

# Submission to Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

## Comments on the entire development plan

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to make a submission for Cork's future. As city citizens stakeholders we would be grateful with an ongoing and accessible space to engage in ~Placemaking~ and learn about and contribute to the city as it develops.

### Tall Buildings & Tivoli Docks

We welcome that the development plan defines 4- 6 storey buildings as the maximum for Cork City. However, we would like the council to reconsider the exceptions to that rule in creating a liveable city. The lived experience of living opposite the Penrose Dock development, at 9 storeys has cost huge loss of wellbeing and quality of life to our family and community. While we support density and better shared spaces, the excessive grey space must be mitigated by an increase in shared Green space and multi use blue space.

Planning as practised at the North Docks does not exist in a vacuum but in the context of existing communities.

There has been no give back to the local community, no green, no park, no playground. Even the newly created plaza outside of the Dean Hotel is being degraded to a car park most of the time, again, without any perceptible traffic enforcement.

With these high rises comes light pollution. As efficient as lighting may be, there we would welcome city wide guidelines to switch lights off when offices are closed or not occupied.

Cork's rich heritage is not reflected in any of the new buildings on the North Docks, this must be different for future developments. Individual developments should be linked by a common design language and not be as disjointed as The Dean, Horgan's Quay HQ, and Penrose Dock. Public amenities like playgrounds, parks and green areas must be part of such developments to create community and avoid living/ working siloes.

Another point that hasn't been sufficiently addressed is affordability: Rents close to 3,000 EUR (taken from the suggested rents for the new development on the former Sextant site) for a 2-bedroom apartment are simply too high. We must find ways to use existing stock like derelict buildings or living space above inner city shops to lower the cost of rent.

The new developments in Tivoli can be exciting but the City must make sure that they are more than people storage and shops: The inclusion of the water front should not be optional but a must-have in any proposed developments.

To protect only a 3<sup>rd</sup> of Tivoli Ridge seems to be a mistake and would lose a lot of the area's character, 50% seem more appropriate.

The Best Practice chapter on developments elsewhere is inspiring and we would love to see some of this in Cork. We must create better communities and support existing communities.

We must do better when it comes to city planning!

### **Green & Blue Infrastructure**

Cork lacks parks and lacks easy access to them (Tramore Valley Park is only being addressed now after many years and a lot of pressure from the public; The Glen Park has no pedestrian crossing at the entrance on the Ballyhooly Road). There is no inner-city playground. The pedestrianisation of the Marina is only half-hearted, though welcome.

Easy access to the river in the shape of pontoons and benches that invite you to rest seem to be a necessity.

The entire area around Kent Station/ North Docks is screaming to get a park with playground for everyone to enjoy.

### **Road Safety Plan**

The entire pedestrian and cycling network in the needs to be reviewed and brought up to speed to international best practice standards. In most places the green phase for pedestrians is simply too short for an elderly person to cross safely. Pedestrians should not have to wait 4 to 5 times longer than motorists to have their opportunity to cross. It is lamentable, that cars are being prioritised everywhere, from parking to traffic light sequencing. There is no noticeable enforcement against offenders.

Cycle lanes should be painted in a colour that stands out; traffic light management should be homogenous across the city for every intersection. Bikes should be allowed to cross alongside pedestrians at walking pace. If this isn't possible, install clear traffic lights with dedicated symbols for pedestrians, bikes and cars and treat them equally.

Install yield signs and warn motorists that they have not right of way when turning and crossing cycle lanes. This is a common misconception and especially dangerous on the new cycle lane on South Mall and the back of Merchants Quay car park (we use these every day with our children and we are sure there are many more locations that would benefit from such road signs).

Running red lights is a huge issue and we encounter it daily on our way to school. Red light cameras should be installed across the city. Resulting revenue can then be used improve active travel across the city.

Speeding is another issue. We live on the Lower Glanmire Road and the speed limit of 50km/h is too high and constantly being ignored, making the road unsafe and leading to noise pollution, especially at night-time when motorists perceive the free road as an invite to speed. Fixed speed cameras

would solve this problem easily, this is a residential area after all. A 30km/h speed limit would be welcome across the city.

### **Climate change**

The proposed plan lacks teeth when it comes to climate change. This is a real and existential crisis, and we need to act now. Writing reports and agendas will not solve it. Lower the speed limits, improve public and active transport, and incentivise people that use these modes of transport. Improve park and ride facilities for people who are car dependent and free up the inner city from most individual motor traffic, this will make buses more reliable and more attractive. Charge more for parking for cars with bigger than 2 ltr engines.

Can we have a free electric bus running along the inner city route for people to hop on and off? Free lockers for people to store their shopping before they head home if they want to go for a bite to eat?

The CMATS base line of 1% to 4% cycle uptake is way too low and needs to be amended to at least 10%.

New developments such as Tivoli Docks and North Docks should have to install solar panels and use geothermal district heating if possible. The bar needs to be higher in everything we do.

We have already begun to feel the effects of climate change all over the world, we need to revert to better practices. The planned flood walls are not a solution and will ruin the inner city, better options have been proposed by the Love the Lee campaign.

Why not ban all disposable coffee and drink cups in the City and issue every citizen with a Cork branded cup? Not having to clean up all the cups every day will pay for this easily.

Let us be creative and be ahead with new ideas that will make Cork a place you want to live in, a place that will attract the 125,000 new citizens.

None of the above is impossible, we only need to want a better future for us and the generations that follow.

Kinds regards,

Carol & Thorsten