

CUNNANE STRATTON REYNOLDS

*Submission to Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028*

On behalf of  
Ballyvolane Development Company Limited

by

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October 2021  
No. 20438

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## 1.0 Introduction

This submission to the Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 has been prepared by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds in accordance with section 12(2)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended.

This submission is made on behalf of our client, Ballyvolane Development Company Limited, and relates to their lands at Ballyvolane Cork which form part of Cork City administrative area following the 2019 extension to the city boundary.

## 2.0 Executive Summary

Our clients have an overall landholding of 1.47 Ha at Ballyvolane, Cork City. This land is located within a District Centre/ Retail zoning in the adopted Local Area Plan. The Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022 unjustifiably proposes to rezone these lands for Public Open Space.

We believe that there may have been deliberations in preparing the Draft Development Plan whether to retain part of our client's site within the District Centre zoning.

This submission requests that 0.49Ha of this land is included within the ***Sustainable Residential Neighbourhood*** Zoning in the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028. This part of our client's site is suitable for residential development and its residential zoning must be considered for the following reasons:

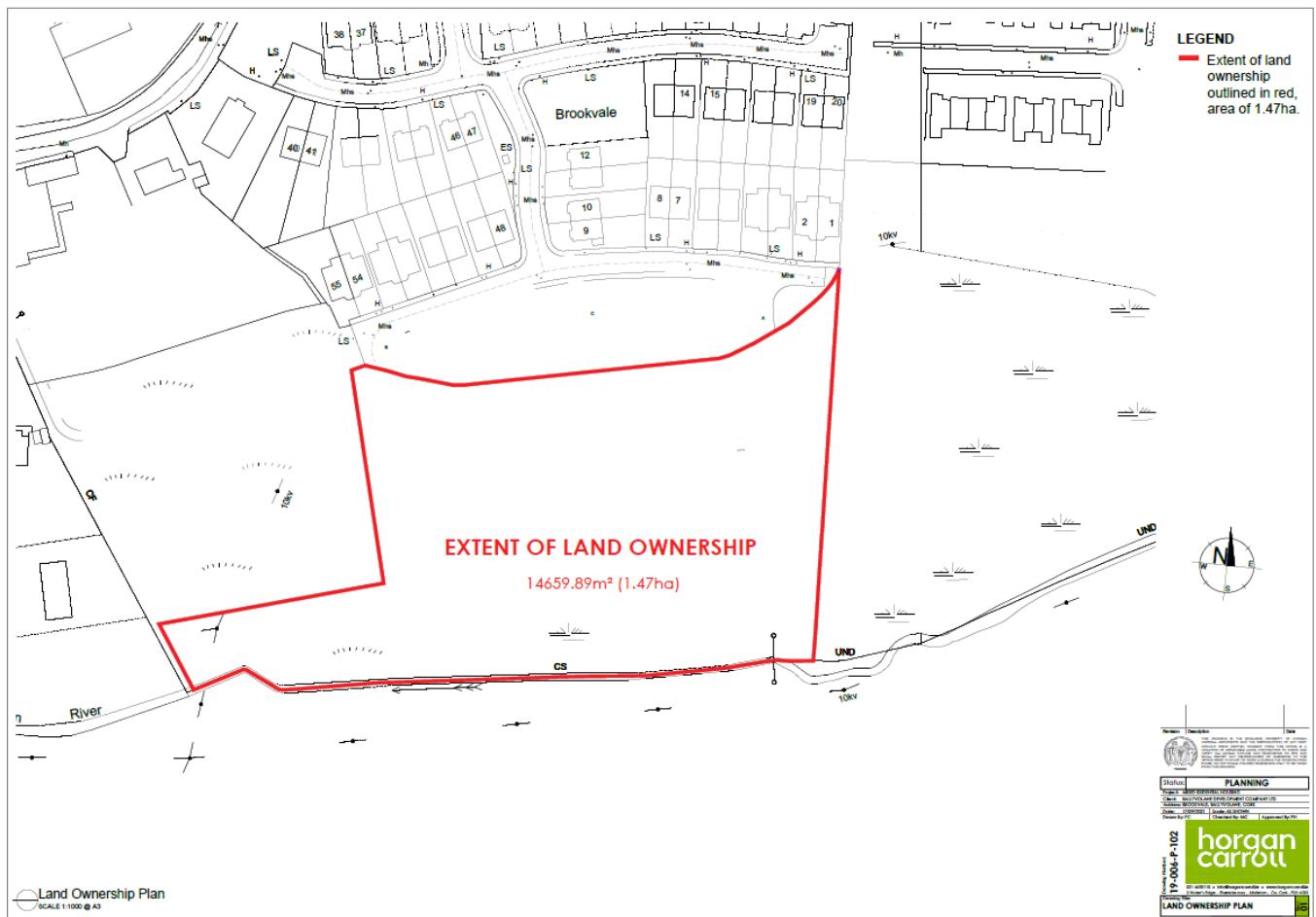
- There is an acute need for residential development within the city area. The northeastern suburbs is well served by existing open spaces and recreational areas with sufficient additional land zoned for open space in the adopted Local Area Plan. It is submitted that the inclusion of this site within open space is not necessary or required.
- The site would be categorised as Tier 1 land in accordance with the NPF and provides an opportunity to deliver a consolidated residential development close to Ballyvolane District Centre and Cork City Centre.
- The residential zoning of the site is appropriate against the considerations set out in the National Development Plan Guidelines that are relevant to proper planning and sustainable development.
- Specifically, the residential zoning of this site is consistent with the sequential approach to land use zoning.
- Cork City Council must prioritise the development of lands such as the subject site that are serviced, accessible and deliverable within the short term in the emerging Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.
- The part of the site proposed is above 0.1% AEP Flood Event (1 in 1000 chance in any given year).
- As demonstrated by this submission the complete re-zoning of the site to Open Space from District Centre / Retail zoning is not justified. It is a complete devaluation of property values, and it will result in the underuse of a sustainably located urban site.

## 3.0 Site Location and Development Context

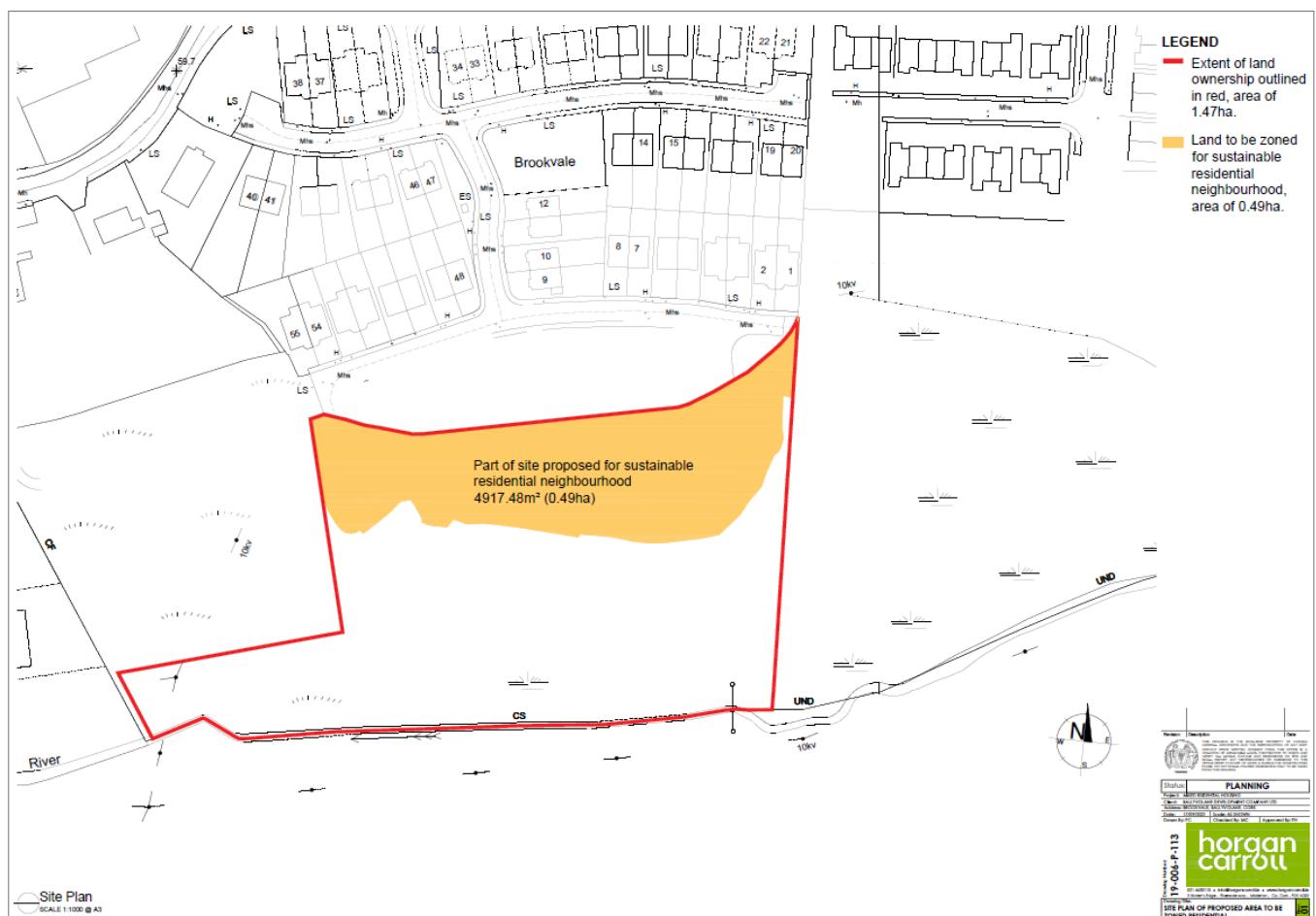
The relevant site is located in Ballyvolane within the northern environs of the city. The site is situated within the Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area (UEA) to the northeast of Cork City Centre.

The area surrounding the site is characterised by a mixture of residential, commercial and retail development and open spaces. Brookvale housing estate is directly adjacent to our client's site to the north with another estate known as Lios Rua to the northeast. Land on the opposite side of the Banduff Road to these estates is in agricultural use with established and newer residential estates further east on the Banduff Road.

**Figure 1** Ballyvolane Development Company Limited Landholding at Ballyvolane



**Figure 2 Site Subject to Zoning Request**



The site is highly accessible. There is a continuous footpath network connecting the site back to Ballyvolane. The nearest bus stop is located c.350m to the west of the site on Ballyvolane Road. This stop serves the 207-bus route. The 207 runs from Ballyvolane to Donnybrook via Cork City Centre with a terminus at Glenheights Park on Glenheights Road and a terminus at Scairt Cross, Donnybrook. This route serves Glen Rovers Hurling Club, Ballyvolane Business Park, Ballyvolane Shopping Centre, Cork City Centre and Douglas. Services depart every 30 minutes from Glenheights between 07.10 to 23.00 Monday to Saturday and on Sundays from 09.30 to 23.00.

The outbound route runs from Donnybrook to Ballyvolane through Patrick Street with the same frequency as the inbound route. The inbound route commences at Glenheights Park, travels via Ballyvolane Business Park, east along the North Ring Road, northeast along Ballyvolane Road past the shopping centre, then south along Ballyhooly Road through Dillon's Cross, St. Luke's and down Summerhill North, across Brian Boru Bridge to the bus station at Parnell Place before commencing its southbound part of the route.

Bus stops located on the North Ring Road are approximately 850m from the proposed development. These serve the 201-bus route – Cork University Hospital – Cork Institute of Technology – Wilton Road – Hollyhill – Farranree – Blackpool – Ballyvolane – Lotabeg.

The area will benefit from further sustainable transport improvements under Phase 2 of the Ballyvolane transport upgrades.

'Ballyvolane Phase 2' - the proposed improvement and upgrading of the Ballyhooly Road & Banduff Roads is currently at planning/ design phase. The works proposed will significantly enhance facilities for all road users but particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and those using public transport.

**Figure 3** Site Location Context



## 4.0 Current Planning Policy Context

### 4.1 National Planning Framework (NPF) 2018

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a key national planning policy document, providing a broad planning framework for development and population growth in Ireland. The NPF provides a series of contextual planning objectives, taking into account the future long term population growth and development needs of Ireland to 2040.

Our client's site at Ballyvolane would be defined as a Tier 1 site in the NPF approach to land zoning as land contiguous to existing residential development that is able to connect to existing development services i.e., road and footpath access including public lighting, foul sewer drainage, surface water drainage and water supply and for which there is service capacity available and is therefore ready to accommodate new development.

The residential development of our client's site would be fully consistent with a number of key National Policy Objectives (NPO's) that will deliver the NPF's overarching objective of compact growth, including the following specific objectives:

- NPO 2a – A target of 50% of future population and employment growth will be focused in the existing five cities and their suburbs
- NPO 3a – Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally, within the built-up footprint of existing settlements.
- NPO 3b – Deliver at least half (50%) of all new homes that are targeted in the five Cities and suburbs of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, within their existing built-up footprints
- NPO 4 – Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.
- NPO 33 – Prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location.

#### **4.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) 2020**

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework. In supporting the NPF, the RSES prioritises the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location. To achieve compact growth, the RSES prioritises housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.

The RSES seeks to attain sustainable compact settlements with the 10-minute city and town concepts, whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycling timeframes from homes or are accessible by high quality public transport services by connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services.

The RSES sets a population target of 283,669 for Cork City and suburbs by 2031. In accordance with the objectives of the NPF, to promote the consolidation of Cork City and suburbs, a target of a minimum of 50% of all new homes should be within the built-up footprint in Cork and 30% in other metropolitan settlements.

The RSES contains a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) for Cork. The MASP seeks to:

*“Promote the Cork Metropolitan Area as a cohesive metropolitan employment and property market where population and employment growth is integrated with: (i) the city centre as the primary location at the heart of the metropolitan area and region reinforced by; (ii) the continued regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of the city centre, Cork City Docklands, Tivoli and suburban areas; (iii) active land management initiatives to enable future infrastructure led expansion of the city and suburbs (to be assessed by Core Strategy initiatives); and, (iv) the regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of metropolitan towns and other strategic employment locations in a sustainable manner”.*

The RSES identifies the Northern Environs amongst the strategic residential and regeneration areas in the Cork MASP. A potential residential yield of 3,600 units is identified for the Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area (UEA).

#### **4.3 Cork County Development Plan 2014**

Within the current Development Plan, the site forms part of the Northern Environs within the County Metropolitan Strategic Planning Area, which as stated at paragraph 2.2.22 of the Development Plan is *“the main engine of population and employment growth for the region”*.

The North Environs of Cork City are identified as being an important part of the Cork Gateway. The strategic aims for the Cork Gateway are set out in Objective CS 3-1 Network of Settlements which for the City Environs (North and South) seeks:

*“Growth in population and employment so that the Cork Gateway can compete efficiently for investment and jobs. Develop to complement and consolidate the development of the city as a whole and providing enhanced potential to rebalance the city through new development in the north”.*

Objective CS 4-1 of the Development Plan prioritises certain locations to accommodate the planned population growth, including the North Environs, and seeks to:

*“(g) Develop the Cork City Environs so that they complement the city as a whole. In the south, priority should be given to consolidating the rapid growth that has occurred in recent years by the provision of services, social infrastructure and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the population. The North Environs will play a major role in the rebalancing of the City in terms of future population and employment growth.*

*(n) In the Cork Gateway, development to provide the homes and jobs that are necessary to serve the planned population will be prioritised in the following locations, Carrigaline (Shannon Park), Midleton (Waterock) and Carrigtwohill (north of the railway), Ballincollig (Maglin), North Environs (Ballyvolane), Glanmire (Dunkettle), Blarney (Stoneview), Monard and Cobh. Details of the proposed development will be set out in Master Plan studies and Local Area Plans as appropriate”.*

#### **4.4 Cobh Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017**

The vision for the North Environs as set out in the District LAP is to *“re-invigorate the northern suburbs of the city, within the County area, as a significant location for future residential development. This will require a planned major mixed-use development at Ballyvolane coordinated with substantial infrastructure investment, the provision of enhanced community and recreational facilities and public transport accessibility, with the aim of rebalancing the provision of services more equitably throughout the city”*.

The application site is within the Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area (UEA) which was identified in the Cork Area Strategic Plan 2008 Update as a significant growth location. The site is zoned as NE-T-01 for District Centre/ Retail. The zoning seeks to:

*“Provide a district centre with provision for an appropriate range and scale of retail and commercial facilities to support the new population and taking into consideration the existing retail developments at Fox and Hounds, Dunnes Stores and Lidl. The site should*

also allow for the development of a health centre and community hall/ facility for the new residents.

*The existing neighbourhood centre at the Fox and Hounds will form part of the district retail centre subject to the resolution of a number of issues:*

*a) Parts of this site are at risk of flooding. Any development proposals on this site will normally be accompanied by a flood risk assessment that complies with Chapter 5 of the Ministerial Guidelines 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management'.*

*b) Provision should be made on site, for improved recreational facilities, including informal public recreation with the provision of a pedestrian walk along the Glen River. Any proposals should protect the Glen River Valley, an area considered to be should protect the Glen River Valley, an area considered to be of high landscape value"*

**Figure 4** Cobh Municipal District Local Area Plan Zoning Map



## 5.0 Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

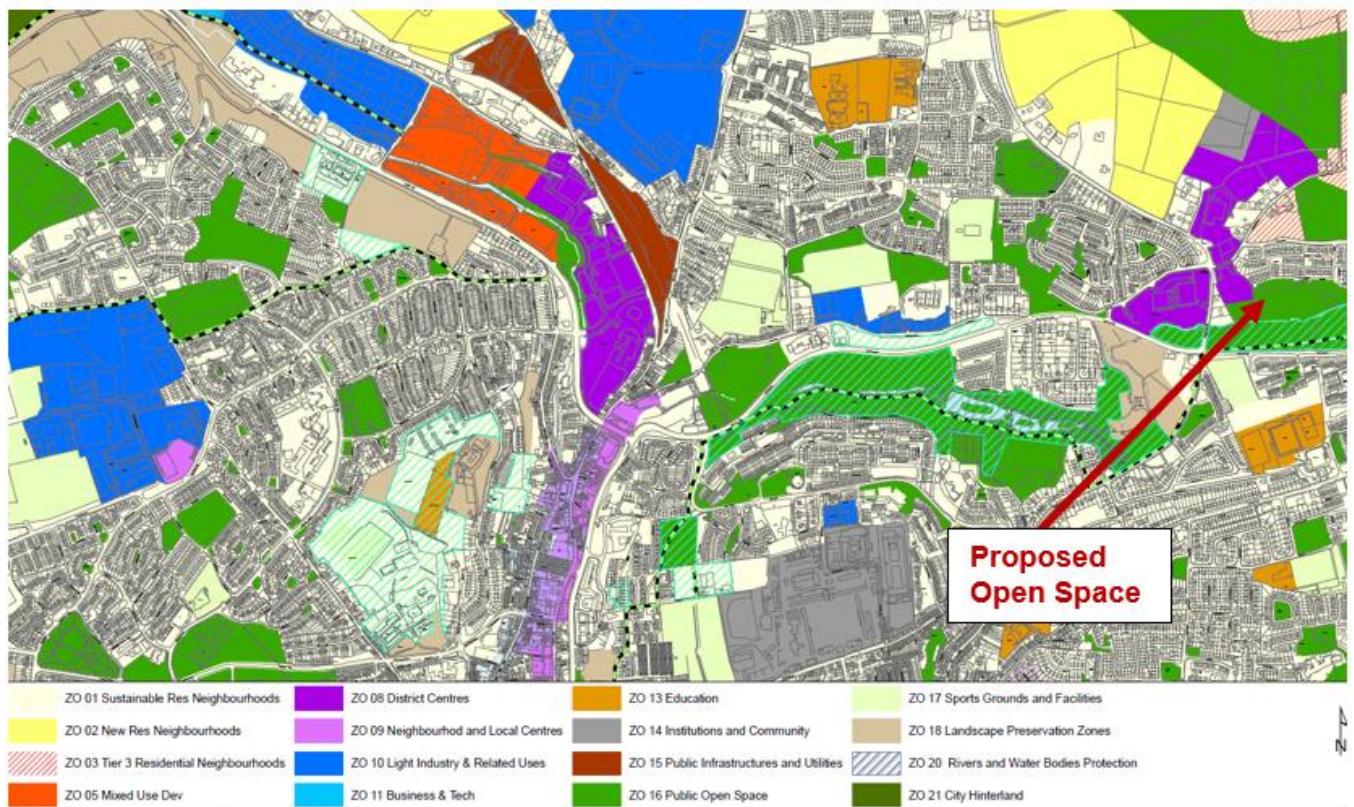
Lands at Ballyvolane will assist in meeting the now urgent housing needs of the growing city population. The importance of these lands is reflected by Objective 10.72 of the Draft City Development Plan which aims:

*"To support the compact growth and development of Ballyvolane East and West Expansion Areas as strategic City consolidation and expansion areas, as identified in the Core Strategy. All development shall be designed, planned and delivered in a co-ordinated and phased manner, using a layout and mix of uses that form part of an emerging neighbourhood integrated with the wider area".*

The Core Strategy identifies Ballyvolane (East) and Ballyvolane (West) as strategic areas in the consolidation and expansion of the City Centre. The Core Strategy indicates that the northeast suburbs will cater for the highest level of growth in the city and suburbs over the period of the Development Plan. It is stated that the population will grow by 8,720 persons (or 32%) in the Northeast Suburbs. This is the second highest level of growth across the entire Cork City administrative area (17.6% of overall growth).

The Draft Cork City Plan 2022-2028 proposes to rezone our client's site from District Centre/Retail to Public Open Space. The proposed relevant policy objective ZO 16 seeks "to protect, retain and provide for passive and active recreational uses, open space, green networks, natural areas and amenity facilities".

**Figure 5** Draft Cork City Development Plan Zoning Map 04



## 6.0 Our Clients Case for the Residential Zoning of their Site

Having regard to the development strategy for Cork City and the achievement of wider regional and national planning policies and objectives, we disagree with the proposed zoning of our client's site as Public Open Space in the Draft Cork City Development Plan.

This submission requests that 0.49Ha of land within the ownership of Ballyvolane Development Company Limited is zoned to facilitate residential development.

The current Development Plan Guidelines set out the matters that should be considered when determining the suitability of lands for zoning in the preparation of development plans as follows:

- **Need**
- **Policy Context**
- **Capacity of Water, Drainage and Roads Infrastructure**
- **Supporting Infrastructure and Facilities**
- **Physical Suitability**
- **Sequential Approach**
- **Environmental and Heritage Policy, including Conservation of Habitats and other Sensitive Areas.**

Our client's site is considered in more detail against these factors below. It is submitted that the site is appropriate for residential development and provides an opportunity to facilitate high quality homes contiguous to the existing built-up area and within proximity of Cork City Centre.

### 6.1 Need

The Draft Cork Joint Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment notes that the current property market cycle has been marked by a supply/demand mismatch. Under-supply has become a serious issue, particularly in key urban areas. This has remained the case over much of the period since 2014 with new home construction remaining well below the long-term.

The strategy estimates that the total housing demand over the plan period is determined to be 17,118 households or 2,853 households per annum. It is indicated within the Draft Housing Strategy and Volume 1 of the Draft Plan that the North-East Suburbs will play a major role in accommodating housing growth in Cork City

As a location that can prioritise walking, cycling and public transport access, Ballyvolane has been identified as a strategic area within the City Suburbs that can deliver the housing need identified within the emerging Core Strategy. It is stated that the population will grow by 8,720 persons (or 32%) in the Northeast Suburbs of the City over the plan period.

Our client's site at Ballyvolane is very well situated to benefit from existing and proposed public infrastructure and accessible to the Ballyvolane District Centre. The site provides an opportunity to deliver high quality homes as a sustainable extension to existing development in the area to help meet an acute housing need in this area. Delivery of new housing units is seen as a key area of housing for all Government and Local Authority Housing Policy.

We do not believe that the entire rezoning of our client's site to Public Open Space is necessary or required. It is submitted that there is already a significant overprovision of land designated for public open space in the north-eastern suburbs of the city when compared against the projected population for the area. The LAP confirms that there are 60Ha proposed

for open space in the Ballyvolane Urban Expansion Area. There are also significant additional areas indicated for open space in the northeast suburbs in the draft plan.

Having regard to the above, the acute need for housing in this area must take priority over the provision of public open space of which there is a significant amount.

## **6.2 Policy Context**

The residential development of our client's site would be consistent with the relevant national, regional and local planning policies and guidance as demonstrated within this submission. Ballyvolane is designated as a strategic residential location within regional and local planning policies.

National policies prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location. The NPF seeks that 50% of the future population will be accommodated within the cities and their suburban areas to curtail the adverse impacts of sprawling urban areas.

The residential development of this site would positively contribute to the fifteen-minute city/walkable neighbourhood concept whereby a range of facilities and services such as employment, local shops and neighbourhood infrastructure are accessible within a 15-minute walk or cycle or trip using public transport. The development of this site would also be underpinned by recent and future public transport projects for the area including the ambitious plans set out in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS).

## **6.3 Capacity of Water, Drainage and Roads Infrastructure**

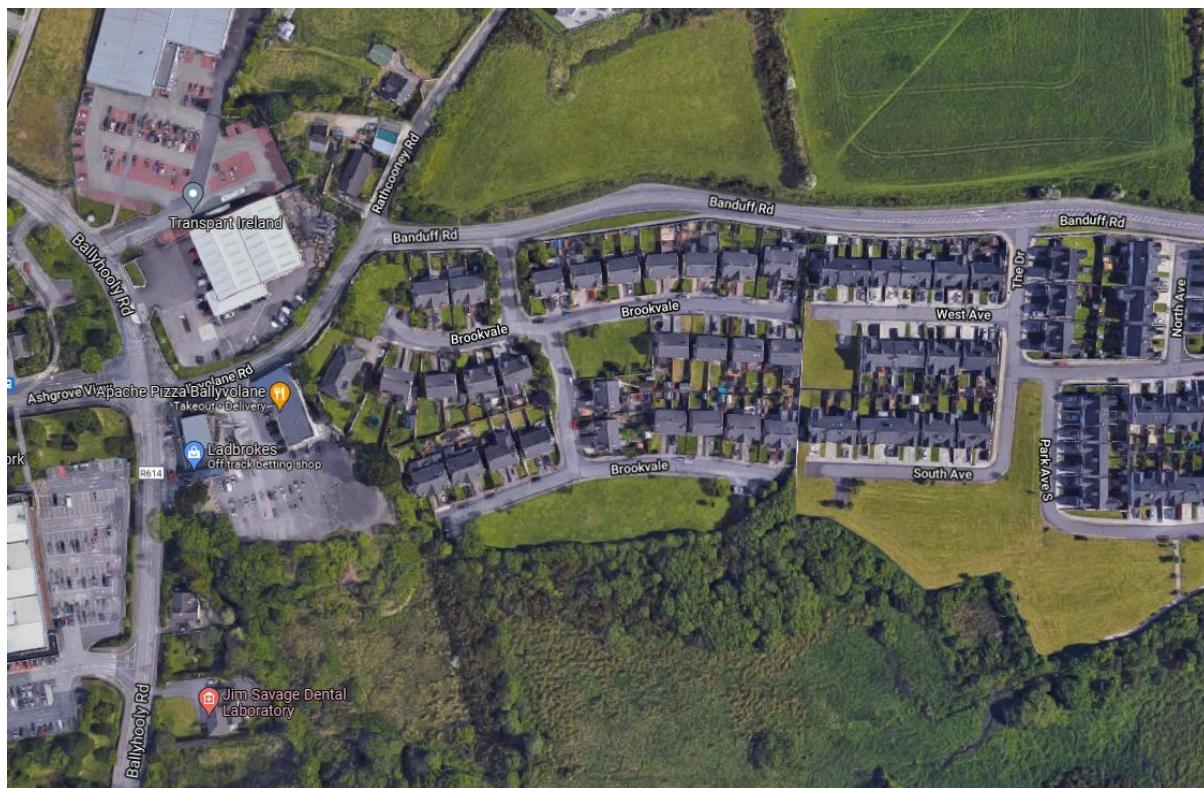
Our client's site would be categorised within the Tier 1 – serviced zoned land category defined within the National Planning Framework as lands that are able to connect to existing development services, i.e., road and footpath access including public lighting, foul sewer drainage, surface water drainage and water supply, for which there is service capacity available, and can therefore accommodate new development.

These lands will generally be positioned within the existing built-up footprint of a settlement or contiguous to existing developed lands. The location and geographical extent of such lands shall be determined by the planning authority at a settlement scale as an integral part of the plan-making process and shall include assessment of available development services.

The site can be easily serviced, and this has been demonstrated by previous planning applications including Cork City Council ref. 20/39295. For that proposed development of 21 no. residential units, Irish Water did not raise any objection with regard to service connections. It was indicated that there was capacity in the network and that a connection could be facilitated. Irish Water noted that in order to facilitate a connection to the wastewater network an upgrade to the Ballyvolane Pumping Station is necessary. A major pumping station has been permitted as part of a large planning consent to the north of Ballyvolane. This pumping station and rising main has been designed to serve 3000+ units with potentially 10000+ units in the future with further enhancements.

Regarding roads infrastructure, there is potential to access our client's site from existing residential developments to the north of the site as indicated in Figure 6.

**Figure 6** Potential Access from North of the Site



#### 6.4 Supporting Infrastructure and Facilities

The Development Plan Guidelines state that consideration must be given to the future availability of, or the capacity to provide, supporting infrastructure, such as community facilities, healthcare, schools, public open space, retail and other service provision and public transport when allocating land for development.

Our clients' lands at Ballyvolane are well located with convenient access to community facilities and services including the following:

- Schools including Scoil Oilibhéir, Cara Junior School, St Aidan's Community College and Mayfield Community School;
- Shopping facilities such as Dunnes Stores, Supervalu, Lidl, Top Oil and Applegreen;
- Sports and Leisure Facilities including the Glen Resource and Sports Centre, Mayfield Sports Complex, Leeds AFC, Glen Rovers GAA club and Delaney's GAA Club;
- Amenity areas and open spaces – Nash's Boreen, the Glen Park and Kempton Park.

The major employment centres of Cork City Centre and Blackpool/ Kilbarry including North Point Business Park, City North Business Park, Blackpool Retail Park and Shopping Centre and Kilbarry Business Park are all within close proximity of the site and are well connected by public transport.

#### 6.5 Physical Suitability

The proposed development of our client's site would make efficient use of existing and committed infrastructure in the area including public transport and wastewater services.

In terms of physical suitability, there are no known constraints to the development of this part of our client's landholding. The site is within a District Centre/ Retail zoning in the adopted LAP and is therefore deemed to be suitable for development.

It is noted that our client's wider landholding is partially impacted by flood risk issues. However, although the site the subject of this zoning request borders flood zones A and B, it is not located within either of these flood zones. A comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment was carried out by Byrne Looby Engineering Consultants for the development proposed under ref. 20/39295 and it was concluded that a justification test was not required as the site is not located within either flood zone A or B. It was determined that the proposed residential development was compatible and would provide for the objectives of the LAP and that the development would not increase flood risk elsewhere.

## 6.6 Sequential Approach

The Development Plan Guidelines state that zoning should extend outwards from the centre of an urban area, with undeveloped lands closest to the core and public transport routes, such as our client's site, being given preference. Areas to be zoned should be contiguous to existing zoned development lands.

Our client's site at Ballyvolane is contiguous to zoned lands and surrounded by established development to the north/ north east and west of the site. As indicated above, the site is very accessible and proximate to services and facilities that support residential development. The nearest bus stop is located just 350m, a short walk, to the west of the site on Ballyvolane Road

Our client's site is sequentially preferable to more peripheral zoned sites throughout Cork City and the opportunities presented by such sites must be maximised in accordance with national guidance.

## 6.7 Environmental and Heritage Policy

There are no flooding issues or known environmental issues or significant biodiversity sensitivities associated with our client's site. An Ecological Impact Assessment was carried out by Greenleaf Ecology for the development proposed under ref. 20/39295. This assessment concludes that provided that the mitigation measures provided are effectively implemented, negative ecological impacts as a result of the proposed development would have been limited to the permanent loss of c.0.4ha of scrub. This was not considered to be a significant residual impact.

Having regard to the above, the proposed zoning of the site for residential development is considered to be appropriate.

## 7.0 Conclusion

Ballyvolane Development Company Limited welcome the opportunity to participate in the development plan making process. It is requested that the content of this submission be given careful consideration during the preparation of the Cork City Development Plan 2022.

In summary, the submission requests that our clients' lands at Ballyvolane are partially zoned (c.0.49Ha) as **Sustainable Residential Neighbourhood** in the emerging Cork City Development Plan 2022.

Our client would welcome the opportunity to discuss any of the above recommendations in further detail with Cork City Council.

If any further information is required, please do not hesitate to contact us.