

Ardarostig Business and Technology Zone

Submission to the Draft Cork City Development Plan
on behalf of Ardarostig Developments Ltd.

October 2021



McCutcheon Halley
CHARTERED PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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CORK

6 Joyce House
Barrack Square
Ballincollig
Cork
P31 YX97

T. +353 (0)21 420 8710

DUBLIN

Kreston House
Arran Court
Arran Quay
Dublin 7
D07 K271

T. +353 (0)1 676 6971

www.mhplanning.ie

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1. Introduction

This submission to the Draft Cork City Development Plan has been prepared by McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants on behalf of our client Ardarostig Developments Ltd who own the lands at Ardarostig which are shaded in red on the map attached as Fig 1.

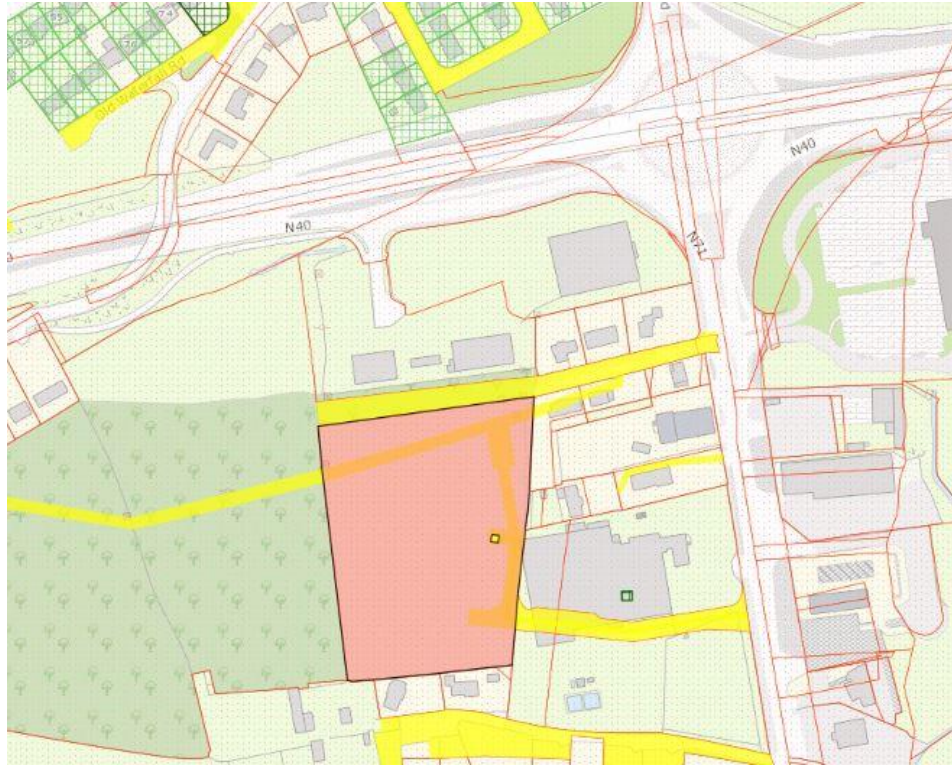


Fig 1 Site location map showing the Edgefield lands shaded red.

1. Current Zoning Objectives

These lands are currently zoned in the Ballincollig-Carrigaline MD Local Area Plan (LAP) as part of the Existing Built Up Area (see map attached as Fig 2.). Paragraph 14.3.1 of the 2014 Cork County Development Plan states that:

Areas of existing development are shown simply as 'existing built up area' in the Local Area Plans. This approach has been taken in order to allow a more positive and flexible response to proposals for the re-use or re-development of underused or derelict land or buildings particularly in the older parts of the main towns.

"Existing built up areas" include all lands within a development boundary which do not have a specific zoning objective attached. Therefore, it includes a mix of land uses which may have existing buildings in place, brownfield lands and undeveloped greenfield lands within the development boundary.

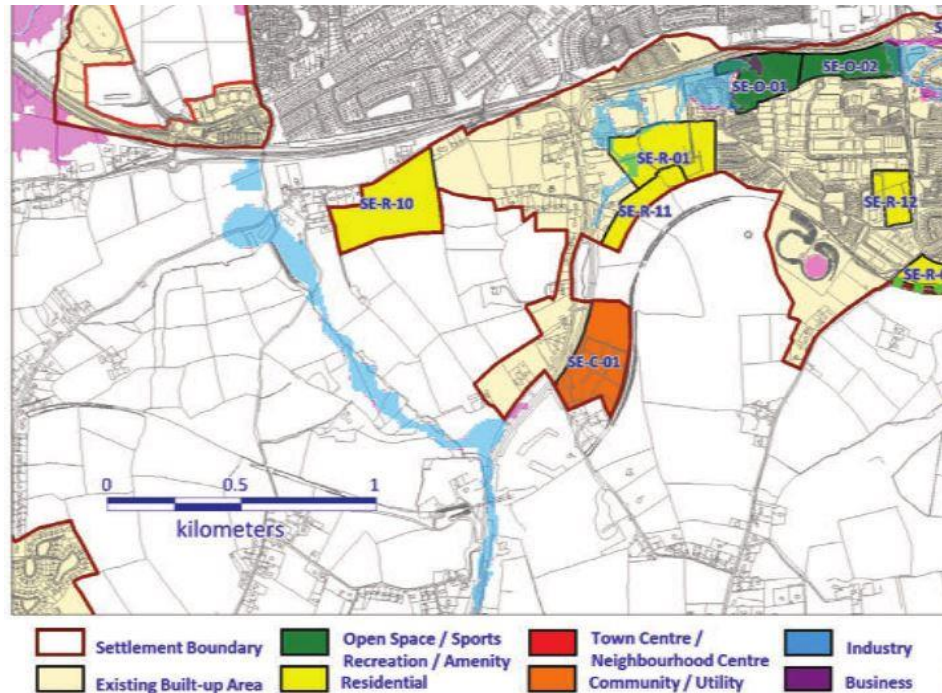


Fig 2 Current zoning objectives for the Ardarostig area

Paragraph 14.3.3 highlights the benefits of this approach for sustainable development:

Within predominantly built up areas, development proposals normally involve in-fill development, redevelopment or refurbishment or changes of use. It is important to recognise that this is part of the cycle of development or redevelopment in settlements that contributes to the character of towns. In many ways, this is more sustainable than continually encouraging growth to concentrate only towards undeveloped areas.

2. Draft Zoning Objectives

The draft City Plan proposes to rezone an area which includes our client's site as ZO 10 Light Industry and Related Uses (see map attached as Fig 3). The zoning objective for areas zoned for Light Industry is

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

According to Paragraphs ZO 10.1 and 10.2 of the Draft City Plan:

The main purpose of this zoning objective is to provide for and protect light industry and manufacturing employment areas. Primary uses in this zone where the primary activity is the manufacturing of a physical product and which activity is compatible with being located near to residential areas.

Primary uses include light industry; small to medium sized manufacturing and repairs; wholesaling; trade showrooms; retail showrooms where ancillary to manufacturing, fitting and business to business activity; car showrooms; and

incubator units. Other uses may include warehousing, logistics, storage and distribution, subject to local considerations. Offices ancillary to the main light industry, manufacturing or employment use are also acceptable.

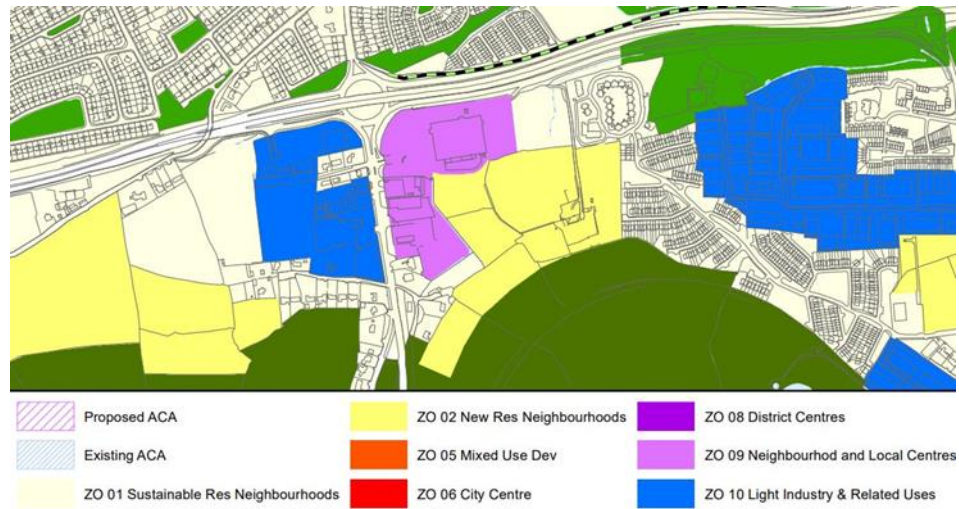


Fig 3 Zoning Objectives Proposed in the Draft City Plan 2022-2028

Ancillary uses such as childcare facilities and small-scale local services, where they serve the local area, are open for consideration at an appropriate scale where they are subsidiary to the main employment uses and do not conflict with the primary zoning objectives. Pure retailing, retail warehousing, standalone offices and office-based industry will not generally be acceptable in this zone.

3. Request for Rezoning

In our opinion the range of uses allowed under the proposed Light Industrial zoning would not be compatible with the current mix of higher value and more environmentally sensitive uses which have been established by Cork County Council while the lands were zoned as "Existing Built up Area". It would be more appropriate for the area, and more consistent with the established planning policy framework, if the site was zoned ZO11 for Business and Technology where the zoning objective is

To provide for the creation and protection of high technology related office-based industry and enterprise, to facilitate opportunities for employment creation.

Paragraphs ZO 11.1 to 11.5 of the Draft City Plan explain that the main purpose of the Business and technology zoning objective is to facilitate opportunities for high technology office -based industry, advanced manufacturing, major office and research and development-based employment.

Primary uses could include software development, information technology, green technologies, creative technologies and emerging industries, telemarketing, commercial research and development, data processing, publishing and media recording, and media associated activities. General offices where each office unit

is in excess of 1,000 square metres is open for consideration in this zone subject to the objectives set out in Chapter 7 Economy and Employment.

Other uses that may be acceptable in this zone, subject to local considerations, include light industrial uses set out under ZO 10 Light Industry and Related Uses. In our opinion this is a strong reason to apply the Business and Technology zoning objective rather than Light Industry and Related Uses as it is flexible enough to allow light industry if that is considered to be appropriate at the development management stage. This would overcome any concerns that the Planning Authority might have about the need to maintain some options for light industry in this area.

4. Rationale for the Rezoning Request

A relevant planning precedent is the permission recently granted by An Bord Pleanal under ABP-310274-21 for a Strategic Housing Development of 276 no. residential units on lands to the west of our client's property. The Inspector noted that:

The site is located within the settlement of Cork City South Environs as identified in the Ballincollig Carrigaline Municipal District Local Area Plan 2017. The Southern Environs area is listed as a 'Town with Public Transport Corridor Potential' in Table 3.1 Settlement Density Guide of the Cork County Development Plan 2014

A Community and Social Infrastructural Audit which was submitted as part of the application concluded that the site location performs well in all aspects of the study from education, childcare, sports, amenity community facilities, healthcare, retail and public transport and that future residents will have access to a significant quantum of facilities and services within the catchment of their homes

This confirms that the Ardarostig area is a well-established mixed-use area which has good public transport connectivity and a wide range of retail, social and community facilities.

It should also be noted that our client's site immediately adjoins an area which is zoned as a Sustainable Residential Neighbourhood linking to the strategic housing development which was recently approved by the Board under ABP-310274-21. Business and Technology uses on our client's lands would be more compatible with medium density housing and could allow connectivity from these housing areas to the retail centres to the east. This is unlikely to be achieved if our client's lands were developed for industrial purposes.

In our opinion the proposed rezoning from what is effectively mixed-use to light industry would be a retrograde step which would result in the unsustainable use of an area which has the social and transportation infrastructure to support higher density and higher value uses. We submit that the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 should have full regard to national and regional policy which advocates more compact development which would make better use of infill or brownfield sites and be more compatible with the medium density housing on adjoining lands.