

Development Plan Submission,
Strategic and Economic Development
Cork City Council
City Hall
Anglesea Street
Cork
T12 T007

Monday, 4th October 2021
[By Online submission]

-: CORK CITY DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022 – 2028:-

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: SUBMISSION TO THE CORK CITY DRAFT DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022 – 2028 IN RESPECT OF EXISTING LIDL FOODSTORE LANDS AT WEST CITY RETAIL PARK, INNISHMORE, BALLINCOLLIG, CORK

Lidl Ireland GmbH – Site Specific Zoning Submission to extend the proposed ZO 9 Neighbourhood and Local Centre of the existing Lidl Foodstore Lands at West City Retail Park, Innishmore, Ballincollig, Cork

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Planning Partnership, The Coach House, Dundanion, Blackrock Road, Cork City are instructed by **Lidl Ireland GmbH**, Head Office, Main Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, to prepare this *Site Specific Submission* in relation to the ongoing Cork City Development Plan Review process and the publication of the subsequent *Cork City Draft Development Plan 2022-2028*.

1.1 Focus of the Submission

The purpose of this submission is to seek the extension of the proposed *ZO 9 Neighbourhood and Local Centre* of the existing Lidl Foodstore Lands to reflect the existing permitted pattern of established retail provisions at West City Retail Park, Innishmore, Ballincollig, Cork, and that such be reflected/presented within the new *Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028*.

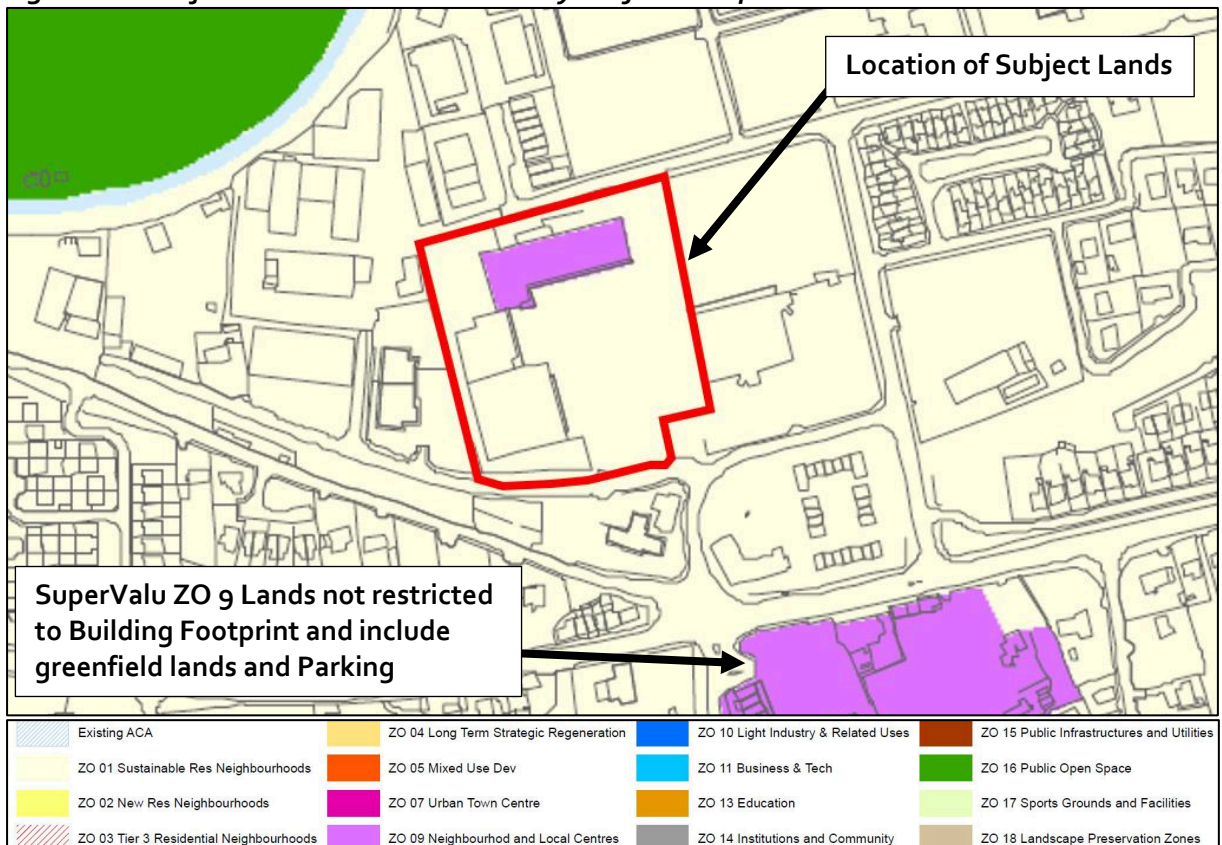
Restricting the proposed *ZO 9 Neighbourhood and Local Centre* the footprint of the current Lidl Foodstore does not facilitate for any redevelopment/expansion opportunity of the existing West City Retail Park, inhibits competition, preserves existing commercial interests, and prevents innovation, which is contrary to the *Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)*. It is further noted that the SuperValu proposed *ZO 9 Neighbourhood and Local Centre* Lands are not restricted to the current Building Footprint and include greenfield lands and the parking areas.

The location and extent of the subject lands, which are in the ownership of Lidl Ireland GmbH, is identified within **Figure 1.1**, and within the *Cork City Draft Development Plan 2022 – 2028* as per **Figure 1.2** and the redevelopment of the West City Retail Park buildings are currently the subject of a Redevelopment Planning Application under Cork City Council Plan. Reg. Ref. No.: 21/40174.

Figure 1.1: Location of the Subject Lands



Source: ESRI ArcGIS, Annotated and Reproduced under Licence by The Planning Partnership, October 2021

Figure 1.2: Subject Lands within the *Cork City Draft Development Plan 2022 – 2028*

Source: *Cork City Draft Development Plan 2022 – 2028*, Zoning Map – extracted, annotated and reproduced by The Planning Partnership under OS Licence No. AR0114721

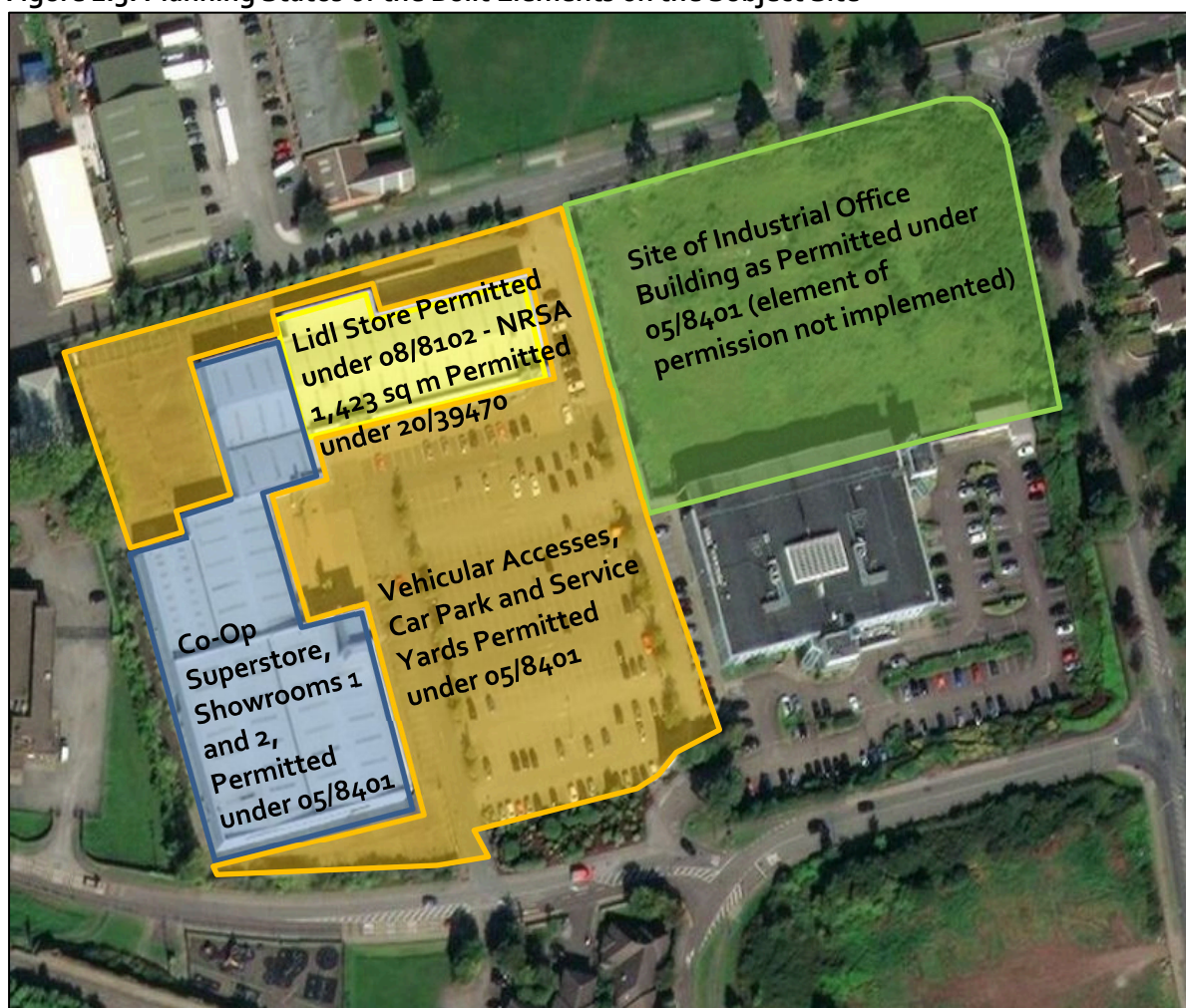
1.2 Relevant Planning History – Background Rationale

Although the planning history associated with the subject site can be traced back to the 1970's, the current as-built format of the site has its origins in 3 no. relevant Planning Permissions. The presence of a permitted Licenced Discount Foodstore confirms the principle of convenience retail established on the subject site and as part of the overall City West Retail Park development.

There is one current live Planning Permissions relating to the subject site, i.e. Cork City Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 20/39470 which facilitates an increase of the Lidl Licence Foodstore Net Retail Sales Area to 1,423 sq m, and an active Application for Planning Permission to redevelopment the West City Retail Park buildings currently under consideration under Cork City Council Plan. Reg. Ref. No.: 21/40174.

Figure 1.3 below illustrates the various built elements on the subject site and confirms the Planning Permission under which the construction (and use) of each has been authorised/principle established.

Figure 1.3: Planning Status of the Built Elements on the Subject Site



Source: ESRI ArcGIS Reproduced and Annotated Under Licence by The Planning Partnership October 2021

File Ref No:	Cork City Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 21/40174
Applicant:	Lidl Ireland GmbH
Date Lodged:	10 th August 2020
Development Description:	Permission for development (total 5,081 sq m gross floor space) comprising the amalgamation and part demolition/extension of two existing single storey retail units (Unit No. 1 and Unit No. 2) to facilitate the relocation of the existing Lidl

	Licenced Discount Foodstore, the change of use of all existing single storey retail units with associated internal and external alterations, subdivision of existing single storey retail unit (Unit No. 4) into two retail units, a new Café/Coffee Shop building, the repositioning of an enhanced entrance from Mechterstadt Road with amendments to part of the existing surface car park area and internal vehicular circulation route affected.
Decision Date:	Awaiting
Outcome:	Awaiting
Status:	Current at Request for Further Information Stage

File Ref No:	Cork City Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 20/39470
Applicant:	Lidl Ireland GmbH
Date Lodged:	10 th August 2020
Development Description:	Permission for development comprising internal alterations to the existing Ballincollig Lidl Licenced Discount Foodstore at a site of approximately 0.214 ha located at West City Retail Park, Mechterstadt Road, Innishmore, Ballincollig, Cork. The development will consist of: The internal reconfiguration of the existing Licenced Discount Foodstore by demolishing an existing internal wall between the existing storage area and retail sales area, and the construction of a new internal wall resulting in a reduction in the storage floor area from 278 sqm to 136 sqm (a reduction of 142 sqm) and an increase in the Net Retail Sales Area from 1,276 sqm to 1,423 sqm (an increase of 147 sqm).
Decision Date:	5 th October 2020
Outcome:	Planning Permission Granted subject to Condition by Cork City Council.
Status:	Current Live Planning Permission

File Ref No:	Cork County Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 11/4882
Applicant:	Peleton Developments Ltd.
Date Lodged:	26 th April 2011
Development Description:	Completion of demolition of existing vacant Topp's buildings, construction of single new co-op store/retail warehouse, stock room with associated garden centre, construction of 4 no. showrooms, erection of an industrial office building on north eastern portion of site, the use of existing vehicular access and provision of 2 no. additional vehicular accesses, the erection of totem sign and southern entrance, all associated carparking, service yards and site development works permitted under Planning Reg. No. 05/8401
Decision Date:	20 th June 2011
Outcome:	Planning Permission Granted subject to Condition by Cork County Council.
Status:	Planning Permission expired on 3 rd May 2016 without being implemented.

File Ref No:	Cork County Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 08/8102
Applicant:	Declan McElhinney
Date Lodged:	25 th July 2008
Development Description:	Amalgamation, extension and change of use of existing showrooms 3 and 4 and portion of showroom 2 previously permitted under 05/8401 to provide for discount foodstore incorporating off licence, internal alterations to showroom 2, elevational alterations, provision of trolley bay, bin storage, compactor and all associated signage and site development works.
Decision Date:	21 st October 2008
Outcome:	Planning Permission Granted subject to no Conditions by Cork County Council.
Status:	Planning Permission implemented in full.

File Ref No:	Cork County Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 05/8401
Applicant:	Peleton Developments Ltd.
Date Lodged:	15 th November 2005
Development Description:	Demolition of existing vacant Topp's building and construction of single new Co-Op store/retail warehouse, stock room with associated garden centre, 4 no. showrooms. Erection of an industrial office building on the north eastern portion of the site, the use of existing vehicular access and provision of 2 no. additional vehicular accesses, the erection of totem sign and southern entrance, all associated car parking, service yards and site development works.
Decision Date:	4 th May 2006
Outcome:	Planning Permission Granted subject to Condition by Cork County Council.
Status:	<p>This Planning Permission was partially implemented prior to its expiration in May 2016 (having been extended under Cork County Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 11/4882. The following elements were implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The demolition of the existing Topp's Building; • The construction of a Co-Op store/retail warehouse, etc.; • The construction of 4 no. showrooms (2 of which were subsequently amalgamated and altered to accommodate the existing Lidl store on the subject site); and • The vehicular accesses, signage, car parking and service yards. <p>The industrial office building as permitted under this Planning Permission was never constructed.</p>

1.3 Permitted Uses – existing permitted retail use is key

Noting planning history and the current built format of the subject site, the following uses are permitted:

- **Convenience retail** (Lidl Licenced Discount Foodstore with ancillary infrastructure and signage as permitted under Cork County Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 08/8102);
- **Retail warehousing/garden centre** (the vacant Co-Op store unit along with Showrooms 1 and 2 as permitted under Cork County Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 05/8401); and
- **Ancillary car parking, service yards and signage** (permitted under Cork County Council Planning Reg. Ref. No. 05/8401 as an ancillary use to the permitted use of the development for retail warehousing/garden centre/convenience retail

West City Retail Park located in Ballincollig, Cork, has been subject to significant retail vacancy in recent years with the closing of the Co-op Store/Retail Warehouse/Garden Centre from the premises, as well as the vacating of the Showrooms. Lidl Ireland GmbHs Foodstore is the only unit which has continuously been trading since opening end 2008, being constructed/implemented as part of a wider retail development known as City West Retail Park.

The value which the Irish consumer places on the Lidl service offering is evidenced by the consistent and continuing growth in its market share throughout Ireland. Lidl Ireland GmbH acquired the entire West City Retail Park development during the course of last year, and it is within the context of ensuring the quality of the customer experience that the proposed development should be seen.

Figure 1.4: Existing Lidl Store, West City Retail Park, Ballincollig



Source: The Planning Partnership 6th December 2019

Figure 1.5: Existing Co-op Store/Retail Warehouse/Garden Centre, West City Retail Park, Ballincollig



Source: The Planning Partnership 6th December 2019

Figure 1.6: Existing Showrooms, West City Retail Park, Ballincollig



Source: The Planning Partnership 6th December 2019

2.0 NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT

The following relevant extracts from national and local policy supports the current submission.

2.1 National Planning Framework – Project Ireland

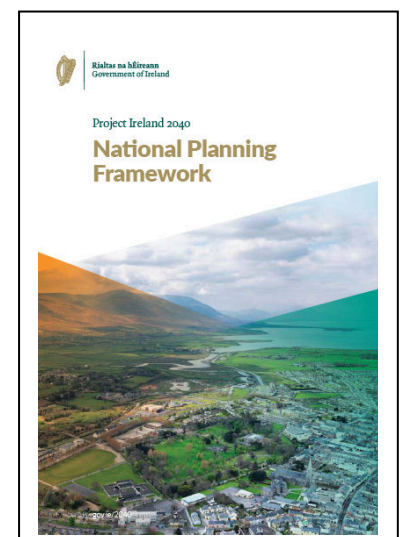
NPO 4: *Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.*

NPO 5: *Develop cities and towns of sufficient scale and quality to compete internationally and to be drivers of national and regional growth, investment and prosperity.*

NPO 6: *Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.*

NPO 11: *In meeting urban development requirements, there will be a presumption in favour of development that can encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing cities, towns and villages, subject to development meeting appropriate planning standards and achieving targeted growth.*

NPO 27: *Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activities for all ages.*



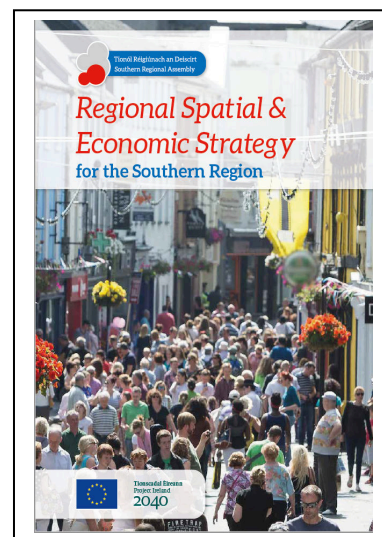
NPO 28: Plan for a more diverse and socially inclusive society that targets equality of opportunity and a better quality of life for all citizens, through improved integration and greater accessibility in the delivery of sustainable communities and the provision of associated services.

2.2 Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

RPO 2 Planning for Diverse Areas: The RSES recognises the strategic role played by all areas, both urban and rural, in achieving the set regional and national targets and objectives. The RSES supports sustainable enterprise growth, services, physical and social infrastructure investment and the sustainable growth of all communities in the Region. The overall strategy builds on cities and their associated metropolitan areas as engines of growth and seeks, in parallel, to re-position the Region's strong network of towns, villages and diverse rural areas in an economically resilient, imaginative and smart way to foster sustainable competitive advantage.

RPO 10 Compact Growth in Metropolitan Areas: To achieve compact growth, the RSES seeks to:

- a. Prioritise housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing city footprints where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling.
- b. Identify strategic initiatives in Local Authority Core Strategies for the MASP areas, which will achieve the compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites at a minimum and achieve the growth targets identified in each MASP. Such strategic initiatives shall comply with MASP Goals to evolve innovative approaches for all MASPs. Initiatives may include:
 - Support the creation and role of Active Land Management Units with a remit to focus on the metropolitan areas and compact growth targets;
 - Partnerships with the Land Development Agency to progress housing and employment delivery in city and town centres, focusing on co-ordinating and developing large, strategically located, publicly owned land banks, reducing vacancy and increasing regeneration of key sites;
 - Support the role of the local authority as a development agency to kick start regeneration processes;
 - Seek design competitions for key strategic sites that deliver greater density, mixed uses where appropriate, sustainable design, smart technology, green infrastructure and public gain through good design;
 - The identification of public realm and site regeneration initiatives which combine, on an area wide basis, opportunities for regeneration of private owned underutilised sites, public owned underutilised sites, private and public buildings and upgrade of parks, streetscapes and public realm areas; and
 - Creation of continually updated databases identifying brownfield, infill sites, regeneration areas and infrastructure packages to enable progress towards achieving compact growth targets. Through active land management initiatives, identify strategic locations for residential growth responding to the growth targets and achievement of compact growth and employment growth.



RPO 55 Retail: *It is an objective to:*

- a. *Improve the physical appearance, vitality and vibrancy of city centre, town centre and village locations through collaboration between Planning Authorities and Retail Traders Associations in regeneration / public realm projects and other measures;*
- b. *Ensure that retail development is focussed on urban and village centres with the application of a sequential approach to consideration of retail development which does not fall into this category;*
- c. *Prepare Retail Strategies in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines including Joint Retail Strategies where applicable. Proposed public realm or urban regeneration projects should be assessed for potential impacts on the receiving environment including capacity of existing services at project level. Where public realm or urban regeneration projects would significantly increase shopper/visitor numbers, planning authorities should ensure that projects include sustainable management of increased demand for access to city/town centre locations.*

RPO 62 Location for Employment Development: *It is an objective to:*

- b- *Identify future locations for strategic employment development having regard to accessibility by sustainable transport modes and environmental constraints.*

2.3 Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)

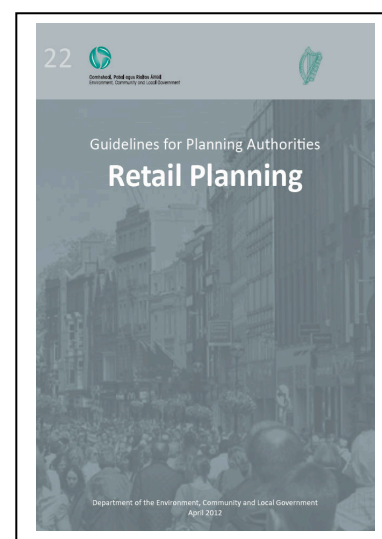
2.5.3 Competitiveness in the Retail Sector: *Strong competition is essential to reduce retail costs and ensure that savings are passed on to retail customers through lower prices. Competition also promotes innovation and productivity.*

The planning system should not be used to inhibit competition, preserve existing commercial interests or prevent innovation. In interpreting and implementing these Guidelines, planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála should avoid taking actions which would adversely affect competition in the retail market. In particular, when the issue of trade diversion is being considered in the assessment of a proposed retail development, planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála should assess the likelihood of any adverse impacts on the vitality and viability of the city or town centre as a whole, and not on existing traders.

2.5.4 Encouraging Sustainable Travel: *While the private car tends to be attractive for activities such as more substantial convenience goods shopping or bringing home bulky goods, careful location of retail developments and attention to detail in terms of how they are connected by footpaths and cycle facilities to surrounding areas can substantially boost trips on foot or bicycle for smaller purchases and make a substantial difference in encouraging smarter travel in line with the Smarter Travel strategy.*

2.5.5 Retail Development and Urban Design: *Quality design aims to create attractive, inclusive, durable, adaptable places for people to work in, to live in, to shop in, or pass through.*

Planning authorities should promote quality design in retailing in their development plan and/or retail strategies and then implement this through the development



management process. This is of particular importance for retail development because of the dominant visual and use role it plays in a city, town or village streetscape.

3.3 Development Plans and Retailing: The function of the development plan is to establish an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of its area.

Specifically in relation to retailing, the development plan must be:

- Evidence-based through supporting analysis and data to guide decision making;
- Consistent with the approach of these guidelines; and
- Clear and concise with regard to specific objectives and requirements.

5- Set out strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development to support the settlement hierarchy, including where appropriate identifying opportunity sites which are suitable and available and which match the future retailing needs of the area;

7- Mobility management measures- that both improve accessibility of retail areas while aiming to develop a pedestrian and cyclist friendly urban environment and vibrant street life.

4.4 Sequential Approach to the Location of Retail Development:

City and Town Centres: The centres of cities and towns are the most suitable locations for the higher order fashion and comparison goods and are the most accessible locations for the majority of the catchment population. They should be supported in maintaining and expanding their retail offer to serve that population in a sustainable way which will also help to reduce the need to travel.

4.9 Retail Impact Assessment: However, where a planning authority considers an application for planning permission to develop a new retail development to be particularly large in scale compared to the existing city/town/district centre, or where a retail strategy or development plan has allocated a specific type and quantum of retail floorspace to a particular settlement and a proposed development absorbs on one site the bulk of that potential retail floorspace, the planning authority may request the applicant, by way of a Retail Impact Assessment (RIA) as set out in Annex 5, to demonstrate compliance with the development plan and that there will not be a material and unacceptable adverse impact on the vitality and viability of any existing centre. This is a matter for careful technical assessment and professional judgement.

4.11.5 Retailing in Small Towns and Villages: The role of small towns and villages in the provision of retail services to their local urban and rural populations should be defined in development plans. Where appropriate, the maximum size of store, consistent with maintaining a variety of shops in the centre of these towns and villages and protecting an appropriate level of retail provision in the rural area, should be identified. In general there should be a clear presumption stated in favour of central or edge-of-centre locations for new developments.

4.11.6 Local Retail Units: Local retail units such as corner shops or shops located in local or neighbourhood centres serving local residential districts perform an important function in urban areas. Where a planning authority can substantiate the local importance of such units in defined local centres, they should safeguard them in development plans, through appropriate land-use zoning. Development management decisions should support the provision of such units, particularly where they encompass both food-stores and important non-food outlets such as retail pharmacies, and have significant social and economic functions in improving access to local facilities especially for the elderly and persons with mobility impairments, families with small children, and those without access to private transport.

2.4 Cork City Draft Development Plan 2022 – 2028

Objective 2.8 The 15-Minute City: To support the delivery of a 15-Minute City delivering Compact Liveable Growth through walkable neighbourhoods, towns and communities with a mix of uses, house types and tenures that foster a diverse, resilient, socially inclusive and responsive city. Strategic infrastructure and large-scale developments shall demonstrate how they contribute to a 15-minute city and enhance Cork City's liveability.

Objective 2.10 Mix of uses: Support the delivery of a diverse mix of suitable uses that enhance Cork City's network of neighbourhoods, towns and communities as places to live, work, provide, care, learn and enjoy.

Objective 7.30 Neighbourhood and Local Centres: To support, promote and protect Neighbourhood and Local Centres which play an important role in the local shopping role for residents and provide a range of essential day to day services and facilities. It is also aimed to support and facilitate the designation of new Neighbourhood and Local Centres where significant additional population growth is planned or where a demonstrable gap in existing provision is identified, subject to the protection of residential amenities of the surrounding area and that they are adequately served by sustainable transport. Proposals should demonstrate the appropriateness of the site by means of a Sequential Test, demonstrate retail impact and provide for a mix of uses appropriate to the scale of the centre.

Objective 7.36 Vibrant and Mixed-use Centres: a- To encourage a vibrant mix of uses, while retaining a healthy mix of retail uses within the designated centres and ensure they appropriately serve their population catchments.

b- To invest in and activate the public realm, while promoting accessibility and encouraging sustainable modes of transport as a means to travel to designated centres. This would encourage multi-purpose shopping, business and leisure trips as part of the same journey.

c- To support the independent retailing sector by continuing to provide financial support, skills training and education through the Local Enterprise Office and other means.

e- It is an objective to support and promote the use of on-street / outdoor markets in appropriate City Centre locations and the suburban District Centres and to pursue the development of a Market Strategy



2.5 Extending the proposed ZO 9 Neighbourhood and Local Centre of the existing Lidl Foodstore Lands to reflect the existing permitted pattern of established retail provisions at West City Retail Park, Innishmore, Ballincollig, Co. Cork

As detailed within the *Cork City Draft Development Plan 2022 – 2028*, the objective and vision for **Neighbourhood and Local Centres** land use zoning are:

ZO 9 – Neighbourhood and Local Centres: To protect, provide for or improve local facilities.

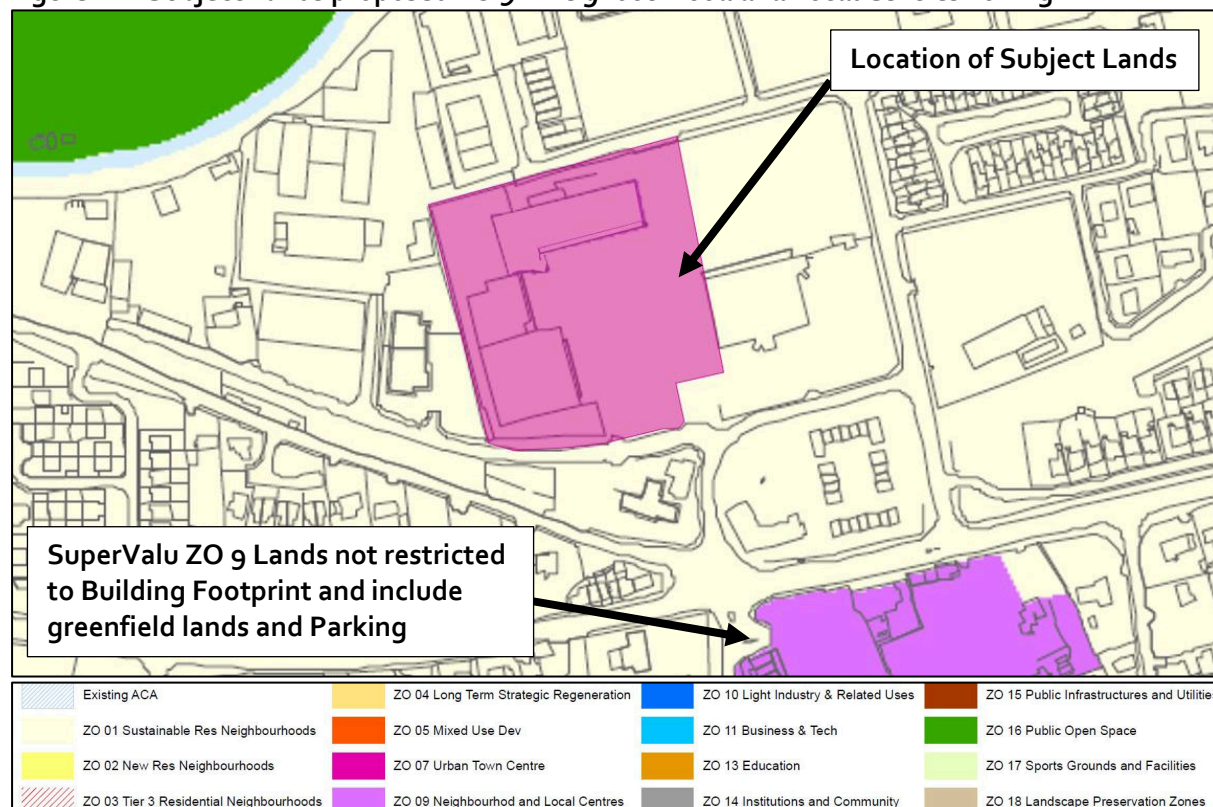
ZO 9.1: Neighbourhood and Local Centres contribute to sustaining liveable communities and neighbourhoods by fulfilling a **local convenience retail**, employment and service function, **providing a mix of uses and range of services**, at an appropriate local scale, to **the local population often within a 5- or 10- minute walking distance**. Chapter 7 Economy and Employment sets out further objectives for Neighbourhood and Local Centres.

ZO 9.2: Neighbourhood and Local Centres provide for local convenience shopping, however lower-order comparison shopping may also be open for consideration commensurate to the scale and character of the local centre and its function in the neighbourhood. Neighbourhood and Local Centres also provide a focus for other uses, including but not limited to local services, community facilities, cultural uses, educational uses, medical and healthcare uses, places of public worship, innovation or enterprise centres and limited retail offices. Neighbourhood and Local Centres should also include residential uses, particularly at higher densities that contribute to sustainable compact growth. These can be delivered particularly above ground floor level.

ZO 9.3: Development proposals in this zone must serve local needs and must demonstrate how the proposal would respect, reflect or contribute to the character and vibrancy of the particular Neighbourhood and Local Centre, commensurate with the nature and scale of the development. Developments must deliver a quality urban environment and public realm with a focus on accessibility and permeability.

Having regard to the foregoing and noting the established principle of Retail Development at the subject lands, we request the extension of the proposed ZO 9 Neighbourhood and Local Centre of the existing Lidl Foodstore Lands to reflect the existing permitted pattern of established retail provisions at West City Retail Park, Innishmore, Ballincollig, Co. Cork, and that such be reflected/presented within the new Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Figure 2.1: Subject Lands proposed ZO 9 – Neighbourhood and Local Centres zoning



Source: Cork City Draft Development Plan 2022 – 2028, Zoning Map – extracted, annotated and reproduced by The Planning Partnership under OS Licence No. AR0114721

Extending the proposed *ZO 9 Neighbourhood and Local Centre* of the existing Lidl Foodstore Lands to reflect the existing permitted pattern of established retail provisions, will facilitate redevelopment/expansion opportunities of the existing West City Retail Park, provide for more competition, will not preserve existing commercial interests, and promote innovation, which is all in line with the *Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)*.

The subject lands are in close proximity to a significant extent of other uses, including *Sustainable Residential Neighbourhood*, provided in the immediate surrounding area, all accessible within 15-minutes, allowing for more active transportation and a wider range of uses and services available for the residents in the surrounding neighbourhood.

3.0 CONCLUSION

In summary, we request the extension of the proposed *ZO 9 Neighbourhood and Local Centre* of the existing Lidl Foodstore Lands to reflect the existing permitted pattern of established retail provisions at West City Retail Park, Innishmore, Ballincollig, Co. Cork, and that such be reflected/presented within the new *Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028*.

The presence of a permitted Licenced Discount Foodstore confirms the principle of convenience retail established on the subject site and as part of the overall City West Retail Park development and will facilitate redevelopment/expansion opportunities of the existing West City Retail Park, provide for more competition, will not preserve existing commercial interests, and promote innovation, which is all in line with the *Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)*.

Should you have any queries or require any further information in relation to the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Wessel Vosloo
Principal
The Planning Partnership