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Programme for the Review of the Cork City Council Development Plan

How can we shape Cork City for 2021?

A place to Live | A place to Work | A place to Belong

Movement & Accessibility

Walking; cycling; rail; park and ride; new transport infrastructure; car parking

Housing

Location, type; occupancy

Climate Change

Renewable, cleaner energy; energy efficiency.

Regeneration

Design, enhanced public spaces

Water

Flood protection, efficient use of water

Sport and Recreation

Efficient use of resources, dual use, improved access.

Tourism

Promote as a tourism location.

Assets

Environment, Green trails, walking, cycling, enhance heritage, protect wildlife, protect built heritage.

Local Economy

Promote existing employment areas, diversity of economy, business support.

Services and Facilities

Greater range of facilities, libraries, community facilities.

1. Introduction

Cork City Council is in the process of preparing a new City Development Plan. This new plan, will replace the current City Development Plan, which came into operation in May 2009 and runs to April 2015.

The new City Plan will set out the overall strategy for future development in Cork City from 2015 to 2021. This Issues Paper forms part of the initial stage of this project and of public consultation and it is intended to stimulate discussion amongst residents, businesses and all other stakeholders about the issues affecting Cork City. This Issues Paper is a Section 11 Consultation Document, as per the Planning & Development Acts 2000 - 2011.

Now is the time for you to tell us what you think the big issues in Cork City are and how best they can be dealt with. The Issues Paper is divided into sections containing a variety of questions for consideration, though these are not exhaustive. If you don't think we have covered everything, please tell us. We encourage you to get involved in this process and welcome your comments at this important stage in plan making.

Context

The development plan is primarily focused on physical planning issues such as the location of development and the appropriate uses of land. However, these must be set within the context of the wider economic, social and cultural objectives for the city and region.

The development plan fits into the broader range of policies and plans developed and implemented at a regional, national, European and, ultimately, a global level. Equally, though, the development plan is intended to deal with our local issues.

Cork city is the primary urban centre in the South-West and the foremost economic and development generator in the region. As regional capital and national Gateway city the success of Cork City is both a key driver of the region and also a key indicator as to the economic health and success of the Metropolitan area. The National Spatial Strategy includes an objective for Cork to develop as a metropolitan centre that is dynamic and socially balanced, served by effective public transport and offering a high quality of life for its population.

Among Cork's strengths are the two high profile third level education establishments. With a highly skilled workforce the city region is a location of choice for high tech industries such as Medical Devices, Information & Communications Technology (ICT) and pharmaceuticals. The city is also the location for regional level health provision and a strong range of government bodies and infrastructure providers as well as having one of the main national ports.

The slowdown in the economy has had an impact on the pace of development in and around the city and the city itself has not experienced the level of population growth that would be desirable. The challenge for the new city development plan will be to look to the future and identify ways it can contribute to further development of the city as a good place to do business in, to visit and live.

What Happens Next?

This initial public consultation process will last 8 weeks from the 22nd April to the 17th June 2013. Following this, submissions will be analysed and a City Manager's Report on the outputs

of the consultation will be prepared for Council and will feed into the preparation of a new draft City Plan.

The timetable beyond this will be as follows:

- Preparation of the Draft City Development Plan will take place towards the end of 2013.
- Following this, the Draft Plan, will be submitted to Council for discussion. The Draft Plan will then go on public display for public consultation in early 2014.
- A second Manger's Report will be prepared mid 2014 on the submissions to the Draft Plan. This will then go to Council and there may be further amendments before a final Plan is agreed. The new Plan is expected to be adopted in early 2015.

A chart showing a summary of the Development Plan timetable is located at the back of this document.

It is important to stress that although further consultation will take place on the Plan, you should not wait for a later stage to get involved. The best time to influence the Plan is at the very start, so we encourage you to participate in this consultation.

How do I submit my comments?

Sharing your views, comments and suggestions could not be easier. We encourage you to send in your submissions or observations with your name and address by the following means:

In writing to:

**Patrick Ledwidge, Director of Services,
Strategic Planning & Economic Development,
Cork City Council, City Hall,
Anglesea Street, Cork.**

Submission Leaflets which include a form for submissions are available at the planning counter of Cork City Hall and at various locations around the city including the city libraries. They can also be downloaded from www.corkcity.ie You can post these in to the address above or drop them in to the planning counter on the ground floor of City Hall.

Alternatively email your submission to: cdp@corkcity.ie

All submissions need to be received by the City Council by 4pm on Monday 17th June 2013.

Please note that, as per legislation, submissions proposing the zoning of particular land for any purpose shall not be considered at this stage.

2. Cork City Core Strategy

Introduction

The Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015 included an overall strategy for the city which set out population and employment targets for the city and identified key development areas. This was updated in 2011 to incorporate a Core Strategy as required by the Planning and Development (Amendment Act) Act 2010. The Core Strategy did not change the overall strategy of the Plan but demonstrated that the City Development Plan was consistent with the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS) and the South West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 (SWRPG) and that the population targets in the Plan related to the quantum of land zoned for residential development in the city.

National and Regional Policy

The NSS proposed balanced regional development with a continuing major role for Dublin but greater distribution of development around the country, facilitated by focusing development in a series of nine Gateways cities, including Cork. The NSS is due to be reviewed over the next year but in the meantime the current NSS stands. The SWRPG provide an overall spatial planning framework for the region and take the NSS objectives to a regional level. The SWRPG took NSS population targets for the region and translated them in to targets for Cork City and Cork and Kerry Counties. The Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) also has a significant role in the strategic planning of the Cork Gateway and aims to focus development in population and economic development in Cork City and the nearby County parts of Metropolitan Cork.

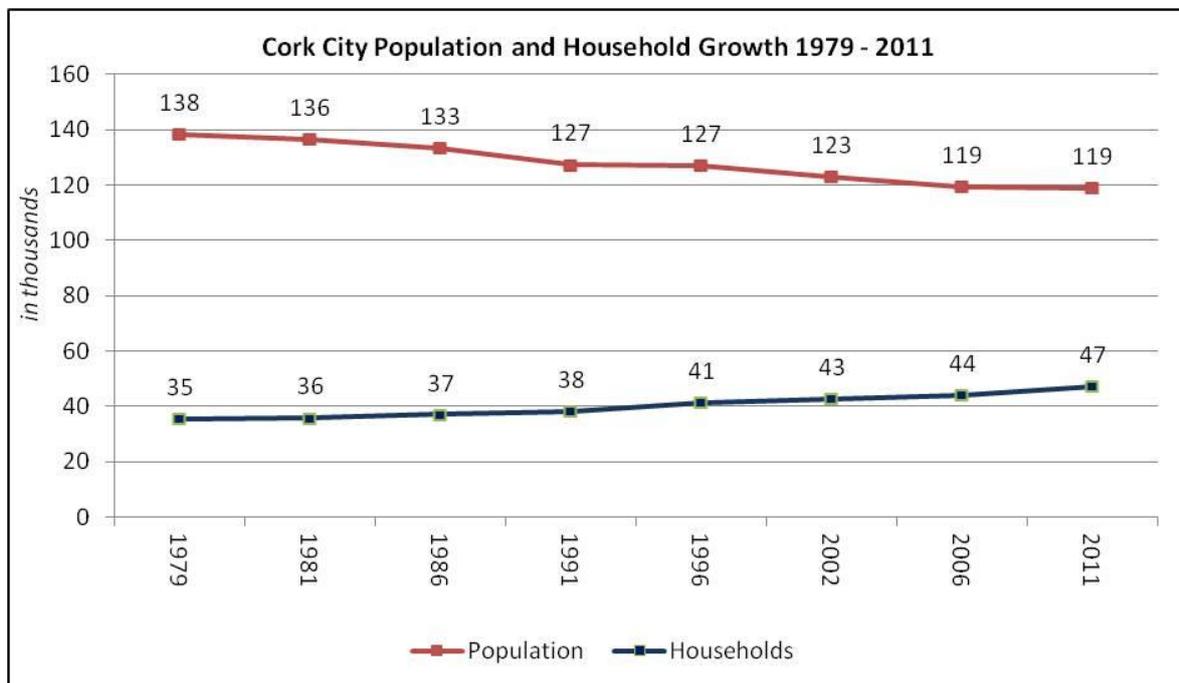
Population change

Table 2.1 Population targets and trends: Metropolitan Cork

Area	Census		2011 (derived)	SWRPG target		
	2006	2011		Variance from SWRPG target	2016	2022
Cork City	119,418	119,230	128,975	-9,745	134,710	150,000
County part of Metro. Cork	153,123	170,509	177,616	-7,107	201,290	231,500
Total Metropolitan Cork	272,541	289,739	306,591	-16,852	336,600	381,500

The SWRPG set population targets for Cork City and County and also for Metropolitan Cork and for the CASP Ring. Overall population change in the CASP area was lower than, but close to, RPG targets between 2006 and 2011. However, the pattern of growth differed in that the CASP Ring significantly exceeded the target, the population in Cork City remained more or less stationary and well below target, while the population in the Cork County part of Metropolitan Cork grew somewhat less than targeted.

Population growth in Cork City peaked in 1979 at 138,000 and has been gradually declining since then, with some evidence of stabilisation between 2006 and 2011 (see graph).



The reasons for the decline include lack of easily developed greenfield land, new households moving to alternative and cheaper green field development locations in the county area and declining household size in the city. A reversal in the trend of population decline in Cork City and an increase in the pace of growth in the County part of Metropolitan Cork will require a range of measures including:

- greater control of development in the CASP Ring;
- significant investment in infrastructure;
- measures to increase the attractiveness of the city and surrounding areas for development.

There was significant variation in population change around the city, with the City Centre and the South East increasing population while the North side, South West and South Centre declined. Despite the overall fall in population in the city, the number of households has been gradually increasing (see Figure 2.2). There was a net gain of 3,650 households between 2006 and 2011, although average household size is continuing to fall. Family life cycle is also a significant factor and areas which are developed at a particular time tend to have a large percentage of households at the same stage of the family cycle. Areas go through a cycle of growth and decline and then begin to increase again, as they move through the family cycle. This may lead to increases in population in some established areas of the city which are at the stage where new families are moving in.

Future population trends

New National population projections are in preparation and early indications are that they will project lower levels of growth than heretofore, reflecting increases in out-migration. The review of the NSS will take place over the next year and is likely to result in changes to regional population targets. Employment opportunities and their impact on migration will be key factors in determining future population growth. The Greater Cork City area is likely to continue to be

targeted as a location with considerable growth potential in the medium term, particularly in the context of its record in attracting significant Foreign Direct Investment, its balanced economy and its high quality educational infrastructure and connectivity

A major shift will be required to ensure that there is a change in population and employment growth patterns towards more sustainable locations in and around Cork city and it is likely to take a considerable period of concerted effort to achieve this shift. To facilitate and support this change in direction the new City Development Plan through its Core Strategy will be required to show that *'the Plan's development objectives are consistent, as far as practicable, with the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines'*(Planning and Development Amendment Act 2010), including appropriately zoned land to accommodate the SWRPG population and housing targets.

Key Development Areas

Notwithstanding the long-term decline in population, the city has considerable potential for new residential and employment development through redevelopment and intensification of 'brownfield land' in areas such as the City Centre, Docklands, Mahon and Blackpool. These locations can be served by sustainable transport, in line with national policy, and development there will reduce the need to develop in more dispersed 'greenfield' locations, which are largely dependent on the private car for transport.

The Core Strategy in the existing Plan identified a number of areas where development was to be targeted in the city to facilitate population and employment growth. These are mainly brownfield areas where there is potential for intensification and change and which could be served by sustainable transport. Progress to date in these areas is reviewed below. (Other aspects of the Core Strategy, including economic development and transport infrastructure are addressed in later sections of the document.)

The City Centre

A healthy city centre is essential for the city region as a whole. The city centre saw increases in retail and office development in the middle years of the last decade as well as significant improvements in the public realm. Planning Permission was granted for a number of office, retail and entertainment developments since the last Development Plan was adopted, however the economic downturn has resulted in a significant slowdown in implementation of such projects. Existing retail businesses have been under pressure due to the economic downturn and older office buildings have also been experiencing increasing vacancy.

If the economy improves there is significant potential for further office, retail and residential development in and at the edge of the city centre, although there is strong competition from suburban locations and proactive measures will be needed to make it happen. The completion of high quality apartment developments such as in Lancaster Gate, the Elysian and Opera Lane has shown that there is an appetite for this type of residential development, from young workers including those coming from outside Ireland to work in high-tech businesses. This is reflected in an increase of almost 12% in the city centre's population between 2006 and 2011. A new City Centre Strategy is in preparation at present to support the future development and revitalisation of the city centre.

Docklands

The North and South Docks represent a major opportunity for development adjacent to the city centre. Planning permission for a number of large mixed use residential/office/ retail/ entertainment developments was granted during the plan period in Docklands and planning approval was also obtained for major elements of the necessary transport infrastructure. Progress was also made in relation to hazardous 'Seveso sites' which have a limiting effect on

development in their vicinity: two out of three of these have now relocated out of Docklands. However the economic downturn and lack of funding for infrastructure improvements has meant that there has been little progress in realising these developments in Docklands. Reflecting this, the South Docks LAP has been extended by 5 years to 2018. A new implementation strategy for Cork Docklands *Cork City Harbour – unlocking Cork Docklands* has been published by Cork City Council and proposes incremental development from the city centre eastwards, allowing early phases of development to go ahead with more limited investment in infrastructure. Significant investment in transport infrastructure will be required to facilitate later phases of development.

Blackpool

A local Area Plan was completed for Blackpool in 2011 and a Blackpool Village Action Plan was prepared in 2010. The area has undergone significant change in the last decade, with mixed retail, office, leisure and residential development occurring. Planning permissions for new retail and office development and for a new commuter rail station were granted since the City Plan was adopted but they have not been implemented due to the economic downturn. However the area continues to have potential for long term sustainable growth. The short-term priority will be sustaining the existing businesses and development in the area.

Mahon

Mahon has seen significant population and employment growth in recent years. Mahon Point Shopping Centre continues to trade successfully attracting trade from a wide catchment. Growth in high-tech employment has been significant with the completion of the City Gate and City Gate Park office developments and the development of a new private hospital. The area has medium to long term potential for residential and employment uses but needs investment in sustainable transport and an increase in residential development to balance employment uses and relieve congestion. These issues are being addressed through the preparation of a Local Area Plan for Mahon, which will shortly be issued for consultation.

Two areas were identified in the last Plan as possible future key development areas:

Tivoli

The Tivoli Docks area is currently occupied by the Port of Cork and a range of industrial uses including 'Seveso' sites. Port of Cork have plans to move operations downstream to Ringaskiddy and in the long term the area has potential for redevelopment for a mixture of residential and employment purposes, provided it can be linked to sustainable means of transport such as via the adjoining commuter rail line. The potential for change will be linked to progress in relocating the Port operations and associated heavy industrial uses.

Tramore Road/Kinsale Road area

This area was identified as a possible area for intensification in in the medium to long term. There has been only limited demand for development in the area in the intervening period. The Cork Area Transport Study (CATS) concluded that the North South Rapid Transit route identified in the CASP update which would have served this area was not viable, rather it would be served by the bus service to the Airport. It provides a useful location for light industrial and wholesale uses at present and may have potential for intensification if market demand increases in the future and suitable high quality public transport can be provided.

Issues

- Cork city has been set a target of a population of 150,000 in the SWRPG – there is a need to identify measures to improve its attractiveness as a location for development, if progress towards this ambitious target is to be achieved.

- There is a need to provide infrastructure to facilitate development.
- There is unequal spread of development – some areas are experiencing development, others experiencing decline.
- Employment growth/decline will be a key factor in future population change.

Questions

- What actions can be taken to reverse the trend of population decline and improve the attractiveness of the city as a place to develop and live?
- Is the current focus on key development areas the most suitable strategy for the city or are there other locations that should be the focus of development?

3. Economic Development Strategy

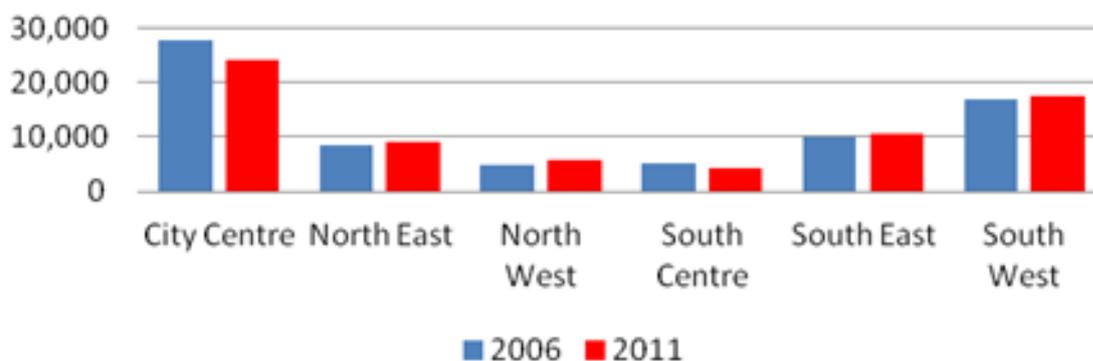
Introduction

The economic strategy in the current City Plan is based on the CASP Update and it envisaged growth in employment of 15,000 in the city by 2020 with the bulk of the growth to be in the services sector, particularly market services, with an emphasis on knowledge based sectors and continued decline in traditional sectors. The economic situation experienced over the last 5 years means that these targets are unlikely to be achieved in the short term. However the strategy is a long term one and the implementation of the proposed CASP labour force and skills strategy is more important than ever in the current climate. It will also be a major influence on the achievement of population targets.

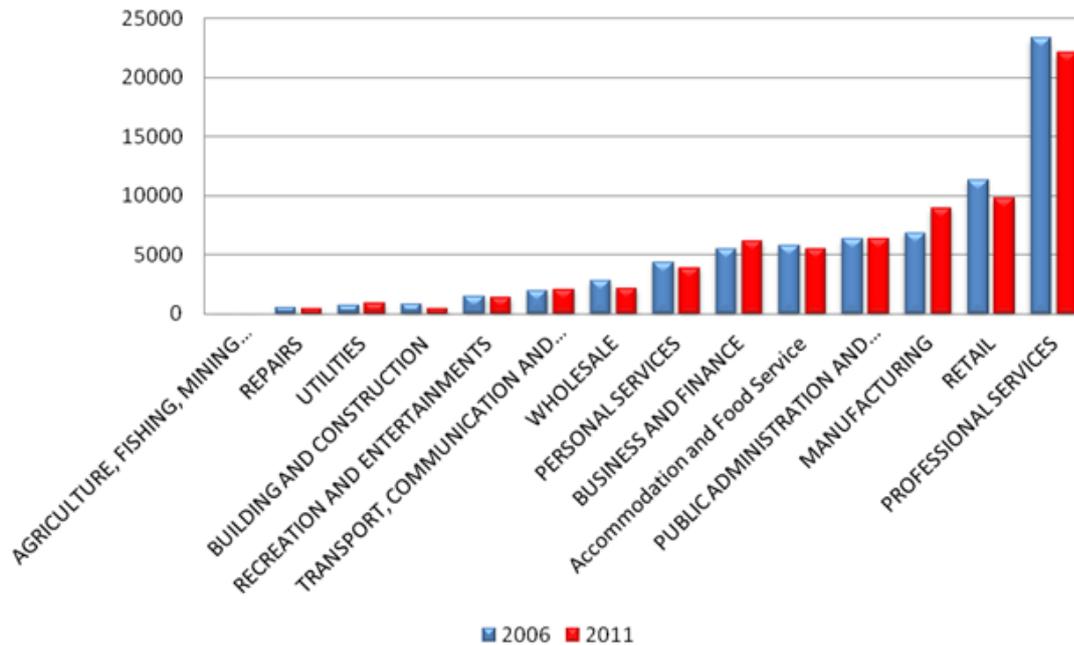
Review

The City Council Employment Survey in 2011 showed that employment in the city had fallen by 2% since 2006, somewhat less than might have been expected considering the overall economic conditions. There was significant variation around the city with employment growing in all city sectors except the City Centre and South Centre. Professional services and retail are the two largest employment activities in the city and these also showed the greatest decline in absolute terms between 2006 and 2011. There was significant growth in high-end manufacturing (such as medical related companies) and in ICT related companies (such as Apple and Dell).

Cork City Employment Change by Sector



City Wide Changes in Activity Sectors



On the negative side, the 2011 census recorded an unemployment rate of 22% for Cork City residents, compared to a rate of 12% in 2006. This compared to a rate for the state as a whole of 19% in 2011 and 9% in 2006. The higher than average rate for the city reflects the concentration of deprivation and social housing in certain areas and is aggravated by a degree of mismatch between skill levels and employment growth sectors.

At national level Government enterprise and employment policy is focusing on areas such as the Smart Economy (which is about boosting productivity and performance through better use of knowledge) and the Green Economy (aiming to create employment and export opportunities in areas such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and waste management,); National initiatives to stimulate employment growth include the Action Plan for jobs 2013 which aims to rebuild the economy and create jobs.

The Cork economic entity is not Cork city on its own but Metropolitan Cork and beyond that the overall CASP area. This is the geographical unit that is the driver of the South West Region and the second largest economic area in the State. At local level, Cork City Council works with local stakeholders through CASP and other co-operation mechanisms to create an environment that favours increased economic activity, addresses obstacles and provides stimuli where appropriate. Success in this endeavour requires the co-operation of all local actors and national Government.

Recent international studies into cities' competitive performance tend to focus on drivers such as innovation, economic diversity, skills and human capital, connectivity, place quality and strategic governance capacity.¹ A key challenge for Cork is to balance its acknowledged strong performance in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) with the creation of locally developed enterprises.

¹ e.g. Second Cities in Europe – In an Age of Austerity Why Invest Beyond the Capitals? Espon and LJMU 2012

The Government in its 2012 publication 'Putting People First' gives an enhanced role to local authorities in facilitating economic development. Cork City Council has created an Economic Development Fund to support local economic actions and created a Tourism Strategy to further develop the tourism sector in the city. It has worked with local partners to implement local initiatives such as Energy Cork and Cork Innovates and a range of programmes that support entrepreneurship and seek to improve business performance. In addition, it will be a key partner in the roll out of Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs).

The recent "*Cork City Harbour; Unlocking Cork Docklands*" report sets out a way forward for the incremental development of the docklands area, moving eastwards from the city centre. A new retail strategy has been drafted and is being issued separately for public consultation. It supports the city centre as the region's primary retail centre and sees it as the main expansion in comparison retail floorspace. This is being complemented by a new City Centre Strategy which is in preparation. Cork City Council has also sought to encourage development through a waiver scheme on development contributions.

Increasingly Cork is going to have to market itself internationally and an initiative to achieve this is being developed with local partners including Cork County Council as well as through the Tourism Strategy. This will complement the work being carried out already in Cork's Sister Cities and other targeted destinations.

Issues

- The need to maintain existing businesses and jobs is a key issue in all employment sectors
- Improved connectivity is needed – Broadband, Port, Airport, Roads, Rail
- Lack of space for modern FDI – large floor space high quality offices in the city centre and suburbs
- Human Capital - skills, education, training need to match likely growth sectors; initiatives need to commence in primary schools
- Health of the City Centre – there is a need to improve its retail offer, employment provision, and enhance leisure and tourism. The retail market is currently weak with only very limited investment in new floorspace occurring.

Questions

- What actions can be taken to maintain existing employment?
- Does Cork depend too much on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)?
- What can be done to promote/attract more businesses, both locally generated and FDI, in the Knowledge Economy?
- How can Cork attract talented people?
- How can we attract more employment and development to the city centre – in sectors like retail, commercial offices, leisure, culture?
- Should planning policies attempt to regulate the type of employment uses such as offices going to suburban areas such as Blackpool and Mahon in the context of decline in city centre employment?
- Are there new sectors that should be targeted?
- How can we maximise employment creation potential linked to research expertise in UCC, Tyndall, CIT, IMERC etc
- In the current economic climate with constrained government funding what policies and measures should be considered to promote economic development in Cork?

4. Transportation

Introduction

At the national level there is a mandate to reduce emissions caused by fossil-fuelled transport, as well as an objective to increase walking and cycling for the health benefits and cost savings they can bring. These aims have been translated into a national target of reducing the share of people who drive to work alone to 45%.

Review

Sixty-nine (69%) of those working in Cork City drive to work; this is higher than the national average (60%).

A number of these workers live in dispersed rural locations that cannot be feasibly served by public transport and therefore have no option but to use a car for a significant part of the commuting journey.

The share of Cork City workers commuting by bus or train has fallen slightly since 2006. Major employers are increasingly locating in areas outside the city centre (Airport Business Park, Little Island, Mahon), which means workers are travelling in several directions, creating more complex travel patterns that are more challenging to serve with transit.

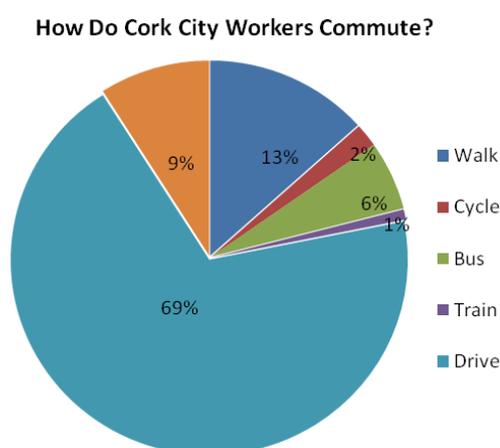
Since 2006, 350 additional workers in Cork City have started travelling to work by bicycle; however, cycling still accounts for only 2% of total commuting trips. The overall share of walkers also fell slightly, though the share of walkers is still high at 13%; most of these walkers live near the City Centre.

Fifty-five (55%) of primary students and 45% of secondary students in Cork City are driven to school. Parking and accessibility to the City Centre were key issues raised by business owners in a 2011 survey.

Key actions since 2009 or currently underway include:

- 30 kph speed limit in City Centre
- Streetscape improvements on Barrack Street
- Cycle lanes and associated infrastructure from the City Centre to Douglas, University College Cork; installation of cycle parking in several city centre and suburban locations
- Almost 50 “real-time” passenger information signs installed at bus stops
- Increase in frequency of key bus services and completion of Ballincollig to City Centre “Green Route”
- Re-opening of rail line between Glounthaune and Midleton
- Construction in progress on South Ring Road Flyovers at Sarsfield Road/ Bandon Road

Where Do We Want to Be?



The framework for transport objectives is set at the national level by the National Transport Authority (the “NTA”). The NTA has established three key objectives for transport in Cork City:

- 1) Increased walking and cycling for local trips (work, education, retail, and leisure);
- 2) Increased public transport usage to employment centres and;
- 3) Enhanced safety, especially for vulnerable road users.

The long-range transport plan for Cork City is still forming but will likely include reallocation of road space, junction treatment, and other improvements for cyclists and pedestrians; a public bike scheme; continued improvements to the bus network, including bus rapid transit or highly developed bus network along east-west route from Ballincollig to Mahon; and a North Ring Road.

The NTA also establishes the framework for investment in transportation infrastructure. The strategy from 2013 – 2017 is to focus infrastructural investment on the City Centre and five key corridors leading to the City Centre.

The investment in infrastructure (“hard measures”) will be supplemented by investment in “soft measures,” such as promotion, awareness raising, and information provision about alternative modes of transport.

Issues

- Increase walking, cycling, and public transit usage.
- There is a need to “Match up” transport systems and landuse.
- Different parking standards in the Metropolitan area.
- Parking in city centre – How much should be provided and how to regulate and manage it.

Questions

- What alternative methods of getting to work would you prioritise in order to reduce the use of fossil fuels in transport? More walking, cycling, transit, carpools, electric vehicles, or alternative solutions?
- Do you currently walk or cycle to your neighbourhood shop or other local destinations instead of driving? If not, what are the main reasons?
- What are your impressions of the bus service in Cork City? When was the last time you used a bus?
- What changes in the physical environment could best support increased walking and cycling?
- What impacts will pending transport changes have on surrounding land use? e.g. the removal of private cars from St Patrick Street will change the level of activity and feel of the area, as will re-orientation of McCurtain Street to two-way traffic.
- The current Development Plan says “High density and mixed uses will be encouraged where appropriate within walking distances of high quality public transport corridors.” Do targeted transit corridors provide scope for more transit-orientated redevelopment?
- If bus rapid transit is to proceed, is redevelopment required along some parts of the potential route in order to provide transit-supportive densities?
- Parking standards: How are current standards working? Are revisions required, both in terms of the zones and the standards for each landuse?
- In the current economic climate what measures should be considered to ensure physical growth of the city is not negatively impacted, where public investment on transport cannot meet best practice over the lifetime of the Development Plan.

5. Housing

Provision of sufficient residential development is essential and must be of an appropriate mix and at locations that are close to places of employment, readily accessible to the City Centre and supported by community and recreational facilities.

Draft Joint Housing Strategy

The Draft Housing Strategy for Cork has been developed by Cork City and County Councils in order to address the existing and future housing needs of the area.

The main findings and recommendations of this draft Joint Housing Strategy include the following:

- Alignment with the population and housing targets set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South West 2010-2022
- Planning Authorities will have a requirement that 14% of units on all land zoned for residential uses (or for a mix of residential and other uses) will be reserved for the purpose of social housing.
- Highlighting the importance of estate management generally.
- Ensuring a mix of house types and sizes within individual developments and within communities to promote a socially balanced and inclusive society.
- Taking account of the Unfinished Housing Estates where measures to address public safety and environmental improvements for people living in these estates and surrounding areas will be prioritised.

Review

Cork City's Core Strategy, as outlined in the current City Plan, shows enough land zoned in the City Plan in areas such as Docklands, Mahon and Blackpool to exceed the 2016 population target of the Regional Planning Guidelines. It also details that additional zoned land is needed to meet the 2022 population target. The Draft Mahon LAP identifies scope for an additional 1,000 units. The development of sites in existing suburban and city centre locations, which were previously used for non-residential purposes also offers opportunities for new residential development. The re-development of Tivoli for a mix of residential and other uses is also a potential opportunity in the medium to long-term.

According to the 2011 Census the average number of persons in Cork City households is 2.45 persons. This is down from 2.61 in the 2006 Census. The demand is for more units accommodating fewer people. The number of households is increasing as per the table below:

No. of Households per Census in Cork City		
2002	2006	2011
42,742	43,939	47,163

A profile of the City shows that the city centre has a predominance of people in their twenties. The majority in the 65+ age cohort are located in the south sectors, mainly in the mid southern region and along the edge of the boundary with the county. Owner-occupied units and social housing are clustered in the suburbs while private rental units makes up the majority as one moves towards the city centre. The city needs to provide a range of housing tenures and sizes to

be attractive. While it is necessary to have sufficient densities to make public transport viable there is some pressure for an easing of residential density standards in some suburban locations to make them more attractive for development and to help get the residential development market moving.

The Assessment of Housing Needs 2011 sets out the different categories for households seeking accommodation from the Council. The housing needs of the following categories require special attention: Social Housing, Special Needs Housing, Elderly, and Traveller Accommodation etc.

Issues

- What range of accommodation types is needed to make the city attractive?
- Are the current locations of housing appropriate to cater for the population target? Or should others be considered?
- How can we re-balance the age profile throughout the Cork City sectors?
- Are we meeting the accommodation needs of all?

Questions

- Is housing in the right place in the City?
- Is our mix of housing stock right for Cork?
- Should we increase or decrease residential densities?
- How should the provision of social housing be delivered?
- Is the balance between social housing and private housing adequate?
- In general, is the housing stock of good quality?
- Could we do with more and better designated student accommodation?
- How should we deal with traveller accommodation requirements?

6. Living in the City

Introduction

In order to continue to act as the economic driver of the region and to counteract declining population trends Cork City needs to become the place where people of all ages and circumstances want to live. Developing a housing stock and living environment which are adaptable to change will support a wide range of residents' needs, facilitate positive community interaction and support sustainable urban living.

Key to this will be the provision of a high quality built environment with well maintained green spaces and a wide range of cultural facilities. Urban green spaces contribute significantly to improving quality of life, contributing to healthier lifestyles, child development through scope for outdoor play and encouraging social inclusion. The artistic and cultural life of a city also impacts significantly upon quality of life for its residents as well as enhancing the urban form of the city. Places which are proximate to such facilities are attractive places in which to live, with consequent positive impacts upon the general maintenance and upkeep of an area.

Review

Many residential areas of Cork City are located within a superb natural setting and contain landmark buildings which contribute positively to the character and identity of that place. However overall there is a relatively small range of housing typology with a large proportion of the city's suburbs having been either developed publicly with terraced dwellings in the post war years or privately with three bedroom semi-detached housing in the 1950s and 1960s. The presence of large health and educational institutions in the southern suburbs has heavily influenced the housing market in these areas – i.e. high levels of rented accommodation with resultant degradation of the quality of housing stock and desirability of the residential environment for owner occupiers. In the northern suburbs the development of extensive tracts of social housing has resulted in an unbalanced social structure in the city with areas of concentrated deprivation. Urban renewal schemes aimed at living in the city have been moderately successful however there remains an under-provision of high quality accommodation aimed at owner occupiers/families.

Key Issues

- On a positive note Cork city has the highest rate in Ireland of persons resident in an area in which they were born thus indicating that Corkonians want to live where they are from.
- The City Development Plan has a role in enhancing Cork City's inherent sense of place identity and character and ensuring that persons have access to the type of living accommodation and environment in which to enjoy their desired lifestyle.

Questions

- Where do you live – if outside the city was there a reason why you chose to live there rather than in the city itself?
- What facilities would encourage you to live in the city/decide to live in a particular area?
- Is accessibility to workplace a deciding factor in choosing where to live?
- How important are quality green spaces in enhancing your quality of life?

- What other facilities/amenities would encourage you to live in a particular area?
- How can the City Council support the City Centre to be a vibrant and positive space during both day and night?
- What lessons can we learn from other cities you may have lived in?
- Is there a particular type of housing that in your opinion is not being provided or is over provided in Cork city?
- How can we support and encourage community interaction?
- Are there areas of social segregation/disadvantage within Cork City and what can be done to improve quality of life in these areas?
- Does Cork City provide a supportive living environment for people from all walks of life?

7. Community Provision and Social Inclusion

Community and Social Inclusion

Introduction

Inclusive neighbourhoods have a high level of participation, and a strong sense of identity. These qualities can be facilitated by planning for healthy, safe, 'liveable' and distinctive neighbourhoods, where people can access the facilities and services that they need in their daily lives without having to travel e.g. shops, health services, community facilities, good quality schools and childcare provision. The availability of suitable community facilities can bring together residents from different backgrounds and have a positive impact on local issues and services.

Review

The city has already launched a number of regeneration initiatives for priority neighbourhoods of the city such as RAPID (Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development). The focus is on working together to make things happen through combined efforts of community, voluntary sectors, City Council, Cork City Partnership, Cork Local Drugs Task Force, the VEC, FÁS, the Gardaí and local Councillors which will breathe new life into these areas and improve connections with the rest of the city.

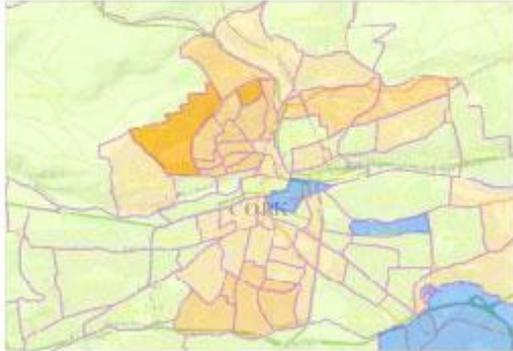
RAPID has worked with various sports bodies to set up summer camps for young people. Another youth café was created in 2010 in addition to the 2 youth cafés which were set up since the RAPID programme began.

Community facilities such as halls and resource centres provide an essential function for people to socialise and meet as well as providing for general recreational and other needs. Works were completed on upgrading The Hut community facility at Gurrabraher, while a new community and services building in Knocknaheeny has also been provided. This also encompasses a citizen's information office and a day centre for the elderly.

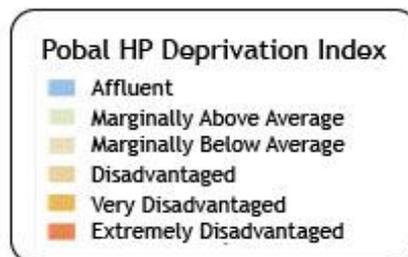
The Cork City Northwest Regeneration Masterplan & Implementation Report was adopted in November 2011. The masterplan sets out a strategy for new residential neighbourhoods, retail and public open spaces for recreational and amenity purposes. The Regeneration process will include a suite of projects to provide high quality housing and improved tenure mix, high quality built environment, improved social infrastructure and improvement in the economic circumstances of the area and its residents.

The 2011 Pobal HP Deprivation Index is the latest in a series of deprivation indices developed by Trutz Haase and Jonathan Pratschke. Based on the 2011 Census of Population, the index shows the level of overall affluence and deprivation. Three dimensions of affluence/disadvantage are identified: Demographic Profile, Social Class Composition and Labour Market Situation. Of the 71 Electoral Divisions in Cork City, 14 EDs improved their status (5 in the City Centre; 4 in the Southeast; 3 in the Southwest and 2 in the Northwest) while 3 EDs deteriorated (1 each in the Northwest, Northeast and City Centre). All others remained static.

2006 HP Deprivation Indices



2011 HP Deprivation Indices



Key Issues

Alongside the need to build strong and inclusive neighbourhoods, there is also the question of how to improve the health, safety and well-being of Cork City's population. One of the most critical areas of service provision is education and the Development Plan now has to give due consideration to the needs of educational development in the City over the lifetime of the plan.

Questions

- What is the general state of childcare?
- What is the state of neighbourhood medical services and facilities?
- Do some areas need more youth and other social services and facilities?
- Is there more crime in certain areas than there should be?
- Is it caused by poor planning and design?
- Have we the right schools in the right places?
- Are we adequately catering for an ageing population?
- Is Cork City a socially inclusive city?

8. City Centre

Background

Cork City Centre is the historic, cultural and commercial heart of Cork and the South West region and its success is fundamental to the well-being of the city and wider region. Cork City Centre enjoys a unique urban character and sense of place. Its particular combination of streets and spaces framed by buildings of character, combined with activity, vibrancy and culture all combine to give Cork and its historic city centre its charm and uniqueness. The health and vibrancy of the city centre is also an asset to the economic health and success of the metropolitan area. A City Centre Strategy is in preparation at present and will feed into the new Development Plan policies.

Issues

Employment

The City Centre is the symbol of the vibrancy and vitality of Cork City. It contains a diverse range of primary uses (including retail, office and public service functions), which complement each other and support a range of other services.

The City Centre remains the area of the city with most jobs, i.e. 34% or 24,175 of Cork City's workforce are employed there. The challenge however is that while employment in the city as a whole fell by 2% the City Centre sector experienced a decrease of 13% (3,521) from 27,696 employees to 24,175 between 2006-2011. This is a worrying trend and one which needs proactive and co-ordinated action to remedy.

Population

Despite a fall in the overall population of Cork City from 119,418 in 2006 to 119,230 in 2011 the City Centre has seen a significant increase in overall population (approx. 11.8% to a total of 13,490) over the same period. Outside of the SE sector (+4.2%) the City Centre was the only other city sector to witness a population increase over the period. This increase has been registered at a time of falling household size across the entire city highlighting the impact of new build high quality residential schemes and the growing popularity of the City Centre as a place of residence for an increasing number of people. Currently the City Centre accommodates approximately 11.3% (up from 10% in 2006) of the city's population.

Other

Cork City Centre is the commercial and cultural heart of Cork city and of the wider city region (population c. 300,000). While there has been significant investment in the public realm and in private sector development in the last decade, the city centre faces increasing challenges, particularly in the current economic climate. Employment is falling (see above), vacancy, dereliction and under-use are on the increase and competition from the suburbs for office development and retail spend is significant. While there have been some new retail developments in prime areas in recent years, the retail function of other parts of the city centre has declined, while older office buildings also have significant vacancy.

Whilst the City Centre has changed for the better significant challenges and opportunities lie ahead. Increasing the numbers of those employed and living in the City Centre along with easing

access into and around the city are issues we need to tackle effectively in the new City Development Plan. Maintaining and developing Cork City as an attractive, vibrant and unique place to do business, to visit and to live must be a top priority.

A proactive response to address these problems in the city centre is required. There is a need to re-examine the role of the City Centre and to look at what mixture of uses and functions it should aim to have in the future. A healthy city centre is vital to the future success of the city region.

Questions

Securing Economic Vitality

- Does the economic / business offer within the City Centre need to be improved?
- What is holding the City Centre back – is it the range of shopping facilities, lack of employment opportunities, or a limited range of leisure or cultural pursuits?
- How can we deal with vacant shops and commercial buildings in the City Centre? Are temporary ‘pop-up’ shops a solution or should financial incentives or business supports be considered to encourage renewed commercial activity?
- How can the existing older and vacant office accommodation in the City Centre be put to better use?
- Do you think that the early evening economy in the City Centre needs to be improved?
- How can we nurture a family friendly environment in the City Centre?
- Should we direct future leisure and cultural uses to particular parts of the City Centre?
- Do you think the City Centre would benefit from coordinated late night shopping and how could it be promoted?

Creating a Sense of Place

- Which areas or streets do you think would benefit from environmental improvement?
- Do you have any general suggestions for making the city centre a more attractive place to visit?
- Should there be a limit on building heights in the City Centre?
- What, if anything, can the Plan do about stalled developments in the City Centre?
- Do you think the Plan should specifically identify new sites for office and retail development?
- Do you think the Plan should specifically identify new sites for residential development? If so, what types of housing are needed, e.g. apartments, terraced, semi-detached?

Enhancing Movement & Accessibility

- What can be done to revitalise the two main public transport hubs in the City Centre (the Bus Station and Kent Railway Station)?
- How can we reduce the amount of non-essential car based traffic in the City Centre, whilst maintaining access facilities to encourage visitors and shoppers
- Looking to the future, do we need more or less car parking provision in the City Centre? Do you think Cork City would benefit from more Park & Ride sites serving the City Centre?
- Where in the City Centre, in your view, does the pedestrian environment need to be improved most?
- Do you think the environment for cyclists within and around the City Centre is both safe and functional? If not, what could be done to improve it?

9. Environmental Infrastructure & Climate Change

Introduction

A safe, clean and healthy environment is very important to the future social and economic development of the City. All new developments should respect the receiving environment by seeking to minimise the generation of waste, maintain air and water quality and promote sustainable energy use and conservation. There is mounting evidence that the global climate is changing (as a result of human activity) resulting in rising sea levels, an increasing frequency of extreme weather events and threat of flooding episodes.

Review

Significant progress has been made in the City regarding the provision and management of water and drainage infrastructure, waste management and sustainable energy use promotion.

Although there is sufficient water supply and foul sewer capacity meet current demand, the City Council will shortly commence development of a new water treatment plant on the Lee Road and a tertiary wastewater treatment plant at Carrigrenan to meet future capacity demands.

Water Supply infrastructure has recently been updated with a new inter-connector at the Tivoli Industrial Estate, and pipeline connecting the Inniscarra Reservoir and the Wilton Road Roundabout. The tender process for the Wilton Roundabout to the Lee Road inter-connector will commence in 2013. Pipe renewal works in Shandon Street and the Lower Glanmire Road will take place in 2013 thus reducing waste through leakage.

The City's Waste Management Plan 2004 -2009 was evaluated in 2012. In line with national waste management policy set out in 'A Resource Opportunity - Waste Management Policy in Ireland' published in July 2012, a new Regional Waste Management Plan shall be prepared for the 'Southern Region' consisting of the whole of Munster and the Counties of Kilkenny, Carlow and Wexford. Work is expected to commence in 2013 on the new plan.

The redevelopment of the former Kinsale Road landfill site as a 50 hectare public park and leisure facility through the Tramore Valley Park Masterplan was launched in August 2012. The City's waste collection service was transferred to a private operator in August 2011.

The final report of the Lee Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (Lee CFRAMS) is due to be published in 2013 and will form the basis of the City Council's flood risk assessment and management within the City and inform strategic land-use planning decisions.

Key Issues

It is crucial that the City Council, through the Development Plan, responds to climate change by making sure that new developments are designed to lessen and adapt to the effects of climate change. A key priority includes measures to reduce energy demand. A major opportunity is to focus on integrating land use and public transport as a key strategy in sustainable energy use.

Tackling climate change, ensuring a constant and quality water supply for existing and future development and protecting against flooding are among the issues facing the City. Under the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework and the Planning & Development Amendment Act 2010, the Development Plan is required to contain an additional mandatory objective for the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including the promotion of measures to reduce energy demand and man-made greenhouse gas emissions and address the necessity for adaptation to climate change, having regard to location, layout and design of new development.

Questions

- What do you think are the most challenging environmental issues facing Cork City?
- Which infrastructural improvements (water supply, waste management, sustainable energy, telecommunications, etc.) should take priority within the City?
- How should the development plan ensure that Cork City retains its high quality environment and that new development enhances our city?
- How should the development plan encourage energy efficiency in new buildings and stimulate the use of renewable energy supplies?
- How can the City tackle the detrimental effects of climate change?

10. Sports and Recreation

Introduction

At the national level there is a requirement for local government to ensure that places have an adequate supply of open space and recreational amenities to the right standard to meet the needs of the community for reasons of health and well-being. Open space and recreational facilities are required in the form of parks, amenity spaces within housing areas, sports grounds and facilities, allotments, community gardens and other facilities. Open space in the city also makes a very significant contribution to the landscape of the city, transport, biodiversity, and flood management, which are all national issues with a local dimension. The development plan is also required to identify public rights of way.

Where do we want to be?

A diverse range of recreation and open spaces facilities, such as sports pitches, public parks, amenity spaces, indoor sports centres, and walking / cycling routes are vital to the health and wellbeing of Cork's residents, as well as those working and visiting the city. This green infrastructure also provides a key ingredient for making the city an attractive place to live and do business in, and therefore is key to the way people perceive Cork. We want everybody to have access to an appropriate level of provision to the right quality.

Cork has a range of high quality open space and recreational facilities provided by the public, private and voluntary sectors. However, there will continue to be a need for additional facilities and improvements to existing resources to raise standards and to serve an expanding population in the metropolitan area. The city has been taking steps to increase the levels of open space provision to match need but there are still gaps. Improving Cork's recreational, sporting and green infrastructural offer takes both time and resources and significant improvements are being made in your name but there is still a lot more to do.

Review

Substantial improvements to Cork's sport and recreational infrastructure have been achieved over the last 4 years. Including:

New parks have been opened at:

- The Military Cemetery Park in the Glen in 2010; and
- Saint Anne's Park in Shandon in 2010.

Masterplans for the design of new City-scale parks at [Tramore Valley Park](#) and [Marina Park](#) and the refurbishment of [Fitzgerald Park](#) were underway in 2012 and are due for delivery from 2013 onwards. Cork City Council and Cork County Council have also started to forge new relationships around recreational provision for the benefit of the whole metropolitan population.

Three new City Council pitches were opened at Mahon Estuary Drive in 2010; Land for new sports pitches at Inchigaggin Lane has been acquired by the City Council, partly to replace the pitches being decommissioned to provide the proposed Carrigrohane Park and Ride facility

The city currently has two allotment facilities in Blackpool and Churchfield;
New pedestrian bridges across the river opened to provide new pedestrian cycle routes at the UCC Westgate Building and Victoria Cross;
A number of new playgrounds were opened, including one at the Military Cemetery Park

Issues

- Cork City Centre has a very limited supply of public open space and public sports facilities to meet the needs of residents and workers. This has a negative impact on the attractiveness of the City Centre to live in for all household types but particularly families.
- Some neighbourhoods have a shortage of amenity spaces, parks and greenery;
- The South Centre and North-West sectors of Cork also suffer from a deficit of public open space provision and sports facilities compared to other areas of the city, although the shortage is not as severe as the City Centre;
- There is a lack of larger multi-purpose parks in the city to provide for the needs of its citizens;
- The City has a limited supply of playgrounds for younger children and facilities for older people;
- Does the City have adequate sports facilities to meet the needs of its citizens;
- How will the City fund the management of existing infrastructure and the development / management of proposed infrastructure;
- The City Council is required to have a record of public rights of way that it wants to protect in the development plan. This will need to be based upon a functioning database.

Questions

- Is there an adequate quantity and quality of play, open space and recreational facilities in your area?
- Given the shortages that exist in the City Centre and historic areas (Blackpool Valley, Saint Luke's and South Parish) – how can we meet recreational need in these areas? Are there existing spaces that could be put to use as temporary or permanent spaces that would help to meet need and improve the appearance of neighbourhoods?
- How could the qualities of Cork's parks, sports facilities and open spaces be improved?
- Where should Cork's new larger parks go in Metropolitan Cork go (i.e. including the areas outside of the present City boundary)? What should the priority parks be? How will people get to them?
- Do we need more allotments and community gardens? Where should they go?
- Should some all-weather and indoor sporting facilities be provided instead of more traditional playing fields? What minority sports aren't adequately catered for and how could this need be met?
- Are there existing facilities that could be shared to help meet local needs? Where?
- Which areas of Cork lack trees, wildlife and walkway / cycleways?
- Should a green infrastructure approach that identifies a strategic green space network be included in the plan? How could open spaces be better connected?
- What are the public rights of way near you that need protection?
- Is there a workable strategy that could be developed, which would maximise the use of all sports and recreation facilities in the city, whether owned by the state, communities, institutions, organisations, so as to maximise their availability and use for citizens?

11. Arts, Culture and Tourism

Cork City Council has a good track record in investing in and supporting the arts and is committed to culture acting as one of the key pillars of our city. The city has benefited in recent years from sustained capital investment in the provision of physical space for the arts most recently with the development of Triskel Christchurch and the acquisition of St. Luke's Church. In addition, the City Council continues to actively support and facilitate such festivals such as the Cork Midsummer Festival, the St. Patrick's Day Festival, a Cork Christmas Celebration as well as numerous community arts events.

Review

Since 2011 the Council's arts service now falls within the remit of the Tourism, Events, Arts and Marketing Unit (T.E.A.M.). This unit aims to create synergies across Cork City Council so that investment into the cultural sector is sustained and maximised for social, cultural and economic benefit.

Cork City has developed its own tourism and visitor economy capitalising on its qualities as a cultural destination and an area of local distinctiveness with the city acting as a gateway and a base for regional tourism. The city itself appeals in growing numbers to an independent, culturally aware visitor, however it is often the case that visitors by pass the city en-route to the scenic areas of West Cork with the city failing to retain tourists and their spend. The initial priority of T.E.A.M. is to address perceived gaps in tourist infrastructure and to subsequently market the city once these have been supplied. To this end the City Council's Tourism Strategy sets out a range of measures including the planned opening of Elizabeth Fort as a visitor attraction, to develop a National Genealogy/Diaspora Centre and to enhance the visitor experience through improving legibility and signage in the city centre. Implementation of the measures in the strategy will significantly enhance the city tourism offer over time but will require state investment to assist their development.

Key Issues

Developing an understanding and appreciation of the concepts of place identity and image as they relate to the city will help to underpin any future tourism strategies. As such the City Council has a role to play in ensuring that the city's cultural heritage – in its *widest* meaning² - is valued by citizen and visitor alike. With the growing awareness of food provenance and low food miles and an increasing awareness of and desire to experience unique food products, there exists an opportunity for somewhere like Cork City to fulfil its ambition of becoming 'Food Capital of Ireland'. Likewise there is potential to protect, enhance and market the city's natural assets, built heritage as well as the 'spaces between the buildings' for artistic facilities and festivals/events to the benefit of both citizen and tourist alike. The role of artistic functions and facilities and educational facilities in counteracting dereliction and vacancy in the city centre also needs to be examined and promoted.

² *Cultural heritage not only refers to museums, archives and libraries but can include such aspects of our heritage as language, music, genealogy, folklore, sport, traditional food and local history and helps shape an understanding of our city as a unique and special place'*

Source: <http://www.corkcityheritage.ie/cultural_heritage/index.shtml>

Questions

- Are the arts sector and its facilities accessible to all in the city?
- Does the city adequately promote its rich cultural heritage (in particular maritime) to tourists?
- Are there any arts facilities that you feel are lacking in the city?
- Are you happy with the diversity/range of cultural offer in the city?
- How can our food culture be celebrated/promoted to visitors to the city?
- How can the city attract tourists to spend longer time in the city?
- Are there any events/festivals which should be improved upon or celebrated if not already done?
- How would you rate the range, type and standard of tourist accommodation in the city? Are there are gaps in this sector that you perceive?
- Do you feel that the opening hours of cultural attractions/facilities are satisfactory?
- Is there potential for greater linkage with tourism facilities in the county area/nationally/internationally?
- What makes Cork distinct and how can the city market this to a wider audience?
- How can the city make better use of its natural environment and maintain and enhance its built heritage in order to offer a unique visitor experience?
- How can we ensure that existing artistic functions are retained/expanded in city locations rather than lost as part of redevelopment proposals? How can zoning policies and the Development Plan/Development Contribution Scheme/Per Cent for Art Scheme support this objective?
- How can the City Council engage with the artistic community in the area of the design of streets and spaces to ensure that such places can easily play host to major events and festivals?
- How can the City Council grant a wider platform to places where art is *made* in addition to those places where art is shown/displayed – signage systems/walking trails?

12. Natural Heritage / Biodiversity

Introduction

The term biodiversity is an attempt to represent in a single word the rich tapestry of life on earth and the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living things. It encompasses the wide range of living plants and animals in the world and their respective ecosystems from the smallest insect in the garden to the largest whales in the ocean.

Cork City's biodiversity includes a wide variety of plants and trees as well as insects, fish, birds and mammals all of which have managed to adapt to life alongside humans in our urban environment. A range of sites within the Cork City area are protected under national and EU legislation. These include the Cork Harbour Special Protection Area, Douglas Estuary, the Lough and the River Lee. In addition throughout the city there are undesignated wildlife sites which support biodiversity and have the potential to provide wildlife connections.

Review

A number of awareness raising and educational initiatives have been carried out through the Cork City Heritage Plan including projects such as tree surveys, publications and biodiversity training. In addition a number of small biodiversity projects carried out by local groups and organisations have been supported through the Cork City Heritage Grant Scheme.

Key Issues

- Protecting the designated sites within and adjacent to Cork City eg Cork Harbour SPA
- Identifying and protecting non designated wildlife spaces and corridors to promote biodiversity
- Protecting trees in Cork City which currently do not benefit from statutory protection
- Protecting protected species of plants and animals in the city eg bats, otters, little robin etc.
- Control of invasive species eg Japanese Knotweed

Questions

- What are the most important biodiversity assets of the Cork City
- What are the major threats to Cork City's biodiversity
- How do we balance the city's development needs and the protection of our natural heritage
- What are the priority non designated areas for nature in the City
- What are the priority areas for tree and woodlands for protection in the city

13. Built Heritage

The consideration and conservation of the city's heritage is an integral part of Cork City Council's plans and programmes for the physical, economic and social planning and development of the city. This section is divided into a sub-section on Archaeology and a second on Architectural Conservation

Archaeology

Introduction

Cork City's archaeological heritage is protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004) and the Planning Acts 2000 – 2010. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is an inventory of sites and areas of archaeological significance. There are 112 no. RMP sites within Cork City, the largest site is in the city centre, comprising of the medieval historic core and including 54 no. archaeological sites.

Review

The following are some key activities under this heading since 2009:

- Archaeology Lecture Series: Cork Revealed – What Stones and Bones Can Tell Us in the City Library, April – October 2009.
- Cork City's Burial Places published in 2011
- The book entitled Laneways of Medieval Cork was re-printed in 2010.
- Medieval Day Celebration and Archaeology Roadshow in Bishop Lucy Park during Heritage Week in 2009 & 2011 to celebrate Irish Walled Towns Day.
- An archaeological excavation took place at Christ Church as part of the refurbishment works.
- Archaeological monitoring by the City Archaeologist of Cornmarket Street Streetscape Renewal Scheme and works at Dr. Mary Hearn Park, Shandon.
- Cork City Council represented on the management committee of the Irish Walled Towns Network.

Key Issues

- There is a need to assess and review the cumulative impact that development (or lack of) has had on the historic core. Is there a finite physical capacity for development? How much archaeological excavation is appropriate? Have we dug enough of the city?
- How do we maximize the value of Industrial Archaeological Heritage? Is it sufficient to simply record a building prior to demolition?
- The tourism and economic potential of the archaeological heritage of the city is acknowledged.
- Many open space/amenity areas are located on former burial grounds. Are new zoning/policies required to acknowledge this?
- Implementation of the Recommendations of the Management Plan for the City Walls, e.g. interpretation, examination of the potential of public display.
- Increased awareness of the circuit of the medieval city is required.

Questions

- How can we facilitate development while protecting our archaeological heritage and the character of the historic streetscapes?
- How can we preserve and protect Cork's important industrial archaeological heritage?
- In order to protect former burial grounds should we designate them as open spaces / amenity areas?
- How can we promote the City's Medieval Wall and archaeological heritage?

Conservation

Introduction

Cork has a wealth of built fabric of significance dating from the 18th / 19th centuries, some rare elements pre-dating this period and some significant structures from the twentieth century also. Structures include unique Georgian buildings, distinct urban and rural vernacular buildings, a large majority of its nineteenth century single-storey workers cottages and a wealth of Religious and Institutional buildings.

The *Planning & Development Act 2000* provides the basis for the conservation and enhancement of architectural heritage. There are two principal tools for the protection of these assets: the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs).

The Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has identified 2,772 structures of architectural heritage significance in two surveys of Cork (2003 and 2011) and included these on the National Inventory for Architectural Heritage (NIAH). These structures are recommended for protection by the Minister.

The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) identifies those buildings that benefit from statutory protection of their architectural character. Buildings can be protected where they are of architectural, historical, technical, scientific, social value or a combination of these significances. There are 1,141 buildings protected by inclusion on the RPS. Thirty-one designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) provide statutory protection to the character and appearance of areas of architectural and historic significance and help protect 1,205 NIAH structures.

Review

Since the adoption of the Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015 four structures have been added to the RPS and no ACAs have been designated. A batch of structures in the South Docks area are currently being considered for inclusion on the RPS. Approximately 1,000 structures additional structures on the NIAH have yet to be considered for inclusion on the RPS. Further additions will be made as resources permit.

The national Conservation Grant Scheme was run in 2009 and 2010 but after this ceased to be available due to national funding cuts. In response to this lack of funding the Structures at Risk Fund supported two Buildings at risk in 2011 and 2012. In addition to this the City Council has run an Architectural Conservation Areas Grant Scheme in 2011 and 2012, and so far this has incentivised investment and conservation of 5 buildings in the Shandon / Blackpool area.

The Heritage Open Day is also a successful annual event that promotes and opens up Cork's unique architectural heritage to the public.

The slow-down in the development industry has resulted in a lack of investment in historic building fabric but also presents an opportunity for 'slow urbanism' to see buildings benefit from incremental investment and long-term sustainable conservation and re-use of buildings, given the right conditions.

Keeping Cork's Characteristic Buildings In Use (December 2012), a study commissioned by the Council, has identified a range of actions to help improve understanding, custodianship and interventions to historic buildings in Cork. The actions identified will be explored in more detail in 2013 and projects will be proposed for delivery over the next few years to help achieve better conservation practice and conservation outcomes in Cork.

Key Issues

- Increasing vacancy, deterioration and dereliction of Cork's historic building stock, particularly in the City Centre and the historic Blackpool / Shandon / Barrack Street spine, and former institutional buildings.
- How to make City Centre living more attractive to encourage continuous occupation and investment in Cork's historic building stock;
- Increased vacancy of historic buildings in non-residential use in the City Centre and historic spine;
- City Centre development proposals include large floorplate buildings that propose the demolition of historic city centre buildings and /or the retention of building facades;
- More recent suburban buildings that make significant contributions to the character and local distinctiveness of suburban areas are often undervalued.
- There has been extensive loss of buildings of industrial archaeological value;
- There are many areas of the City that are worthy of protection through Architectural Conservation Areas.
- Historic elements within the public realm, such as the quay walls, surfacing materials, street furniture, street signage, etc require protection.
- Need for a joined-up Cork City Council system for dealing with buildings at risk;
- Long term vacancy of upper floors over shops results in prolonged neglect of fabric. Need to ensure upper floor use is attractive for owners and occupiers;
- Need for additional grant funding to encourage investment in historic buildings and fabric and encourage re-use.

Questions

- Which areas of the Cork should benefit from new architectural conservation areas?
- What particular buildings, structures should be protected through the Record of Protected Structures?
- How can the City Council encourage bringing buildings back into use and encourage a demand for period properties in Cork's historic areas?
- Should the City Council devote more resources to tackling buildings at risk? What should the priorities be?
- What is unique about Cork's built heritage? What should we do to celebrate this?
- Would the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas and Areas of Special Planning Control rather than additions to the Record of Protected Structures be more effective and pragmatic method of protecting the built heritage of the City?

14. Environmental Assessments

Introduction

In order to fully incorporate environmental considerations into the plan making process, the City Council will carry out a number of environmental assessments in parallel with the plan process. These assessments are Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is defined as a process for evaluating at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental quality and potential significant environmental impacts of policies, plans or programmes and to ensure that any potential impacts are assessed during their preparation and before they are adopted. The Strategic Environmental Assessment of the City Development Plans is mandatory under EU Directive 2001/42/EC.

The SEA Process

The SEA process runs in tandem with the city development plan process and involves the preparation of an Environmental Report, where the likely significant environmental effects are identified and evaluated. The process commences with the 'scoping' stage to determine the range of issues within the environmental report and includes consultation with environmental authorities, interest groups and the general public. Scoping and consultation of the SEA coincides with the initial public consultation phase of the development plan process.

Preparation of the environmental report coincides with the preparation of the draft city development plan. The public display and consultation stage of the environmental report and the draft development plan coincide.

Proposed material amendments to the draft development plan (if any) would trigger a re-assessment of the Environmental Report. On adoption of the city development plan, both the city development plan and the environmental report are published. Implementation of the city development plan coincides with the monitoring of significant environmental effects.

Content of the Environmental Report

The Environmental Report should identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the city development plan. The report sets out the current state of the existing environment; strategic environmental objectives; the alternative development plan scenarios / strategies considered significant issues and vulnerabilities, changing trends and specific environmental objectives.

Environmental objectives include biodiversity, flora & fauna; population & human health; soil; water; air quality & climate; cultural heritage; landscape; and material assets. The Report will show how the (Draft) City Development Plan has been assessed against the environmental objectives during its preparation to avoid as far as possible any negative significant environmental impacts arising from its implementation. It will also show that alternative development scenarios were considered and demonstrate informed decision making on these issues.

Appropriate Assessment

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC as amended) and the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC as amended) provide for the designation of 'Natura 2000 Sites' or 'European Sites' that are important for the protection of certain habitats and species of biodiversity importance.

Cork City Council is obliged to assess the impacts of policies and objectives of the City Development Plan on these 'Natura 2000 Sites,' and to determine whether or not the Plan could have negative consequences for the habitats or plant and animal species for which any of these sites are designated. The assessment process is called an *Appropriate Assessment (AA)* or *Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA)* and must be carried out for all stages of the process of making the Cork City Development Plan over the next two years.

Flood Risk Assessment

The City Council will carry out a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment of the policies and objectives of the plan. This assessment will provide a broad assessment of flood risk within the city and inform strategic land-use planning decisions.

Programme for the Review of the Cork City Council Development Plan 2015 - 2021

Development Plan Stages	2013										2014										2015							
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M		
Public Consultation (Round 1)	█																											
Manager's Report	█																											
Manager's Report to Council	█																											
Preparation of Draft Plan	█																											
Draft Plan to Council	█																											
Public Notice of Draft Plan	█																											
Public Consultation (Round 2)	█																											
Manager's Report to Council	█																											
Draft Plan with Council	█																											
Public Notice to Amend Plan	█																											
Public Consultation (Round 3)	█																											
Manager's Report	█																											
Council Make Plan	█																											
Plan comes into effect	█																											



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**Planning Policy
Strategic Planning and Economic Development
Cork City Council, City Hall**