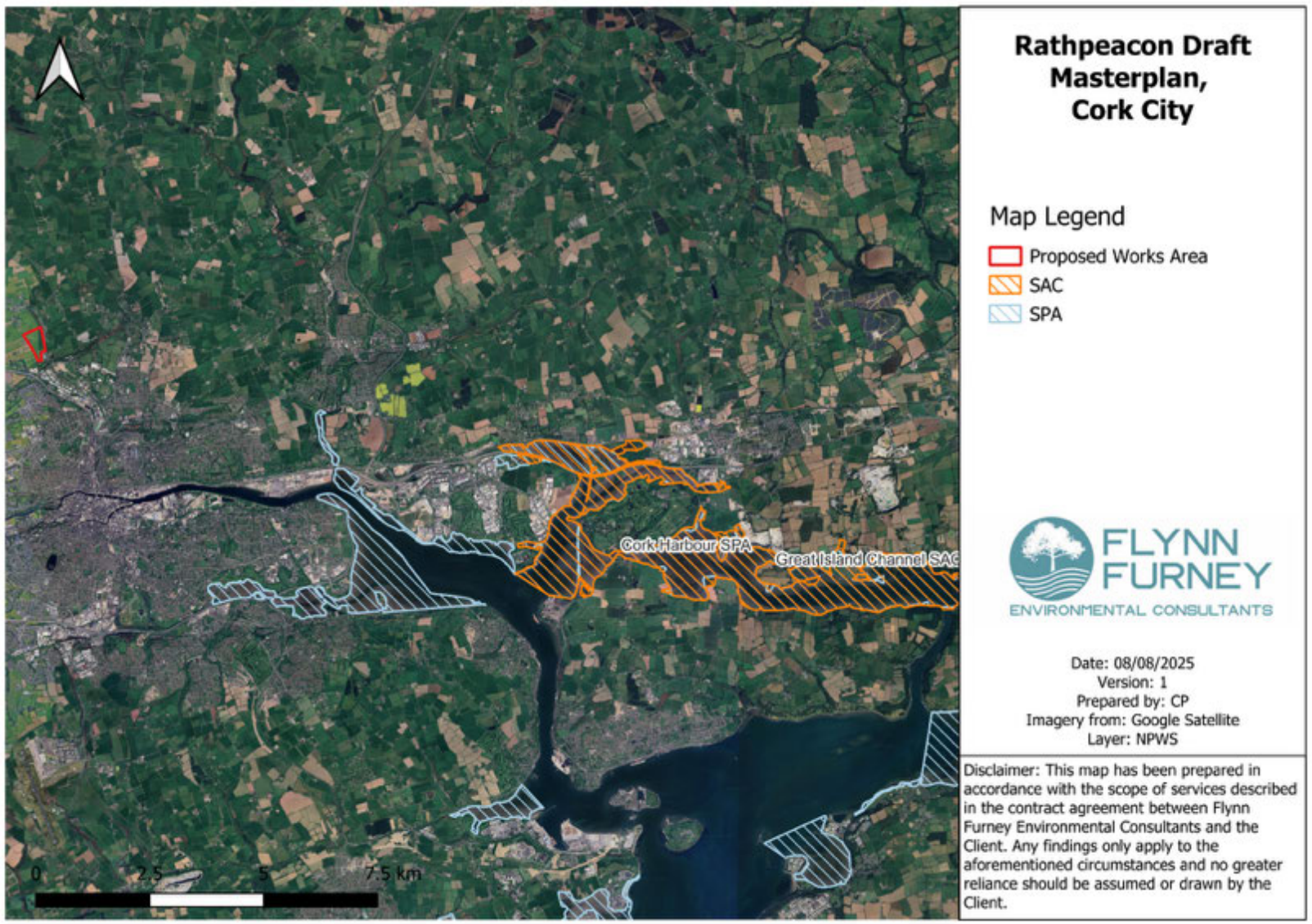

Figure 2. SAC and SPA in proximity of the proposed works area

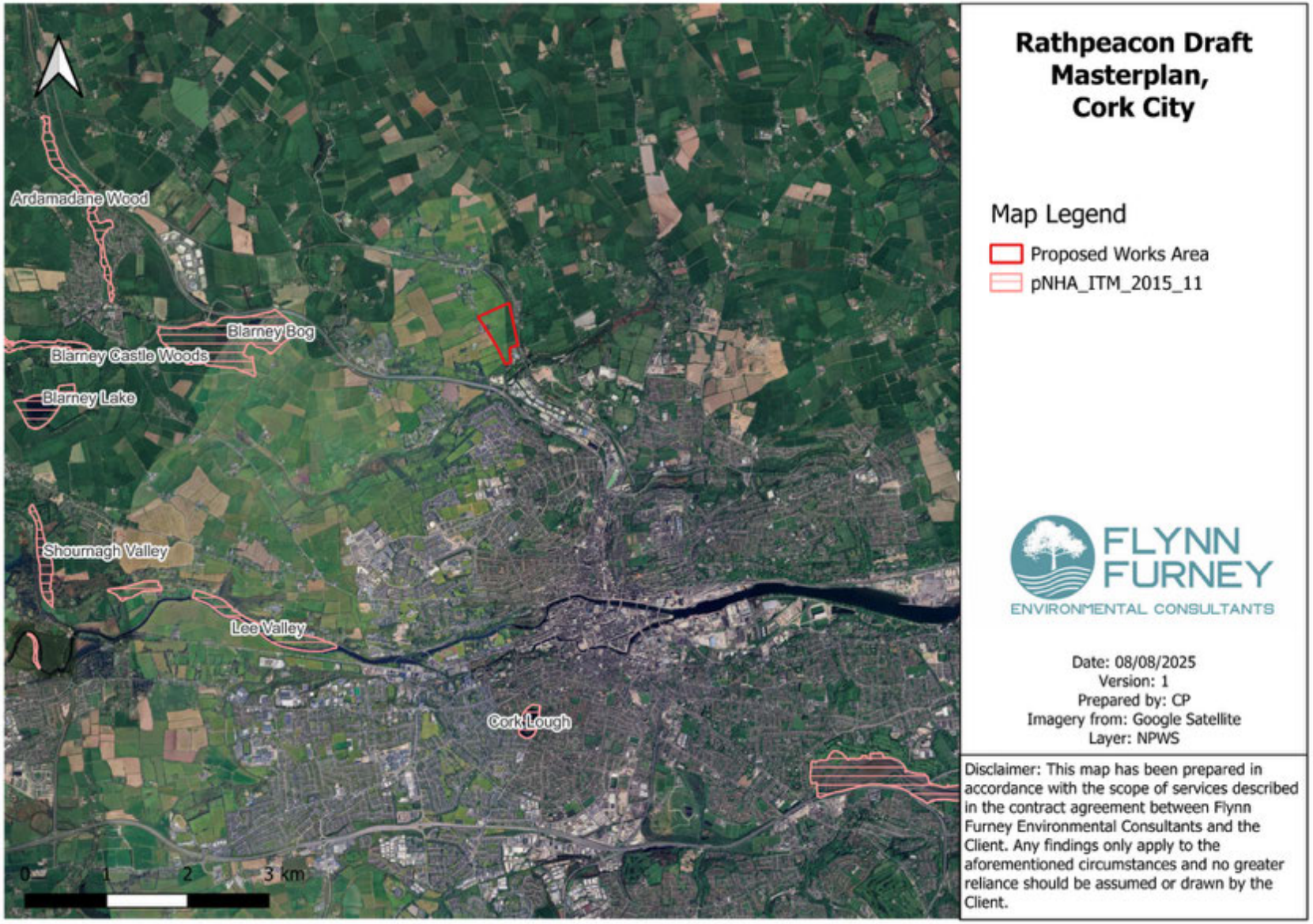

Figure 3. pNHA in proximity of the proposed works area

Table 2. Details of SAC and SPA in proximity of the proposed works area.

Site Name	Qualifying Interests (* denotes a priority habitat)	Distance (km)
Cork Harbour SPA	• Little Grebe (Tachybaptus ruficollis) [A004] • Great Crested Grebe (Podiceps cristatus) [A005] • Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) [A017] • Grey Heron (Ardea cinerea) [A028] • Shelduck (Tadorna tadorna) [A048] • Teal (Anas crecca) [A052] • Pintail (Anas acuta) [A054] • Red-breasted Merganser (Mergus serrator) [A069] • Oystercatcher (Haematopus ostralegus) [A130] • Golden Plover (Pluvialis apricaria) [A140] • Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola) [A141] • Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) [A142] • Dunlin (Calidris alpina) [A149] • Black-tailed Godwit (Limosa limosa) [A156] • Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosa lapponica) [A157] • Curlew (Numenius arquata) [A160] • Redshank (Tringa totanus) [A162] • Black-headed Gull (Chroicocephalus ridibundus) [A179] • Common Gull (Larus canus) [A182] • Lesser Black-backed Gull (Larus fuscus) [A183] • Common Tern (Sterna hirundo) [A193] • Wigeon (Mareca penelope) [A855] • Shoveler (Spatula clypeata) [A857] • Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]	6.3
Great Island Channel SAC	• Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] • Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330]	10.6

4.2 Habitats

The habitat within the proposed development area is comprised primarily of improved agricultural grassland, with some native hedgerows and stonewalls along the boundaries. While these features offer limited biodiversity value in the context of the wider landscape, they do contribute to local ecological connectivity. Several patched of exposed rock, namely red sandstone, were scattered throughout the site. No Annex I habitat occurs directly within the proposed development area. A comprehensive overview of the habitats recorded during the survey is provided in Figure 5 below.

A 2009 survey, available through the NBDC website and shown in Figure 4, provides some broad habitat mapping for the study area. While useful as a general reference, this data is outdated and lacks the precision needed for informed planning, particularly in specific areas of interest within the study boundary.

Recommendation: No specific recommendations.

Table 3. Habitats within the study area

Habitat type	Fossit code
Scrub	WS1
Hedgerows	WL1
Treelines	WL2
Drainage Ditch	FW4
Improved agricultural grassland	GA1
Buildings and artificial surfaces	BL3
Spoil and Bare Ground	ED2
Exposed Rock	ER
Stonewall	BL1



Figure 4. Screenshot of habitat data from NBDC

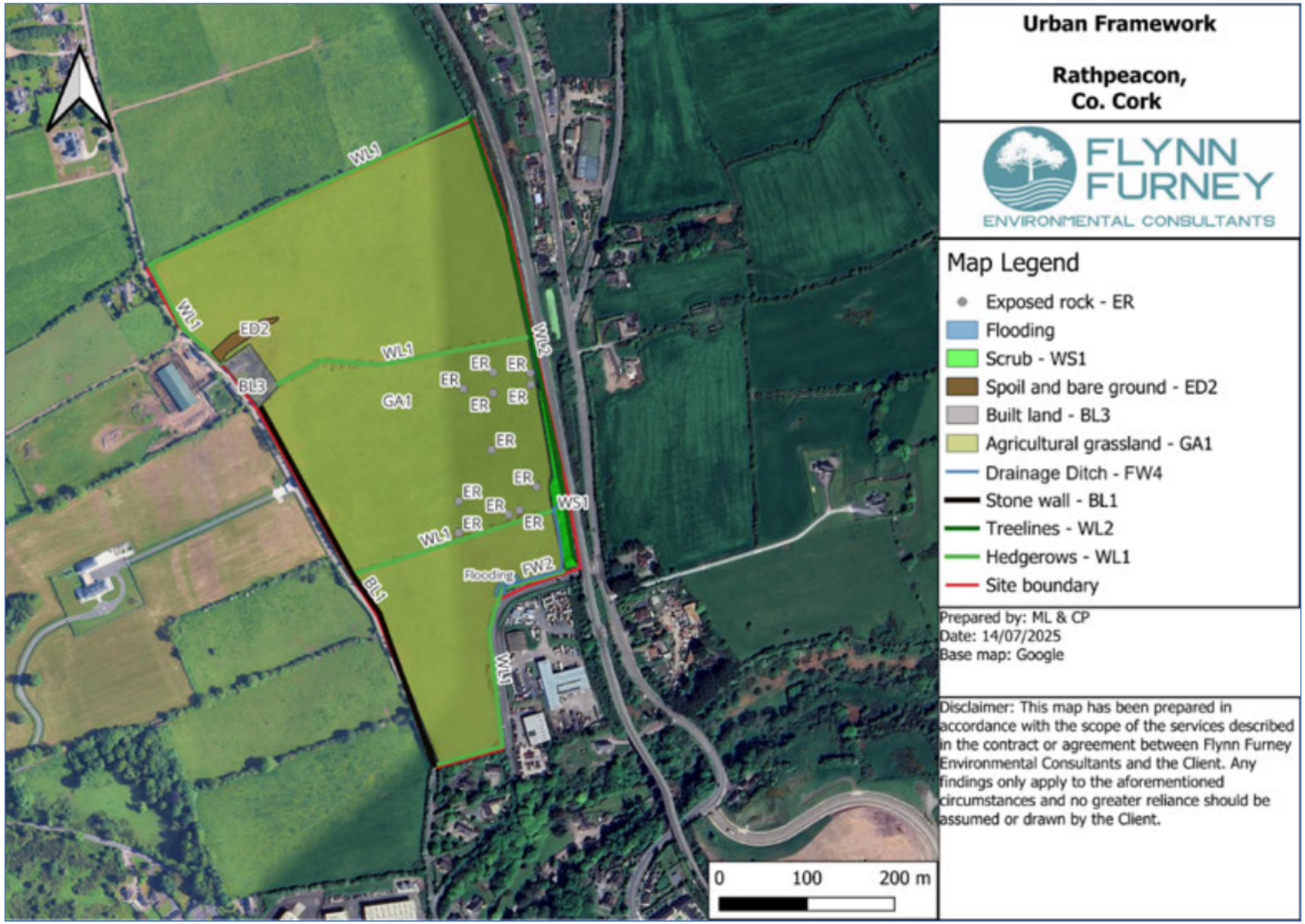

Figure 5. Habitat data from the field survey conducted on 11/7/25

4.3 Watercourses

A review of available data on the catchments and sub-catchments was carried out. This used data from the Environmental Protection Agency and other sources such as www.catchments.ie. The recorded Q values of river waterbodies were examined. A Q-value is assigned under the WFD through the analysis of macroinvertebrate populations and is an indication of water quality status. Under the requirements of the Water Framework Directive all watercourses must achieve good status within the required time frame. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) was transposed into Irish law by the European Comelesmmunities (Water Policy). It represents a legal requirement to carry out water protection and water management measures that are integrated, targeted, and which ultimately must be effective in achieving the objective of at least 'good status' for Irish waters by 2027. WFD Q-Value Scores Along with other parameters (fish, morphology, chemistry) The Q value is used to determine the ecological status of the waterbody, which is an action required under the obligations set out in the EU Water Framework Directive. Ireland is now in the third cycle of the Water Framework Directive. Under the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, all watercourses must achieve good status within the required time frame. If a waterbody is unlikely to achieve good status, then it is deemed to be At Risk. The table below summarises the Q values in relation to Water Framework Directive status.

Table 4. Q-value scoring and ecological designations

Q-value	WFD Status	Pollution Status	Condition
5, 4-5	High	Unpolluted	Satisfactory
4	Good	Unpolluted	Satisfactory
3-4	Moderate	Slightly Polluted	Unsatisfactory
3, 2-3	Poor	Moderately Polluted	Unsatisfactory
2, 1-2, 1	Bad	Seriously Polluted	Unsatisfactory

No specific watercourse is mapped within the site boundary; however, the Glennamought River (EPA CODE: 19G88) flows 108 m south of the site at its closest point. From this location, the river flows southwest for approximately 133 m before joining the River Bride (EPA CODE: 19B14). The combined waters then continue south for approximately 3.7 km before entering Cork Harbour. Below in table 5 is a summary of other relevant waterbodies. Information is collated from the EPA map viewer under WFD 2016-21 and river flow databases.

Although the Glenamought and Bride Rivers are not located within the proposed development site and are not directly hydrologically connected, their proximity to the site (<110 m) and designation as "At Risk" waterbodies under the Water Framework Directive highlights their ecological sensitivity. Given the scale and density of the proposed development, additional surface water runoff, sedimentation, and potential pollution pose a risk to the water quality and ecological integrity of these watercourses.

Table 5. Summary of Watercourses in proximity of the proposed works area

EPA code	EPA name	WFD risk	Latest Status (16-21)	Note
19G88	GLENNAMOUGHT TRIB BRIDE_010	Moderate (At Risk)	Urban-run off. Diffuse Sources Run-Off	Part of the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay_19 catchment
19B14	BRIDE (Cork City)_020	Poor (At Risk)	Urban-run off. Diffuse Sources Run-Off	Part of the Lee, Cork Harbour and Youghal Bay_19 catchment

Recommendation: It is strongly recommended that the Glenamought River be treated as a key ecological receptor in future assessments. Site-specific SuDS should be designed to manage runoff volumes and quality. The potential for indirect hydrological connections (e.g. via drains, soil seepage, or construction-related overland flow) should be assessed further at detailed design stage.

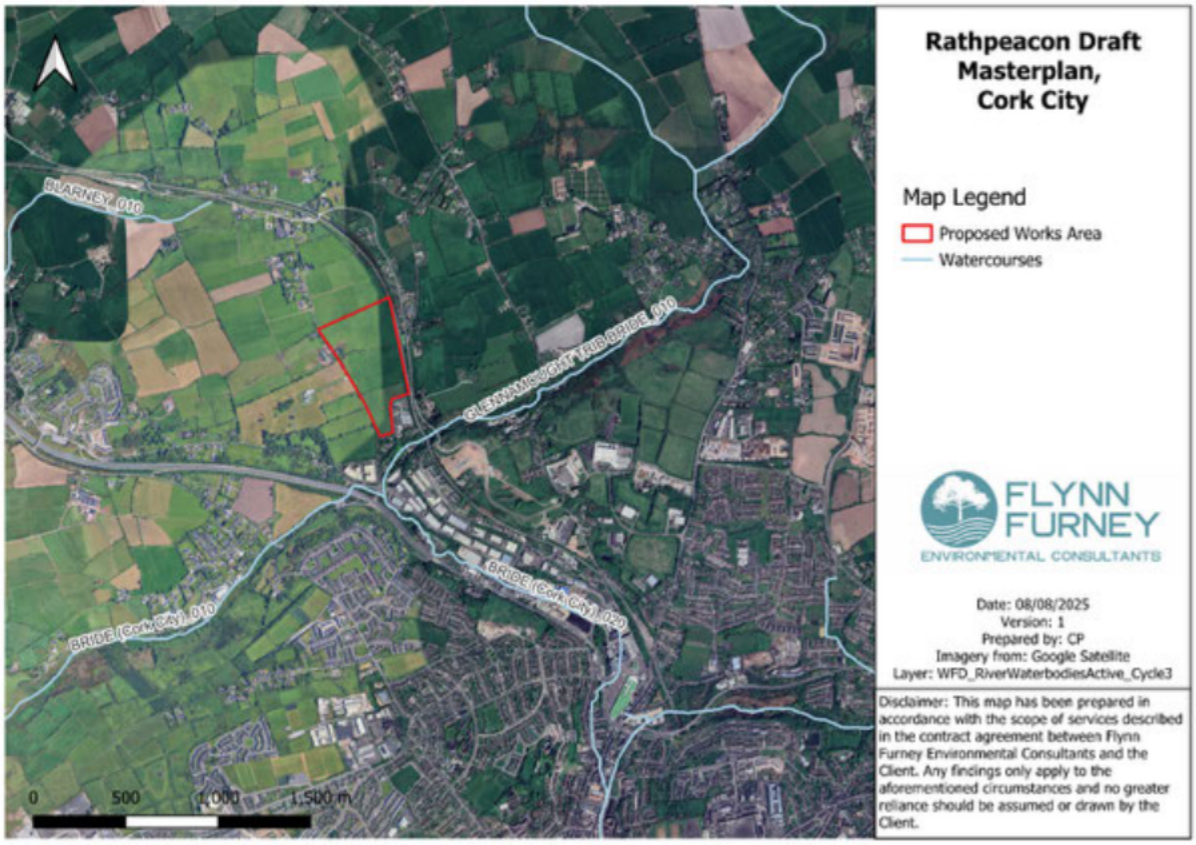

Figure 6. Watercourses in proximity of the proposed works area

4.4 Flora (Protection) Order 2022 Map Viewer

No recent data is available regarding the presence of plants listed under the Flora (Protection) Order 2022 Map Viewer within the study area. However, it is possible that such protected plants may occur, particularly in areas with a history of minimal development, such as the Glenamought River Valley. Following the field survey, no Flora (Protection) Order species was found to occur within the proposed development area.

Recommendation: No specific recommendations.

4.5 Mammals

This section comprises information derived from both desk study and field survey. Figure 8 below shows the approximate location of any potential evidence of mammal activity recorded during the site visit. Table 6 below presents the records retrieved from the NBDC for the 1km² tetrads W6675 and W6575, which contain the proposed works area.

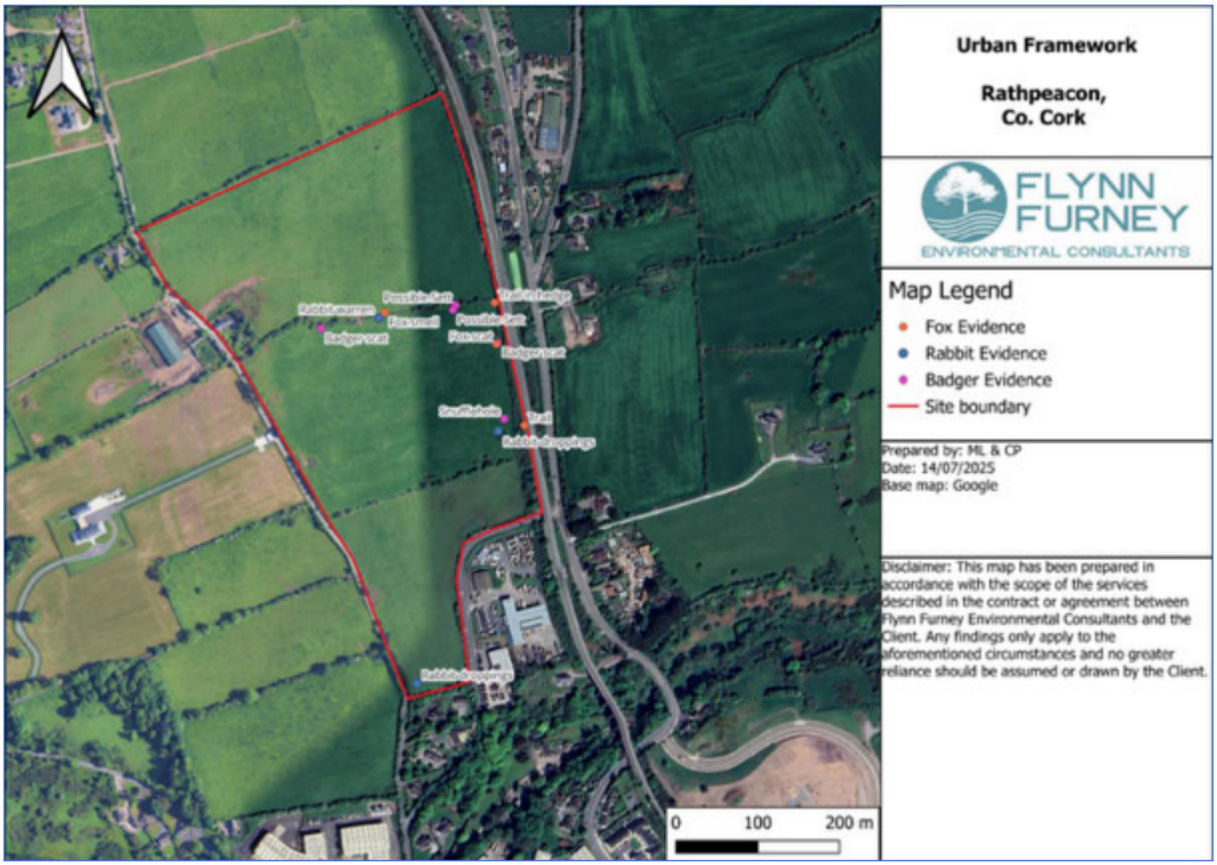

Figure 7. Mammal evidence found during field survey on 11/7/25

Table 6. Records for terrestrial mammals in tetrads W6675 and W6575 encompassing the proposed works area.

Species name	Record count	Date of last record	Title of dataset	Designation
Hedgehog (Erinaceus europaeus)	1	03/08/2021	Hedgehogs of Ireland	Protected Species: Wildlife Acts

4.5.1 Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

The hedgehog is protected under the Wildlife Act 1976 and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. A review of National Biodiversity Data Centre records recorded one sighting of hedgehogs within the study area, recorded in 2021. No hedgehog was noted during the field survey, however, given the previous record and the presence of suitable habitats such as farmland, and hedgerows, it is highly likely that hedgehog populations exist within the proposed works area.

Recommendation: A dedicated survey may be necessary within 12 months of the commencement of the works. The optimal timing for hedgehog surveys is during their active period, typically from April to October, with the peak season being May to September when hedgehogs are most active and foraging. Survey methods include camera traps and footprint tunnels.

4.5.2 Badger (*Meles meles*)

Badgers and their setts are protected under the Wildlife Act 1976 and the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Badgers are associated with a variety of habitats, including woodland, hedgerows, grassland, and farmland, where they excavate setts in well-drained soils. Given the range of these habitats present within the study area, it is highly likely that badgers are active within the region.

Field survey work confirmed the presence of badger activity within the proposed development area, with a number of droppings observed, as well as snuffle holes. A burrow of potential significance was also recorded. This was of appropriate width for a badger sett and showed signs of fresh bedding at the entrance, suggesting possible active use.

Recommendation: Given the field evidence recorded, targeted badger surveys are required prior to any development works. These surveys should aim to confirm the presence or absence of an active sett and may include the use of trail cameras to monitor activity. Surveys are best conducted in late autumn, winter, or early spring when vegetation is less dense, allowing for easier detection of sett entrances, paths, latrines, and footprints. Mitigation measures can then be developed as appropriate based on the findings.

4.5.3 Otters (*Lutra lutra*)

The otter is recognized as "*near threatened*" on the IUCN Red List due to its declining population trend. It is afforded protection under several international and national frameworks, including Appendix I of CITES, Appendix II of the Bern Convention (Council of Europe, 1979), and Annexes II and IV of the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). In Ireland, otters, as well as their breeding and resting sites, are safeguarded under the Irish Wildlife Acts 1976 to 2012.

The Glenamought River, located approximately 108 m south of the proposed development site, has

the potential to support otters. While no suitable breeding or resting habitat was identified within the proposed development footprint, and no otter signs were recorded during the site visit, the proximity of the river combined with its *"At Risk"* water quality status warrants a precautionary approach to limit disturbance and/or the deterioration of the foraging range of this species.

Recommendation: It is recommended that a targeted otter survey be undertaken if works extend within 150 m of the Glenamought River or any potential water features (e.g., field drains, culverts, swales) that may provide functional connectivity to the river. This survey should include checks and search for spraints, prints, and holts along any accessible riparian or artificial drainage features. The findings will inform mitigation (if required) and ensure compliance with species protection legislation.

4.6 Birds

A standalone bird survey following a set methodology was not carried out as part of this initial assessment. However, all birds seen and heard were recorded and are reported in Table 7. These do not include any wintering bird species that are qualifying interests of the Cork Harbour SPA.

Table 7. Notable bird species found within the survey area (collated with results from field survey).

Species	BoCCI Listing 2020-2026
Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)	Green
Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)	Green
Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*)	Green
Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)	Green
Rook (*Corvus frugilegus)*	Green

Recommendation: The removal of any vegetation should be scheduled outside of the bird nesting season. The bird nesting season runs from March 1st to August 31st in Ireland. The cutting of trees, bushes and hedgerows is restricted during this period and due care should be taken to ensure that any such activities do not result in an offence being committed under the Wildlife Act (1976) or the Wildlife Amendment Act (2000). If works need to be undertaken within the main breeding season, clearance must be preceded by an inspection of the vegetation by an experienced ecologist to identify evidence of bird breeding activity (breeding bird surveys) along with consultation with NPWS. If such is found, works must be delayed until young birds have fledged. Based on the proximity of the Cork Harbour SPA and general habitat suitability, a winter bird survey may also be required depending on a particular development.

4.7 Bats

All species of bats are protected in Ireland. These include common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), nathusius' pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*), daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*), and natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*). Lesser horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) has additional legal protection under the EU Habitats Directive.

A review of National Biodiversity Data Centre records indicates no sightings of bats within the study area. The area, however, contains various habitats suitable for bats, including treelines, hedgerows, stonewalls and adjacent farm buildings. The field survey conducted within the proposed development area confirmed the presence of hedgerows and stonewalls that are likely to represent important foraging corridors for bats in the area.

The Bat Suitability Index on the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) website is a tool designed to evaluate the suitability of a given area for bat activity. It uses environmental and geographical data to estimate how likely bats are to be present in specific locations. Those areas shown in red have the highest habitat suitability index, and those in green, the lowest suitability index. The proposed works area presents a bat suitability index of 23.56, as indicated in Figure 8 below.

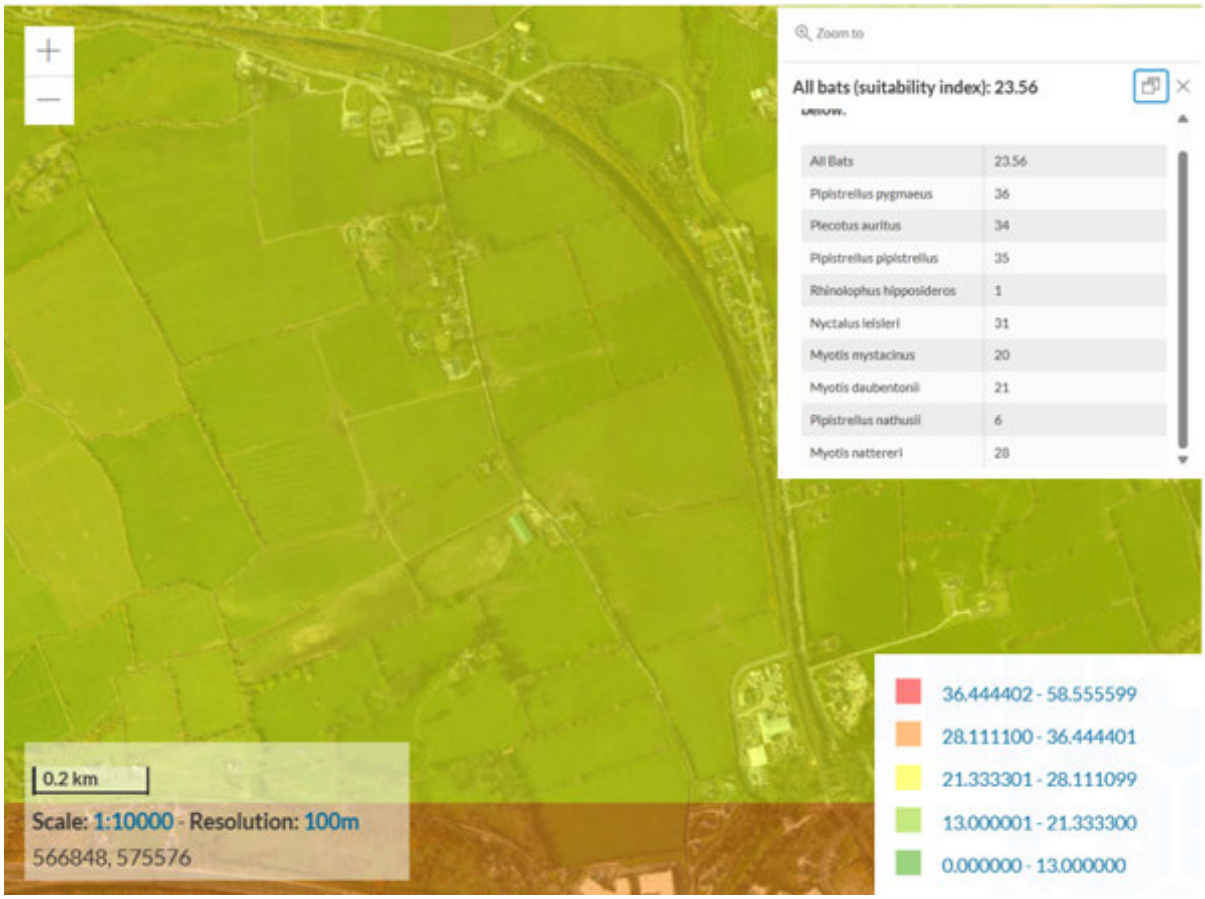

Figure 8. Bat suitability Index of study area

Recommendation: Bat surveys should be carried to ensure compliance with legal protections and conservation efforts. These surveys can employ methods such as transect surveys, static detector monitoring, and emergence or re-entry surveys. Trees within the area should also be assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. Surveys are typically conducted between late spring and early autumn (May to September), as this period corresponds with peak bat activity during warmer months.

4.8 Insects/butterflies

The Marsh Fritillary is legally protected under several conservation frameworks due to its declining populations and specific habitat needs. These legal protections include the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), which lists the butterfly under Annex II, requiring the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), and the Wildlife Act 1976 and Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Records through the NBDC database detail no observations of Marsh Fritillary Butterfly in 2019. Furthermore, no suitable habitat for this species nor its larval webs were observed during the survey.

Recommendation: No impacts on Marsh Fritillary or its habitat are anticipated.

4.9 Amphibians and Reptiles

In Ireland, the Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) & Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) is protected under the Wildlife Act 1976 and its amendments. This provides protection against the intentional killing, injury, capture, or disturbance of frogs & newt and their habitats. It is illegal to interfere with their breeding sites or habitats.

A dedicated amphibian survey was not carried out, however a small area of standing water was identified to the south of the site, as previously illustrated in Figure 6. This area represents suitable spawning habitat for amphibians, particularly for frogs. Note that no frog or newt records were retrieved from the NBDC database for this area, nor any amphibian was recorded during the field survey.

Recommendation: Depending on the timing of the works, amphibian surveys may be required before the commencement of the works. The best time to survey for frogs is in February and March, when frogs are spawning and for smooth newt is March to June.

4.10 Invasive plant species

The Wildlife Acts, 1976 and 2000, contain a number of provisions relating to invasive non-native species (INNS), covering several sections and subsections of the Acts. It is prohibited, without licence, to plant or otherwise cause to grow in a wild state, in any place in the State, any species of flora, or the flowers, roots, seeds or spores of invasive flora.

In July 2024, new regulations were enacted to address the shortcomings of previous legislation on Invasive Alien Species. The European Union (Invasive Alien Species) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 374 of 2024) introduce significant measures aimed at tackling the issue of invasive species. These regulations establish a list of Invasive Alien Species of National Concern, referred to as First Schedule List. The regulations specify various offenses under section 17(1), which prohibit individuals from engaging in certain activities. These activities include the introduction of invasive species into the State, breeding, importing, exporting, or transporting these species within the State—except when such transportation is part of an eradication effort. Additionally, the regulations forbid placing these species on the market, using, exchanging, or offering them for exchange, allowing them to reproduce or cultivate, and releasing them into the environment.

The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) records for the two 1 km² tetrad encompassing the proposed works area include no observations of invasive species for the proposed works area. No invasive species, first schedule or otherwise, were identified during the field surveys.

Recommendation: Depending on the timing of works, additional invasive plant surveys may be necessary. These surveys are most effectively conducted during the growing season, from March to August, when most invasive plant species are more easily identified and assessed.

5 Enhancement surveys / Biodiversity Actions

This section outlines practical opportunities for enhancing biodiversity within the study area. These actions should be considered in future project design, layout, and management.

4.12.1 Pollinator-Friendly Planting

Incorporate native wildflower seed mixes in greenspaces, verges, and road buffers in line with the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021–2025*. Landscaping plans should avoid pesticide use and include seasonal flowering species to ensure foraging resources from spring through autumn.

4.12.2 Hedgerow and Tree Management

Existing hedgerows should be retained wherever possible and enhanced through infilling with native species of local provenance (e.g. hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn). Where removal is unavoidable, compensatory planting should be provided.

4.12.3 SuDS and Wetland Features for Biodiversity

The proposed development should include nature-based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) such as wet swales, detention basins, and rain gardens with native emergent vegetation. These features provide not only water quality benefits but also habitat for aquatic invertebrates, amphibians, and birds. SuDS design should specifically address the Glenamought River's sensitivity and "At Risk" status under the Water Framework Directive. The river should be treated as a key ecological receptor, and runoff management should prioritise both attenuation and pollutant capture.

4.12.4 Artificial Roosts and Nesting Structures

Bat boxes should be installed on mature retained trees and buildings to support local bat species. Nesting boxes for passerines should be placed in suitable locations.

4.12.5 Lighting Impact Assessment

A lighting strategy should be developed in line with *Bat Conservation Ireland* guidance. Avoid upward-facing or white/blue-spectrum lights near hedgerows, watercourses, and green corridors. Use low-spill, directional lighting with motion sensors and timers where appropriate.

4.12.6 Long-Term Biodiversity Management Plan

A site-wide Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) should be prepared. This should detail planting schemes, maintenance of pollinator habitats, invasive species monitoring, and a 5–10 year programme for ecological enhancement and monitoring.

6. Conclusion

This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal presents the results of a desktop review and a field survey undertaken on 11 July 2025 to identify ecological features within the Rathpeacon Masterplan area. The appraisal provides a high-level overview of the site's ecological context and outlines recommendations to guide future development and ecological management.

Based on the findings of this assessment, the site primarily comprises improved agricultural grassland with boundary hedgerows and stone walls offering moderate ecological value. While no designated sites lie within or immediately adjacent to the development footprint, nearby watercourses, notably the Glenamought River, warrant consideration for downstream impacts. Due to the Glenamought River's proximity to the site and its 'At Risk' classification, this feature should be treated as a sensitive ecological receptor. Design measures and construction planning should proactively address runoff management, erosion control, and buffer preservation to avoid indirect impacts. Protected mammals such as badgers and hedgehogs are likely present, and foraging and commuting habitats for bats were identified. No flora listed under the Flora (Protection) Order 2022 was found.

It is strongly recommended that the following additional surveys be undertaken:

- Targeted mammal surveys for badger, hedgehog, and otters;
- Nesting bird surveys if any vegetation clearance is planned during nesting season;
- Bat surveys, particularly in association with treelines, stone walls, and buildings;
- Amphibian surveys during the appropriate seasonal window if works are proposed near any standing water.

In addition, opportunities for ecological enhancement should be integrated into the masterplan, including pollinator-friendly planting, sustainable drainage systems. and retention and enhancement of hedgerows wherever possible.

7. References

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ADVISORY REPORT

Rathpeacon, Co. Cork

Supporting Document for Residential Zoning Submission to Cork City Council

For JCD Group

3 November 2025

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

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Market Overview

- For Cork City In the years 2023 and 2024, the NPF target implied population growth of 10,778, implying housing demand of 4,311 units. Over that period, however, only 2,260 units were delivered in Cork City, putting the shortfall at 2,051.

- Adding that to the 2025-2030 demand figure of 12,933 units brings the total housing requirement to 14,985 by the end of 2030, or just under 2,500 units per year.

- Given that the average annual supply over the past five years has been 1,044 units, Cork City will need to ramp up housing delivery significantly in the years ahead to support the NPF population target.

- The average time lag from planning permission to completion is around 22 months. This obviously reflects schemes of all different types and sizes. However, it does indicate a need for a constant flow of planning permissions of scale to come through to deliver on the housing targets for the City.

- Deliverability is key to achieving the targets required in housing output.

- Critically in reviewing the key large planning permissions granted or sought over the last 5 years while having the capacity to deliver a quantum of housing we have identified at least some impediments to delivery around infrastructure to see these schemes come on site.

- This does not apply with the subject lands which can be developed immediately on receipt of planning permission.

- There is a necessity for there to be a buffer in the quantum of land zoned to ensure that the key targets are met.

- To this end a key strategy should be to promote the development of larger schemes which can create a delivery pipeline over a number of years. Larger schemes also given the opportunity to provide a mix of different housing types to appeal to a broader market.

Executive Summary

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The Subject Lands

- The principal of development is already established with the subject property given its current zoning for industrial.
- The typography of the lands make industrial development challenging and will necessitate a large amount of earth works, however it lends itself naturally to a residential scheme of scale as demonstrated by the indicative master plan layout.
- The site is contiguous with the existing city built up area and is a natural extension of the urban environment.
- The site is located close to existing public transport routes and the proposed new northern distributor road traverses the site providing more public transport connectivity in the medium term.
- The masterplan has been designed to provide a sufficient zone to allow for the proposed northern distributor road to go over or under the adjoining Cork/Dublin railway line.
- The site is located within a kilometre of 2 new residential schemes which have been and are currently being delivered in conjunction with Cork City Council being Duggan Heights (54 units) and Glenbride (delivering 86 units).
- The Duggan Heights development is a good example of the land uses changing from industrial (former Frank Boland premises) to residential use given the evolving need for residential in such a highly accessible location.
- The lands are in single ownership of the development company JCD who are developers of scale that consistently deliver large complex projects in a timely fashion.
- This is a site of significant scale extending to 16.9 hectares/41.74 acres.
- All key infrastructure is in place now to facilitate development of the lands.
- Has the capacity to deliver 601 units of mixed typology across the site.
- The indicative masterplan provides a desirable mix of housing types that will appeal to a broad demographic and mix of public and private. The various house types are as follows: Semi Detached, Detached terrace Duplex apartment, Triplex apartment and traditional apartments
- The site can be developed immediately on receipt of planning permission taking into account future public infrastructure projects that may traverse the site. There is no necessity to take a wait and see approach.
- With an average output of 150 units per annum between private and social housing this scheme will be completed by 2030 once planning is granted in Q4 2026/Q1 2027.
- Rathpeacon has an older demographic and the lack of new homes in the area for the first time buyer has stagnated its growth and development. This site will address this critical need.
- It is well supported by key infrastructure projects such as: new rail station at Stoneview, upgrading of the N/M20 and the northern distributor road. Few sites have the benefit of such projects adjoining that it makes sense to capitalise on this.

Executive Summary

The proposed scheme will deliver 601 residential units on the site.

This is split across three neighbourhoods.

- Neighbourhood 1 – 169 units
- Neighbourhood 2 – 144 units
- Neighbourhood 3 – 288 units

The developers JCD have the experience and capability to provide the on site infrastructure for the entire site day one.

This is significant as it allows for multiple phases of the scheme to be developed in tandem delivering both public and private housing.

To ensure that the momentum for delivery of housing continues in Cork City it is imperative that sites of scale which are serviced are prioritised so that the NPF targets are met.



Executive Summary

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Location in Context of Cork City



Location in Context of Cork Northside



01 | The Property

The Property

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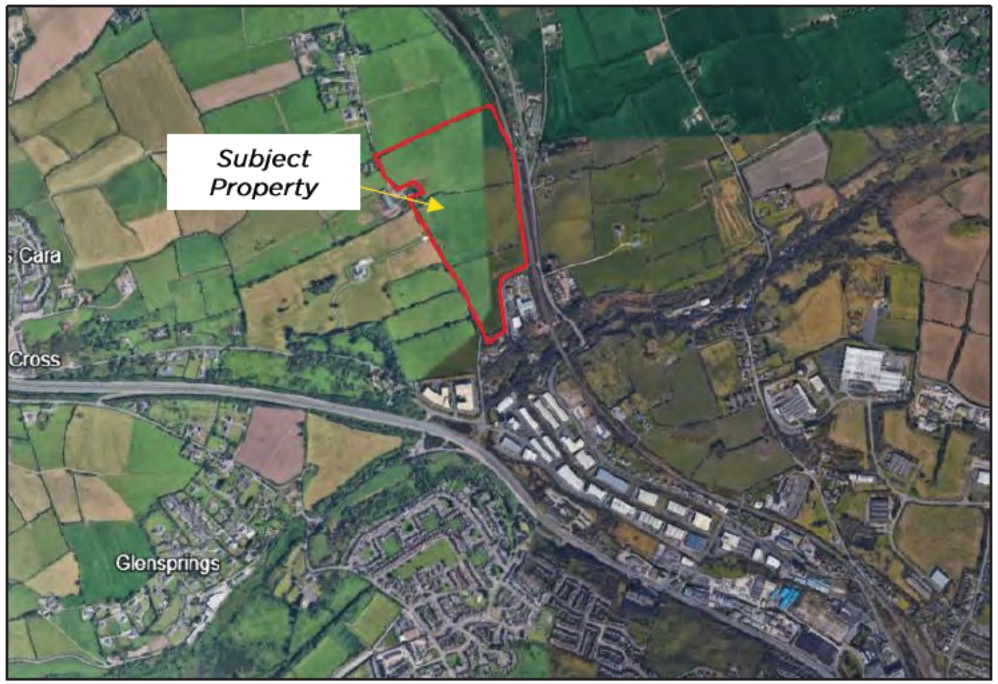
Location

- The subject lands are located on the northern side of Cork approximately 4.8km north of the City Centre
- The lands are bound to the west by Sweeneys Hill, to the east by the Cork-Mallow rail line and to the south by existing residential dwellings and to the south-east by the Old Mallow Road.

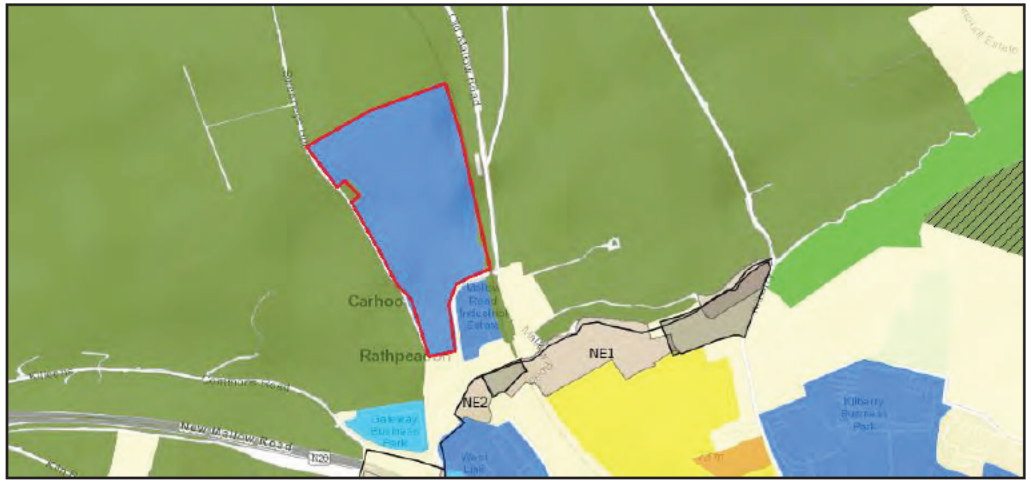


- The lands are situated along the 215 Bus Route, with a bus stop located approx. 500m south of the subject site with regular bus services operating every 30 minutes to/from the city centre.
- The immediate surrounding area is a mix of industrial and residential developments with recent precedents of industrial premises being repurposed to residential use (Duggan Heights). This is a trend that is happening in urban areas both in Ireland and across Europe.
- The greenfield site is a natural extension of the existing urban area.
- Major companies and key employers span many sectors and include;
  - Apple
  - Boston Scientific
  - Merck
  - Teamwork

Description

Description

- The property comprises a roughly regular shaped greenfield site extending to approximately 16.9 hectares / 41.74 acres.
- The lands are sub-divided to provide for three separate fields and are currently in grass and in use for grazing purposes.
- Site boundaries are formed by a combination of mature hedgerows, trees, masonry stone walls and timber wired fencing. Access is provided via a number of steel gates.
- Topographically the lands slope in a southernly direction.
- The property is situated in an area zoned ZO 09 – Light Industry and Related Uses *"To provide for light industry and related uses."* under the Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028.
- We understand there are no site-specific environmental constraints to developing the site.



Aerial Image of the Subject Land



02 | Feasibility Study

Feasibility Study

The subject site supports the objectives of the new Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines on the implementation of the National Planning Framework (NPF).

Proposed Scheme

- Indicative layout shows potential for up to 601 no. residential units comprising a mix of detached, semi-detached, terraced and apartments in 3 phases.
- Density of 40.4 units per ha permissible as per the Cork City Development Plan. Approx. 15% of Open Space is permitted, incorporating the proposed Northern Distributor Road.
- Existing services connections are available and Uisce Éireann confirmed that connection to their infrastructure is feasible, subject to local upgrades.
- We have set out below the proposed schedule of accommodation:

Masterplan

Neighbourhood 1

Unit Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4Bed	Total
Semi Detached			34		34
Detached				3	3
Terrace					0
Duplex		42	42		84
Triplex					0
Apartment	24	24			48
					169

Neighbourhood 2

Unit Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4Bed	Total
Semi Detached			64		64
Detached				2	2
Terrace		4	23		27
Duplex	6	6			12
Triplex	18				18
Apartment	21				21
					144

Neighbourhood 3

Unit Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4Bed	Total
Semi Detached			96		96
Detached				5	5
Terrace		18	70		88
Duplex					0
Triplex	15				15
Apartment	36	48			84
					288



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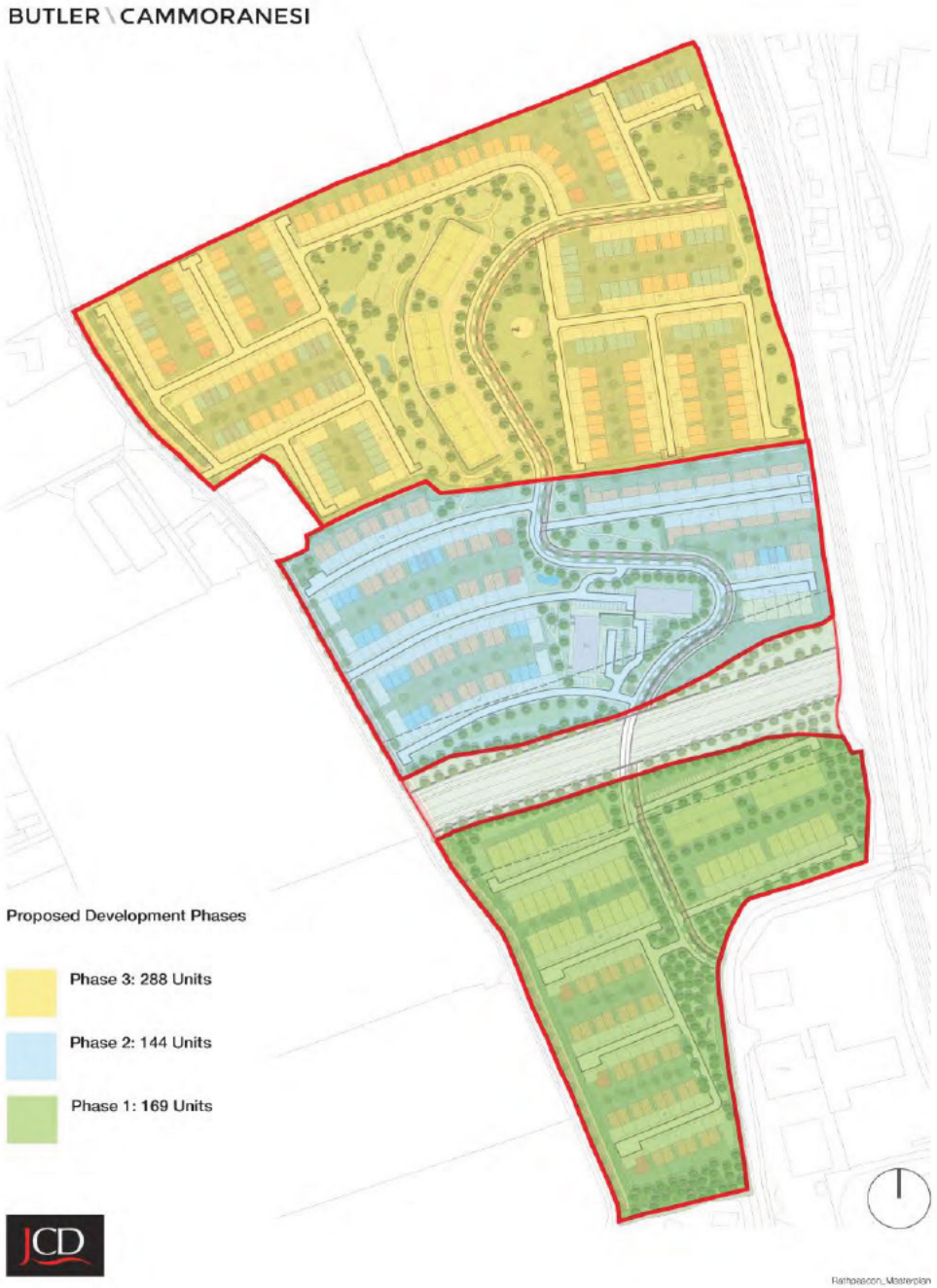
Phasing Plan



Deliverability

Transitioning the site from Light Industry to active residential zoning is the critical first step to unlocking development potential and enabling planning applications. We have highlighted below some of the key points that are considered when assessing the development potential of any site.



ZONING

- Is the site zoned or earmarked for residential use?
- What is the density requirements?



SERVICEABILITY

- Is water, wastewater, electricity and gas services available? ✓
- Are there any capacity issues? X



INFRASTRUCTURE

- Are road access and public transport links sufficient to support a new residential community? ✓



SITE CHARACTERISTICS

- Is topography suitable for development (e.g. well-drained, not prone to flooding)? ✓
- Are there any contamination or remediation issues (e.g. former industrial use)? No



DEV. ECONOMICS

- What is the likely cost of enabling works and infrastructure upgrades? Limited
- What is the expected sales value and absorption rate? Strong Demand (demonstrated below)



DELIVERABILITY & PHASING

- Is the site in single ownership? ✓
- Can it be delivered in phases to manage risk and capital outlay? ✓

03 | Market Analysis

Market Analysis

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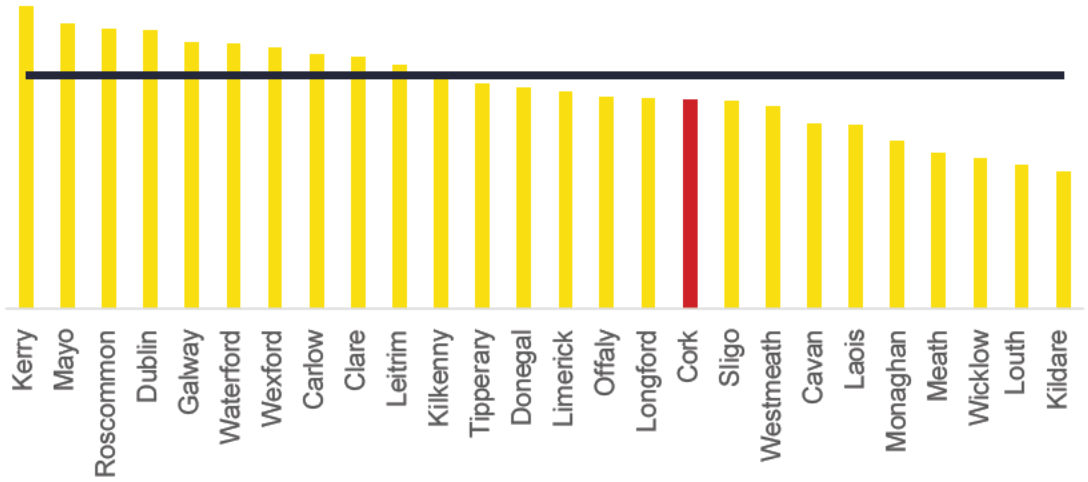
Demographics

The population of Cork stood at 613,000 as of April 2025, according to estimates from the Central Statistics Office (CSO), representing 11.2% of the national population. Cork's population has grown by an average of 1.5% per year over the past five years, just behind the national figure of 1.7%. Although the demographic profile of Cork by age is broadly in line with the national picture, there has been somewhat slower growth among younger age cohorts than for the country as a whole. This suggests that, ceteris paribus, the population of Cork may age quicker than the national average.

Figure 1: Population growth by county, five-year average 2021-2025



Indeed, the share of Cork's population under the age of 25 fell from 32% in 2021 to 30% in 2025, with the same trend seen across the South West. For Ireland as a whole, the decline was weaker, falling from 32% to 31% over the five-year period.

Table 1: Population by age profile and year

	Ireland		South West		Cork	
	2021	2025	2021	2025	2021	2025
<25	32%	31%	32%	30%	32%	30%
25-44	28%	27%	27%	27%	28%	27%
45-64	25%	26%	26%	26%	26%	26%
65+	15%	16%	16%	17%	15%	16%

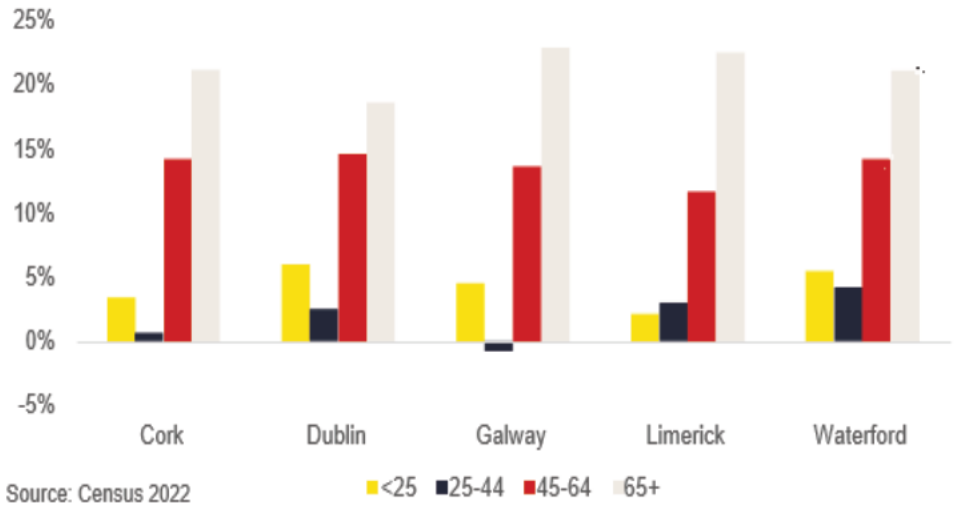
Source: CSO

Less timely but more granular data from Census 2022 show that the population of Cork was 584,156. Between Census 2016 and 2022, Cork's population grew by 41,288 people. Forty-two percent of this increase was attributable to natural growth (i.e., births over deaths), while 58% was due to net inward migration, which was in line with the national trend.

Analysis of the Census data further shows that the fastest growing age group since 2016 has been among those aged 65 and over, with the weakest growth among those aged 25-44. This trend holds for Cork, where growth among those under the age of 25 was just 3%, compared with a national average of 5%.

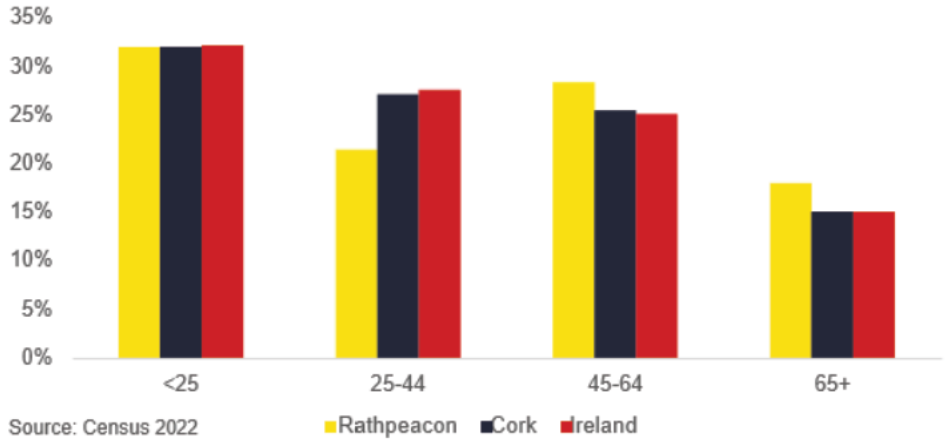
Market Analysis

Figure 2: Population growth by age group, 2016-2022



Source: Census 2022

Figure 3: Share of population by age group



Source: Census 2022

Using the CSO's small area population statistics, we have created a micro location for the Rathpeacon area (2), allowing us to dig into the demographics on a more granular basis. While the percentage of the population under the age of 25 was in line with the national average, Rathpeacon's share of the population aged 25-44 was much lower at 21%, compared to 27% for Cork and 28% for Ireland as a whole. This is noteworthy given that this is the age group most likely to buy a home but also reflects the lack of opportunity to do so in the immediate area.

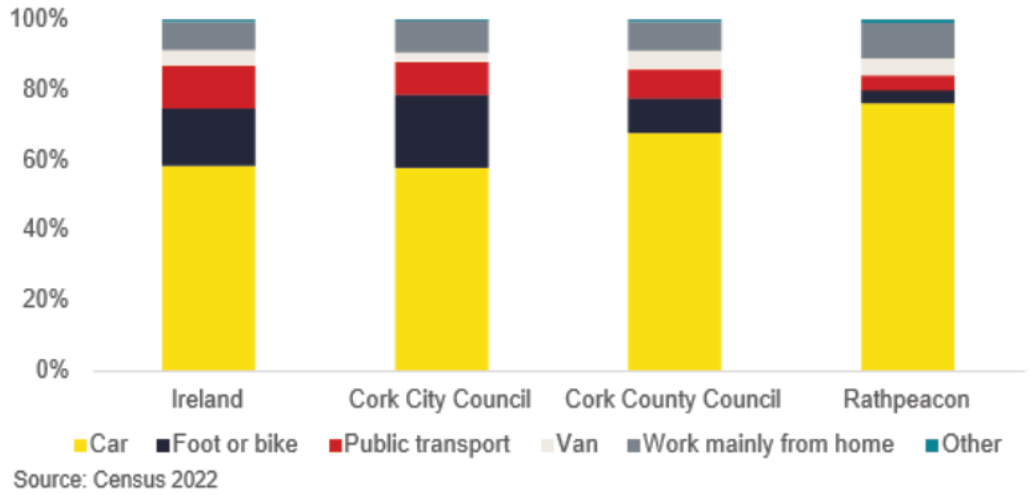
2. The Small Area Population Statistics codes: 47277009, 47320006, 047277010/02, 47320007, 47320008, 047054003/02 and 047054003/01

Commuting

The proportion of people commuting by car, either as a driver or passenger, was 58% for Ireland at the time of Census 2022. While that share was the same for the Cork City Council area, it rose to 76% for Rathpeacon, demonstrating the extent to which commuters are reliant on private cars for their travel needs. By contrast, while 17% of commuters travelled by foot or bike nationally, that figure rose to 21% for Cork City but stood at only 4% for Rathpeacon.

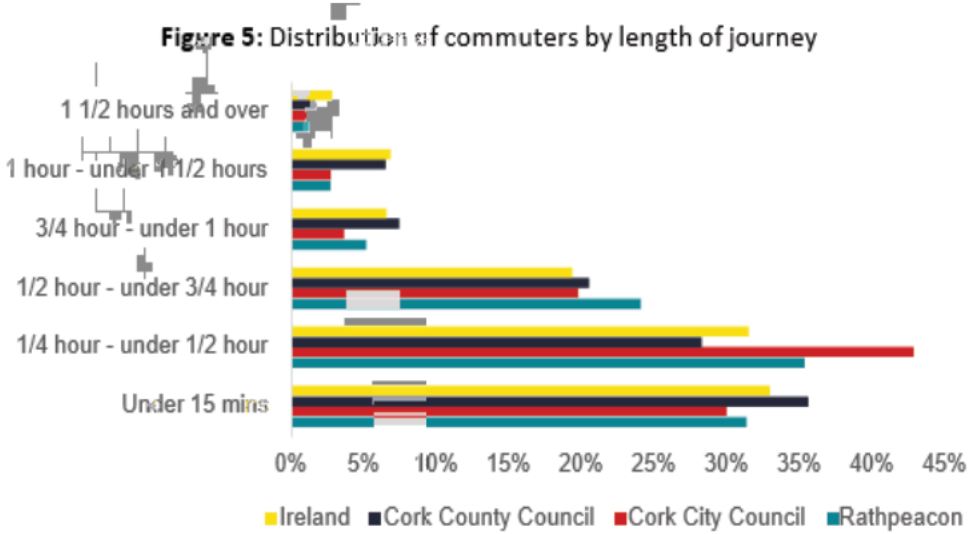
Market Analysis

Figure 4: Means of commuting



Source: Census 2022

Figure 5: Distribution of commuters by length of journey



Source: Census 2022

The data also show the typical journey for a commute, with 33% of the national population undertaking journeys of under 15 minutes. The respective shares for Cork City and Rathpeacon were smaller at 30% and 31%, while the share was higher for Cork County at 36%.

In terms of commuting, the N/M20 Cork to Limerick project is a key priority within the Government's National Development Plan (NDP) and is expected to deliver 80 km of new and improved dual carriageway between Cork City and Patrickswell, Limerick.

An further 80 km of active travel infrastructure is also proposed, connecting communities along the corridor and enhancing mobility for pedestrians and cyclists. This project will help support development at the proposed site, easing commuter pressures and facilitating alternatives to private car use.

Additionally, the Cork Area Commuter Rail programme, which is a key part of the Cork Metropolitan Transport Strategy, proposes eight new rail stations that would support the proposed development at Rathpeacon. Those new stations would be located at Blarney/Stoneview, Monard, Blackpool/Kilbarry, Tivoli, Dunkettle, Ballynoe, Carrigtwohill West and Water-Rock. Notably, the Blarney/Stoneview station would include a park and ride facility, which would streamline connections from the surrounding area including Rathpeacon.

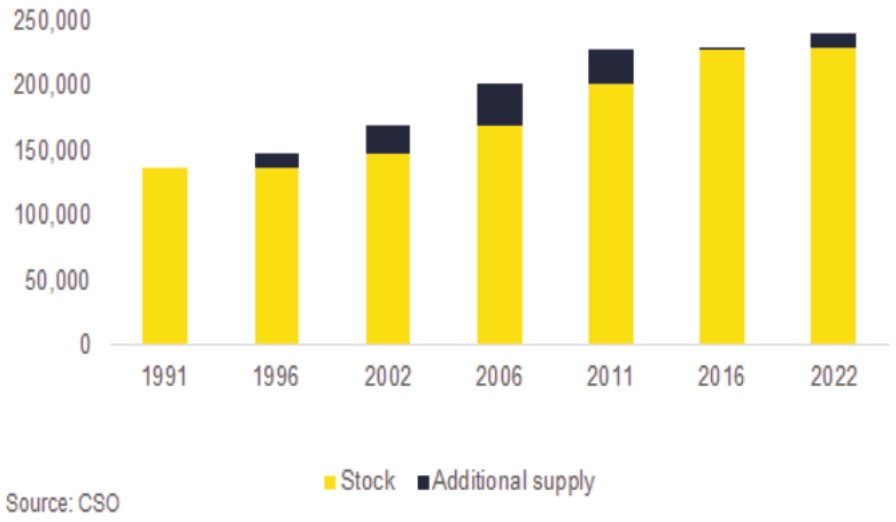
04 | Housing

Housing

Housing Stock

The stock of housing in Ireland stood at 2,112,121 in 2022, while the figure for Cork was 240,942, or 11.4% of the national total. Over the period 2016-2022, the stock of homes rose by 5.4% nationally, or by 5.0% in Cork. The following figure charts the growth in Cork's housing stock at each Census since 1991, with almost no supply in the period following the Global Financial Crisis, 2011-2016.

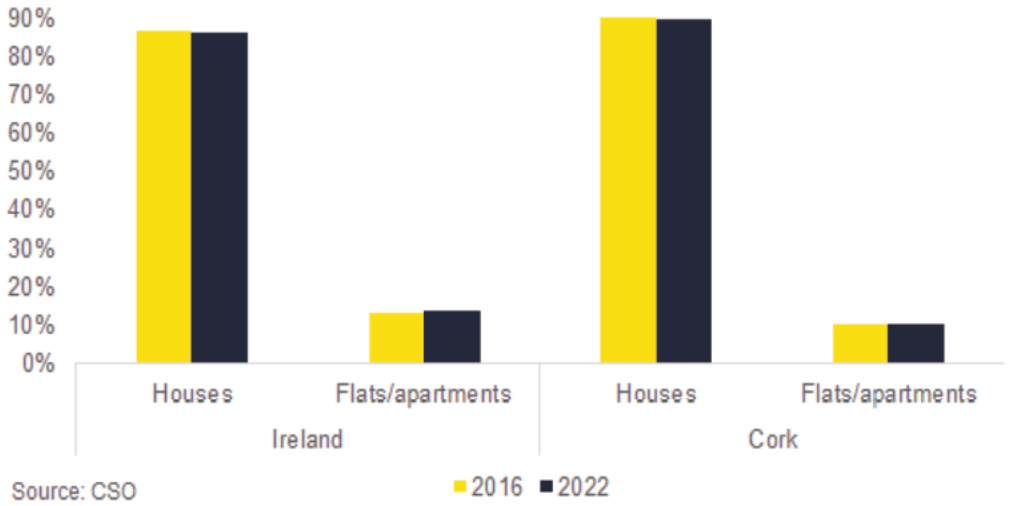
Figure 6: Housing stock in Cork at each Census



Source: CSO

Further analysis of the data show that 14% of the national housing stock was made up of flats/apartments as of 2022, whereas that share was only 10% in Cork. The national share was up slightly from 13% in Census 2016, with the Cork figure unchanged between the two periods.

Figure 7: Housing stock by type



Source: CSO

Housing

Since Census 2022, 101,900 homes have been delivered across Ireland. Approximately 10,800 of these were built in Cork. That suggests the current stock of housing in Ireland is 2,214,015, of which 251,700 are in Cork, albeit this does not account for demolitions and derelictions. The following table provides a breakout of this delivery by Cork's LEAs.

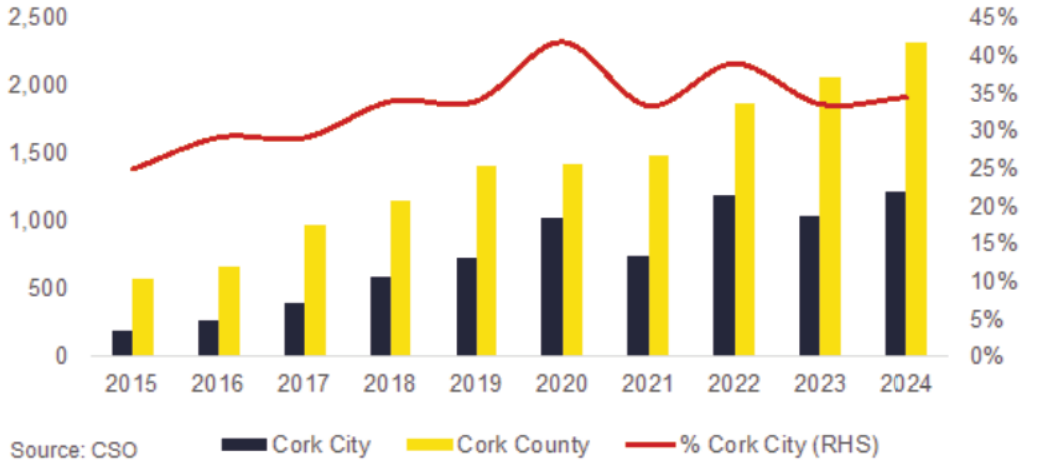
Table 2: Q2 2022-Q2 2025 housing completions by Cork LEA

Local Authority	LEA	Units	% Share
Cork City	Cork City North West	586	5%
	Cork City North East	1,186	11%
	Cork City South East	791	7%
	Cork City South Central	426	4%
	Cork City South West	923	9%
Cork County	Kanturk	371	3%
	Fermoy	614	6%
	Midleton	978	9%
	Carrigaline	1,007	9%
	Cobh	908	8%
	Bandon-Kinsale	841	8%
	Bantry-West Cork	358	3%
	Skibbereen-West Cork	486	5%
	Macroom	842	8%
	Mallow	453	4%

Source: Census 2022

At the local authority level, the population of Cork City Council rose from 125,657 to 224,004, or by 78%, between Census 2016 and 2022. This population growth was supported by housing development over the same period, with 4,672 units built. Cork City's share of housing delivery therefore rose from 29% in 2016 to 39% in 2022, albeit that proportion has since fallen to 34% as of end-2024. For Cork City to meet its population growth objectives as outlined in the NPF, housing supply will need to regain momentum.

Figure 8: Delivery and % share by Cork local authority

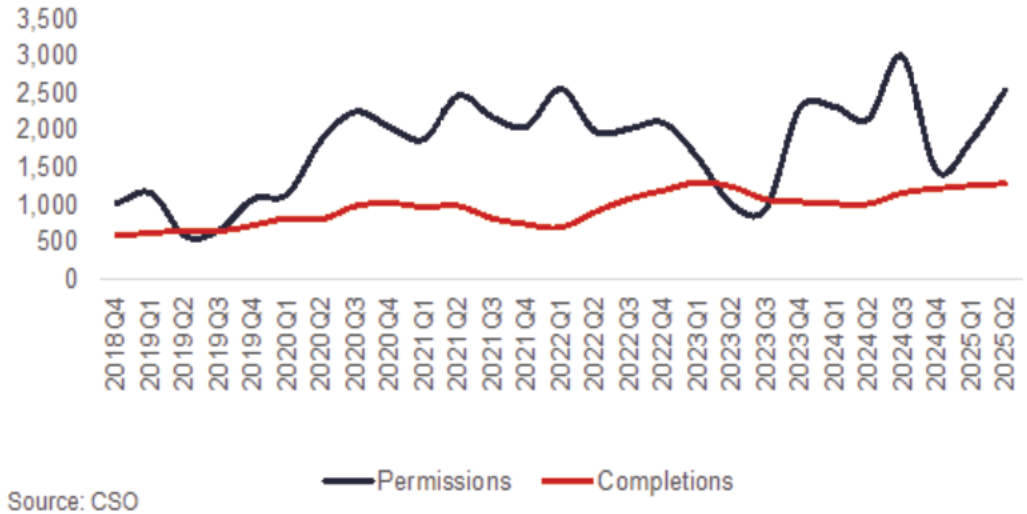


Source: CSO

Housing

Previous analysis by the Department of Finance found that the average length of time between planning permissions and commencements was about 11 months(3). Separate research by the Central Bank of Ireland estimated the average length of time from commencement to completion at 12-18 months4. Taken together, this suggests the average lag time from permission to completion is around 26 months, or 2.2 years. On this basis, we have estimated that roughly 73% of units granted planning permission in Cork City translate into completions. With permissions for 2,540 units currently, this would indicate a potential annual supply of 1,860 units in Q2 2027, up from 1,288 units in Q2 2025. That said, the actual figure may be subject to planning delays or other unforeseen circumstances.

Figure 9: Cork City permissions and completions, 12-month rolling



Source: CSO

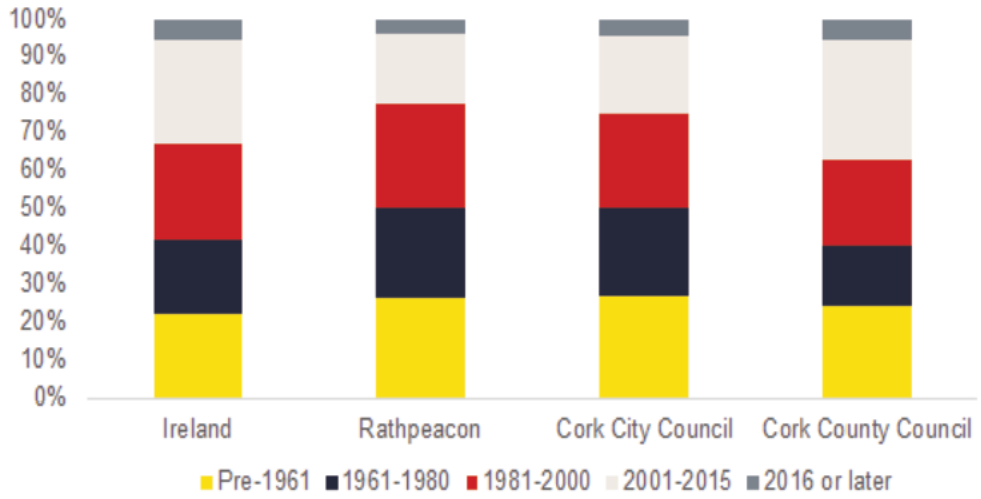
Data limitations prevent us from analysing stock and delivery at the small area level. Nevertheless, the need for new development can be evidenced in Census data describing the distribution of households by the year their home was built. On that basis, 33% of households nationally lived in a home built since 2001, with that share rising to 37% for Cork County Council. For Cork City Council, the share was much lower at 25%, while the respective proportion for Rathpeacon was just 23%.

On the other hand, half of households in both Rathpeacon and Cork City Council lived in homes built before 1981, with the share dropping to 40% for Cork County Council and 42% for Ireland as a whole. Overall, this suggests that new development would be beneficial to bring housing standards in Rathpeacon and Cork City more in line with the national average.

3.Department of Finance, Mind the gap - measuring the lag between planning permissions and commencement, Economic Insights, Vol 2, April 2024.Central Bank of Ireland, Housing supply: uncertainty in the delivery cycle, Box D, Quarterly Bulletin Q2 2024.

Housing

Figure 10: Distribution of households by period of construction



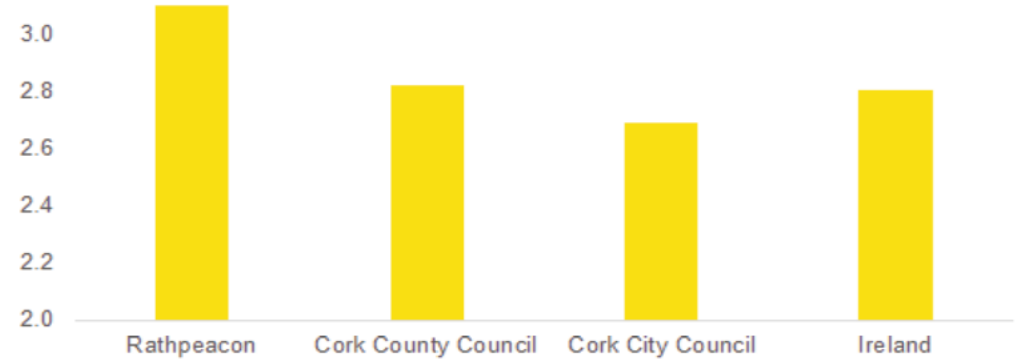
Source: Census 2022

Household tenancy

There were 1.8 million households in Ireland at the time of the 2022 Census, implying an average household size of 2.80 people. The number of households in Cork City was 83,328, or an average household size of 2.69, while Cork County had 127,590 households at an average size of 2.82.

In Rathpeacon, there were 618 households with an average household size of 3.10. Given that the total share of the population under 25 was broadly the same across the geographic levels, Rathpecon's higher average household size is a sign of a more acute housing shortage in the area than at the city, county or country level.

Figure 11: Average household size



Source: Census 2022

Further analysis of the data show that 39% of Irish households own their properties outright. While that share falls to 34% for Cork City, it rises to 43% for Cork County. Most notably, however, the figure stands at a significant rate of 57% in Rathpeacon where owner-occupation rises to 91% when mortgaged households are included. This is well above the second-highest combined share of 75% for Cork County, as well as 59% for Cork City and 69% nationally. This is consistent with the demographic profile of Rathpeacon, which has a generally older population than elsewhere.

Housing

Table 3: Tenure status by location

	Ireland	Cork City	Cork County	Rathpeacon
Owned with mortgage or loan	30.2%	24.8%	32.0%	33.6%
Owned outright	38.7%	34.1%	43.3%	57.4%
Rented from private landlord	18.8%	24.7%	14.6%	5.8%
Rented from local authority	8.7%	13.1%	6.5%	0.3%
Rented from voluntary/co-operative housing body	1.7%	2.0%	1.3%	0.0%
Occupied free of rent	1.8%	1.2%	2.3%	2.8%

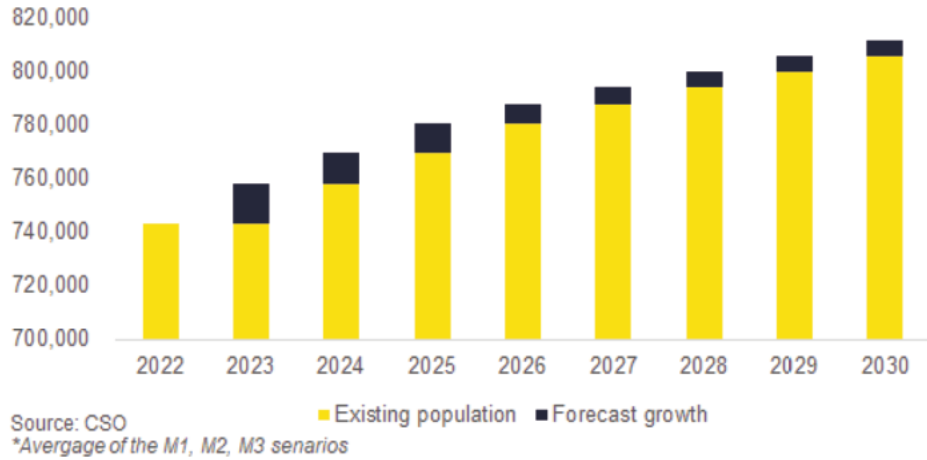
Source: Census 2022

Forecasting Housing Demand

The revised NPF is planning for the national population to reach 6.1 million by 2040. That marks an increase of 250,000 people over that previously planned for when the NPF was initially launched in 2018. As such, the original NPF widely underestimated the likely path of population growth and, consequently, the government housing supply target of 33,000 unts per annum has been revised sharply upwards to 50,500. The NPF aims to ensure balanced regional development by targeting 50:50 distribution of future growth between the Eastern and Midland region, and the Southern and Northern and Western regions combined.

This is important context when considering current and future housing needs. We use the CSO's population projections to illustrate the approximate medium-term housing demand in the region for which data are available, the South West (Cork and Kerry). Taking an average of the CSO's three population scenarios, the population of the South West is expected to reach 811.200 bv 2030 – a rise of 68.233 from the base year of

Figure 12: Projected population of the South West 2022-2030



Source: CSO
Avergage of the M1, M2, M3 senarios

Housing

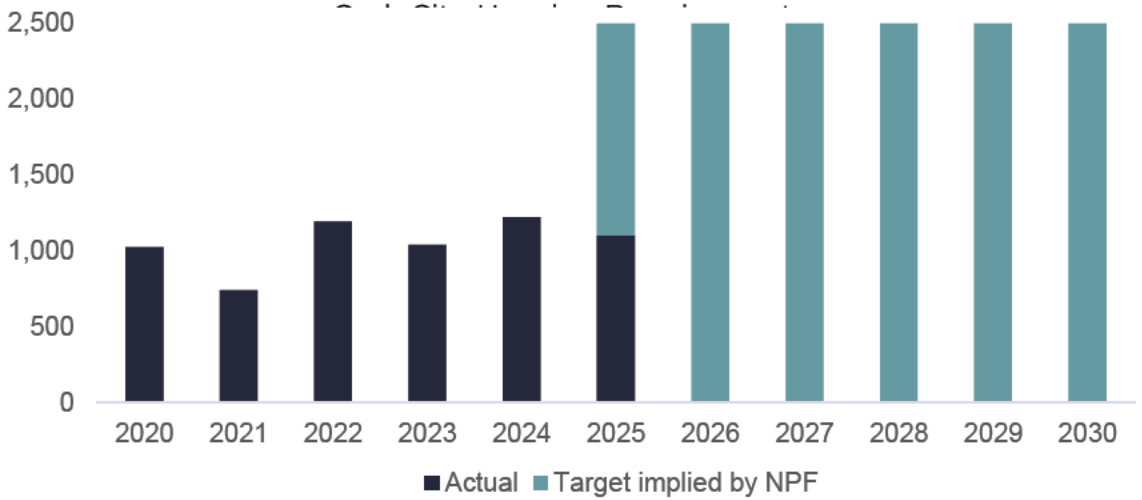
In estimating demand, we apply an average household size of 2.50. The rationale is that this is closer to the Euro Area average of 2.30, but allows for Ireland's younger demographic profile, which underpins larger household sizes. It further acknowledges that the actual average of 2.80 is above where it would be in an effective market where supply is in line with demand.

Looking at the 10 years to 2022, the population of the South West increased by 75,600, necessitating 30,240 new homes based on an average household size of 2.50. Actual delivery during that period was 19,400, implying a shortfall of 10,840 units. If we expect the population to grow by a further 68,233 by 2030, as outlined above, that implies a further housing requirement of almost 27,300 by 2030. Combined with an accumulated shortfall of 10,840, the South West would need 38,140 additional units by 2030, or 4,768 per annum (not accounting for demolitions and derelictions over the same period). In 2024, 4,026 homes were built in the region, which was above the 10-year annual average of 2,500 but still below what is required. So, although moving in the right direction, delivery needs to continue to ramp up strongly in the years ahead.

Cork City Housing Demand

According to the revised National Planning Framework, published in April 2025, the population of Cork city and suburbs is to reach 320,000 by 2040. That represents a rise of over 40% from the 2022 level of 223,000, or 97,000 additional people. To reach that level in 2040, the population would need to grow by 5,389 persons per year. From the beginning of 2025 to the end of 2030, that translates in 32,333 additions to the population. Assuming an average household size of 2.5 persons, that would require additional housing of 12,933 units.

In the years 2023 and 2024, the NPF target implied population growth of 10,778, implying housing demand of 4,311 units. Over that period, however, only 2,260 units were delivered in Cork City, putting the shortfall at 2,051. Adding that to the 2025-2030 demand figure of 12,933 units brings the total housing requirement to 14,985 by the end of 2030, or just under 2,500 units per year. Given that the average annual supply over the past five years has been 1,044 units, Cork City will need to ramp up housing delivery significantly in the years ahead to support the NPF population target.



Source: CSO, NPF, Savills Research

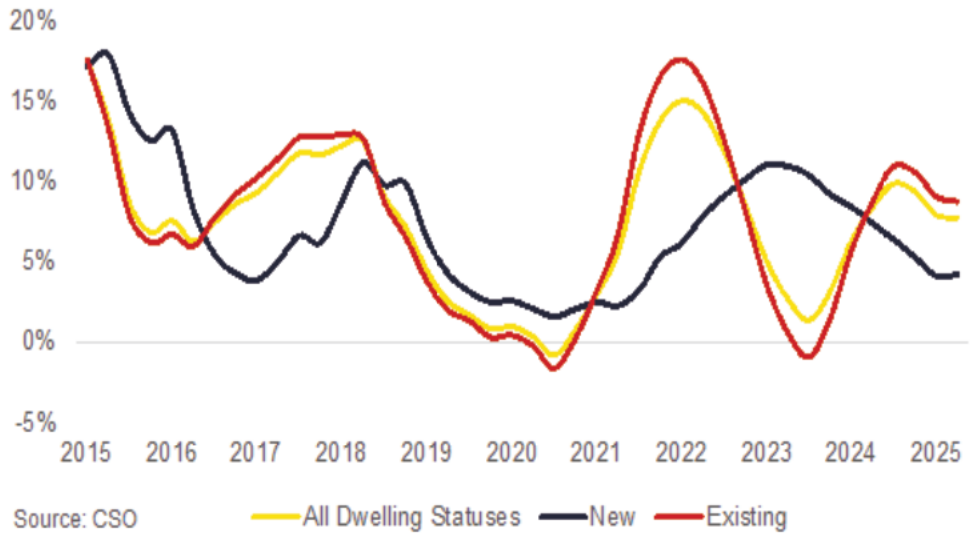
05 | Residential Market

Residential Market

House prices

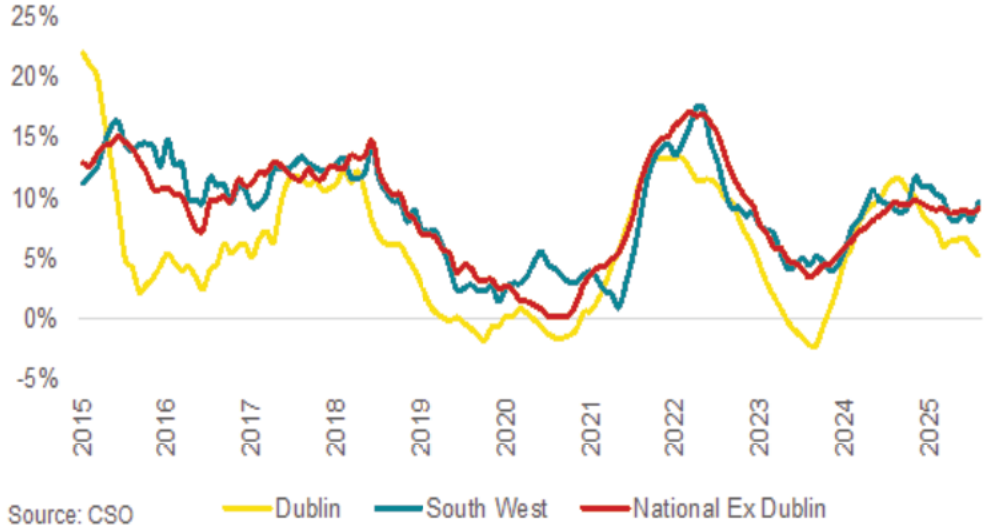
National house price inflation (HPI) stood at 7.8% y/y in Q2 2025, marking the second consecutive quarter of a slowdown. Broken out by type, HPI was higher on existing homes at 8.8% compared with 4.2% for new homes. Overall, HPI remains elevated as demand for housing continues to outstrip supply

Figure 13: House price inflation by property type



At the regional level, HPI is slowest in Dublin at 5.2%, while the national average excluding Dublin is much stronger at 9.1%. In the South West, however, HPI is even higher at 9.6%. The reason for this disparity is that housing delivery has been much stronger in Dublin than it has for the rest of the country, with the capital accounting for 36% of all completions in 2024.

Figure 14: House price inflation by region

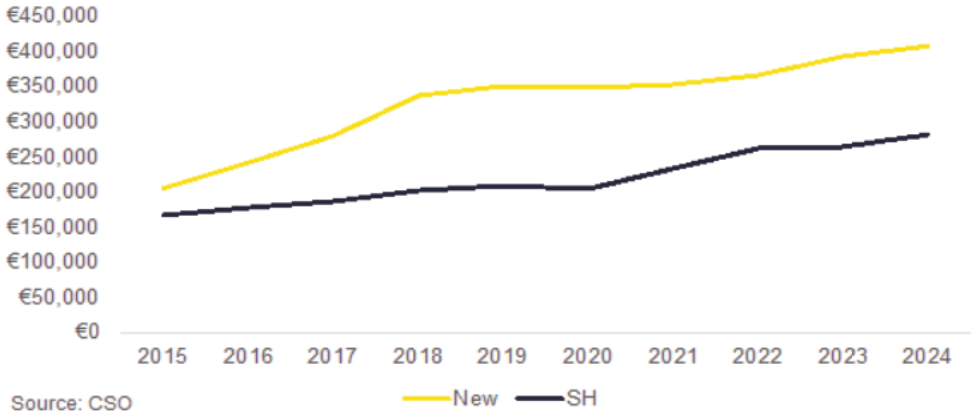


Residential Market

The average price of a new home in Cork stood at €407,700 in 2024 and has almost doubled from €205,400 in 2015. The comparable figure for a second-hand home was €281,500 in 2024, up from €166,900 in 2015. The average price of a new home in Cork has risen by 8.1% per year over the past decade, with a second-hand home increasing by an average of 7.0% per year. This is consistent with the HPI evidence presented above, exhibiting strong price growth over the course of this economic cycle.

The stronger growth in Cork's new homes prices may be reflective of the government's Help-to-Buy (HTB) scheme, which has been shoring up demand and affordability among first-time-buyers since its introduction in mid-2016. While the scheme is approaching its limit in Dublin where the average price of a new home now exceeds the HTB ceiling of €500,000, it remains applicable in Cork.

Figure 15: Average price of new and second-hand homes in Cork

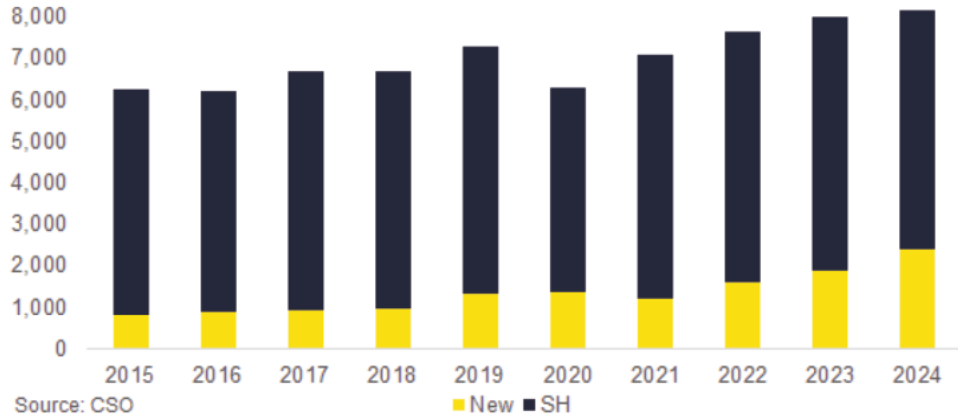


Source: CSO

Transactions

Almost 8,200 homes transacted across Cork in 2024, 30% of which were new homes. The volume of transactions has grown at an average rate of 5.0% per annum since 2015, which was slightly above the national average of 4.7%. Cork as a share of total transaction volumes nationally stood at 11.4% in 2024, which was above the 10-year average of 10.9%; this is consistent with the faster growth in sales activity over the same period.

Figure 16: Cork transaction volumes by property type



Source: CSO

Purchaser profile

Of the 8,200 homes which transacted in 2024, 2,300 were purchased by first-time buyers (FTBs) and 2,700 were bought by former owner-occupiers. The outstanding 2,200 purchases were made by non-occupiers.

Residential Market

Figure 17: Cork transaction volumes by buyer type

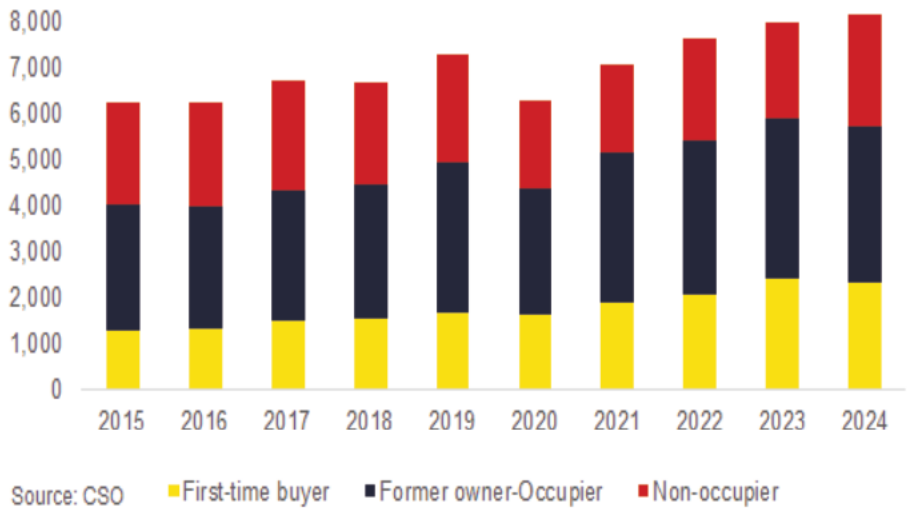
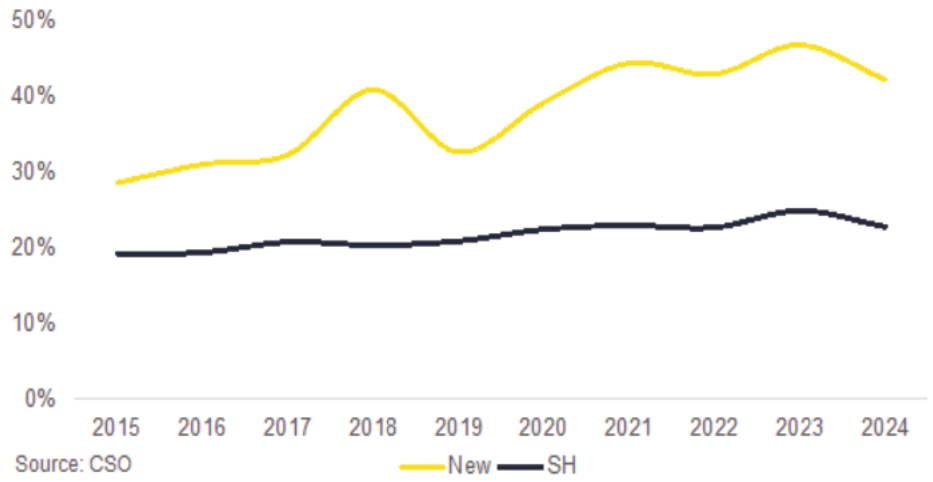


Figure 18: FTBs as a share of total purchasers



Looking at the share of sales by both property and buyer type shows that 42% of new homes were bought by FTBs in 2024. This share has risen from 29% a decade ago, although it was down from 47% in 2023. In the second-hand market, FTBs accounted for 23% of sales, which was up from 19% in 2015.

Residential Market

Surrounding Schemes

Address	Developer	No. units	Comment
Longview, Ballyvolane, Co. Cork	Longview Estates	750	Construction ongoing with delivery of houses being completed in phases. 528 no. houses & 222 no. apartments and creche. Sales agent: Savills
Arderrow, Ballyvolane, Co. Cork	O'Flynn's Constructio n	275	Construction ongoing for the development of 275 no. residential units with 205 houses & 70 no. apartments and creche. Comprising the following, 36 x 1 bed apartments, 34 x 2 bed apartments, 40 x 2 bed houses, 159 x 3 bed houses & 6 x 4 bed houses.
Fairfield Road, Blackpool, Co. Cork	Dunluce Land Holdings	49	Construction ongoing for the development of 49 no. dwellings comprising 9 x 2 bed terraced units, 12 x 1 bed apartments, 24 x 2 bed apartments and 4 x 3 bed apartments.
Glenbride, Old Mallow Road, Co. Cork	Murnane O'Shea	86	Construction ongoing for the development of 86 no. houses. The first phase has delivered 38 no. affordable houses available via Cork City Councils Affordable Purchase Scheme.
Ringwood & Stoneview, Blarney, Co. Cork	Clockstrike Ltd	246	Planning in place for the development of 246 no. residential dwellings comprising 6 x studio apartments, 35 x 1 bed apartments, 60 x 2 bed apartments, 19 x 2 bed houses, 64 x 3 bed houses, 32 x 4 bed houses, 15 x 1 bed duplex units, 15 x 2 bed duplex units. Associated facilities include a creche, 333 car parking spaces & EV Charging points.



Residential Market

Case Study – Longview, Ballyvolane

Longview is an ongoing development by Longview Estates to comprise a total of 750 no. residential units.

The scheme and site are similar to the subject lands with regard to the characteristics of the site prior to any development commencing.

- Undulating topography sloping in a southernly direction.
- Infrastructure and services were installed at commencement.
- Development commenced September 2024.
- Dissected in part by the proposed Northern Distributor Road.
- Mixture of unit types permitted in Longview as detailed below:

Type	Beds	No. Units
Semi-Detached	3 & 4	235 – 3 Beds 41 – 4 Beds
Detached	3 & 4	33 – 3 Beds 34 – 4 Beds
Terraced	2, 3 & 4	71 – 2 Beds 96 – 3 Beds 18 – 4 Beds
Duplex	2 & 3	33 – 2 Beds 36 – 3 Beds
Apartment	1 & 2	6 – 1 Beds 147 – 2 Beds
TOTAL		750













Residential Market

Case Study – Longview, Ballyvolane Continued..

As noted in the previous slide, the site characteristics of Longview are similar to those of the subject lands.

The original site featured a significant southward slope in which substantial groundworks were carried out to level out areas for development.

Key Infrastructure works were installed prior to development, this included:

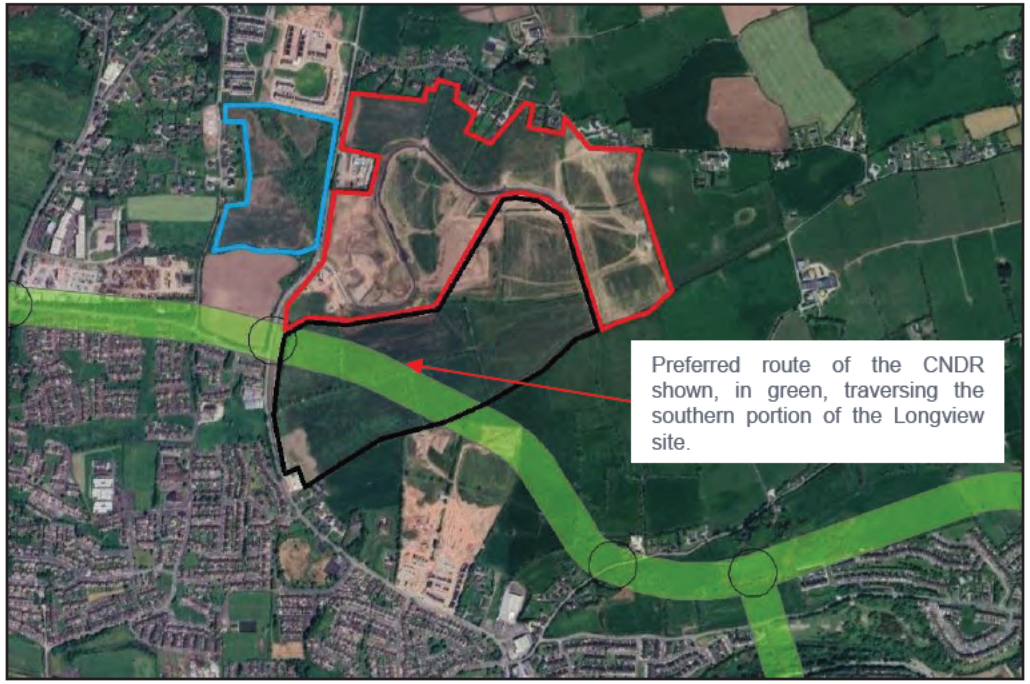
- 1km spine road with associated services & footpaths.
- Upgrade works to Ballyhooly Road.
- Installation of an Irish Water pumping station with capacity to serve up to 3,000 units, effectively covering the entire Longview Development.

The proposed Northern Distributor Road will dissect the Longview Development to the south as shown in the map.

It should be noted that the southern parts of the lands in the ownership of Longview Estates which is traversed by the by the NDR did not form part of the planning application that is currently under construction.

This shows how the subject site can be developed and in a timely fashion on receipt of planning permission.





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06 | Economic Overview

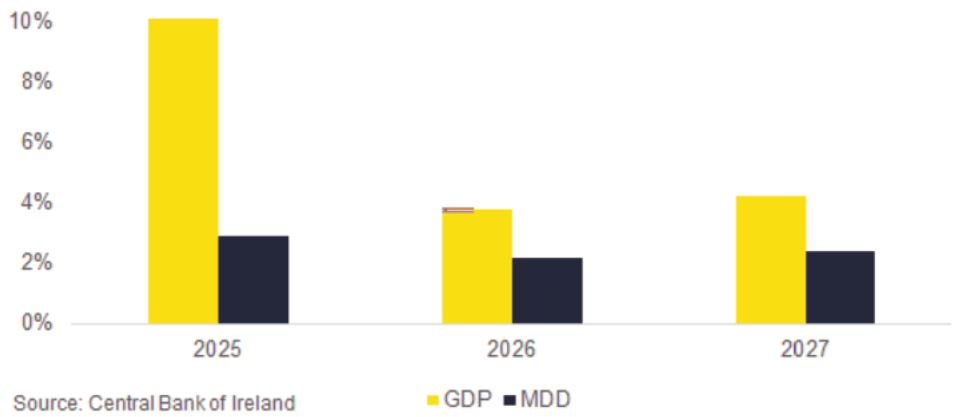
Economic Overview

Growth in the Irish economy has been strong throughout 2025, with GDP expanding by 17.1% y/y in Q2 2025, driven by a front-loading of exports to the US ahead of the introduction of trade tariffs. Meanwhile, the underlying domestic economy has also shown strength, with Modified Domestic Demand (MDD), which strips out the activities of the multinational sector, expanding by 4.4% in Q2. This represented the fastest rate of annual growth since Q2 2023 and reflected increases in both personal consumption and government spending.

The Central Bank of Ireland (CBoI) is predicting GDP growth of 10.1% in full-year 2025, followed by growth of 3.8% and 4.2% in 2026 and 2027, respectively. Meanwhile, MDD is predicted to increase by 2.9% and 2.2% this year and next.

Between June 2024 and June 2025, the European Central Bank (ECB) cut key lending rates in the Euro Area eight times in response to a significant slowdown in inflation. The last cut brought the deposit rate to 2.0%. This reflects improved underlying data with services inflation easing significantly and wage growth moderating. However, the shock of the US' tariff policy has reduced European growth expectations which may encourage the bank to further cut rates to stimulate the economy. Despite this, markets are not anticipating any further cuts in 2025, suggesting that the ECB's deposit rate could bottom out at 2.0% this year.

Figure 19: Forecast GDP and MDD



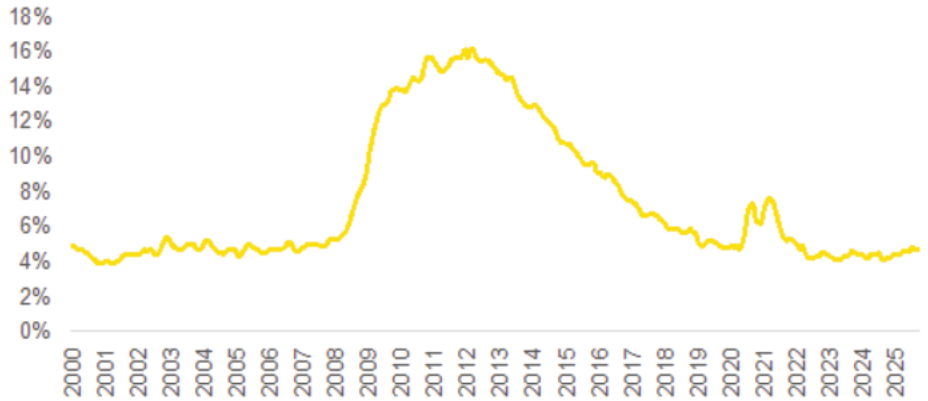
Source: Central Bank of Ireland

Labour Market

Conditions in the Irish labour market have remained tight during 2025 with record levels of employment recorded. The most recent figures from the Labour Force Survey show that the total number of individuals aged 15 years and over in employment reached 2.8 million in Q2 2025. This was 2.3% higher than a year earlier. As a result, the unemployment rate has remained low, with the monthly rate standing at 4.7% in September, albeit this represented an increase on September 2024 when the rate was 4.1%. For 2025 as a whole, the rate of unemployment is expected to remain close to the full employment level, averaging 4.6%. However, it is expected to increase slightly to 4.8% in 2026, according to forecasts from the CBoI.

Economic Overview

Figure 20: Unemployment rate



Source: CSO

Consumer Sentiment

The latest Credit Union consumer sentiment survey revealed that consumer confidence edged up fractionally in September to 61.7, from 61.1 in August. Consumers were still cautious as concerns around living costs and economic uncertainty remained. The major purchases index, which measures consumer sentiment for committing to large scale purchases such as a house or car, increased slightly in September to 93.8, up from 93.4 in August.

Overall, consumer confidence has remained largely unchanged in recent months. While inflation and interest rates are relatively stable, the impact of sustained price increases in recent years continues to weigh heavily on the finances of many Irish consumers, particularly those with modest incomes or significant financial commitments. Although any negative impact of US tariffs has yet to translate into materially changed economic conditions in Ireland, consumers remain cautious.

Looking ahead, there are grounds for some pessimism regarding household finances. Living standards will come under pressure next year due to the Budget 2026 withdrawal of temporary cost-of-living measures. According to the ESRI, there will be an estimated average household disposable income loss of 2.0% arising from the package.

Figure 21: Consumer Sentiment Index



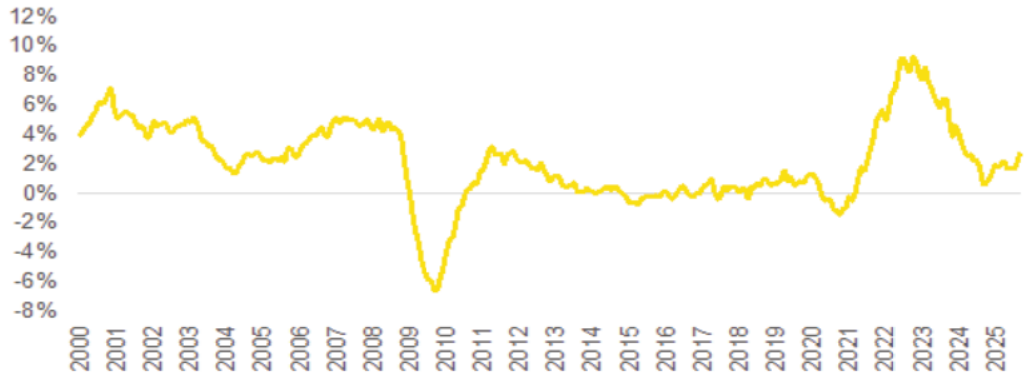
Source: Irish League of Credit Unions

Economic Overview

Inflation

The annual rate of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), has ticked up in recent months reaching 2.7% in September. This was up from a rate of 2.0% in August. This can primarily be attributed to base effects, as the September 2024 inflation reading was low. The most significant increases in the twelve months leading up September 2025 were food and non-alcoholic beverages (+4.7%), followed by clothing and footwear (+3.7%). At the same time, prices contracted by 0.6% for furnishings,household equipment and routine household maintenance. The ESRI forecasts that CPI inflation will average 2.0% in 2025 before increasing to 2.2% in 2026.

Figure 22: Annual change in CPI



Source: CSO

Conclusion

Ireland's housing supply shortage has driven price pressures across the country, including in Cork where the average price is rising faster than either the Dublin or national average. Government efforts to address the supply shortage have fallen short as evidenced by the revised NPF, which revealed that its original population forecasts undercounted growth by 250,000 people. In response, the housing target has been revised upwards to 303,000 units between 2025 and 2030, or 50,500 units per year – compared with just 33,000 units under the old target. The new target is ambitious given the fact that even the 33,000 target has not been reached, with the closest level of output being 32,500 units in 2023. That figure declined to 30,200 units in 2024 largely as a result of a decline in apartment development in Dublin. Indeed, development has been heavily concentrated in Dublin in recent years, even though the NPF aims for a 50:50 split between the Eastern region, and the Southern and Northern and Western regions combined.

For Cork City to meet its housing demands it will need to deliver at least 2,500 units per annum over the next four years.

Overall, in keeping with the national policy objective, and in addressing housing supply pressures at the local level, our view is that the proposed development at Rathpeacon is appropriate and worthy of progression.

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