

**Proposed Variation No. 6 (Tramore Road/Kinsale Road Site)
to the Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021**

Planning Report

7th August 2019



**Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council**

1.0 Introduction

This report sets out a proposal to rezone a c. 3.2 hectare site located at the junction of Tramore Road/Kinsale Road (referred to as “the Site” in this report) from “Light Industrial” to “Residential, Local Services, and Institutional Uses” through a variation to the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 (“the Development Plan”). Public notification of the proposed variation was given on 27 September 2019 (see details in Appendix A). Environmental screening reports of the proposed variation are included in Appendix B.

2.0 Site Context

As shown in Figure 1, the Site is located at the junction of Tramore Road and Kinsale Road. It was developed as a creamery in the 1950’s but all buildings associated with this previous use have since been demolished (see aerial photo below). The Site is currently vacant. The site owners have proposed rezoning of the site to allow for consideration of a planning application for a primary care centre and residential development.

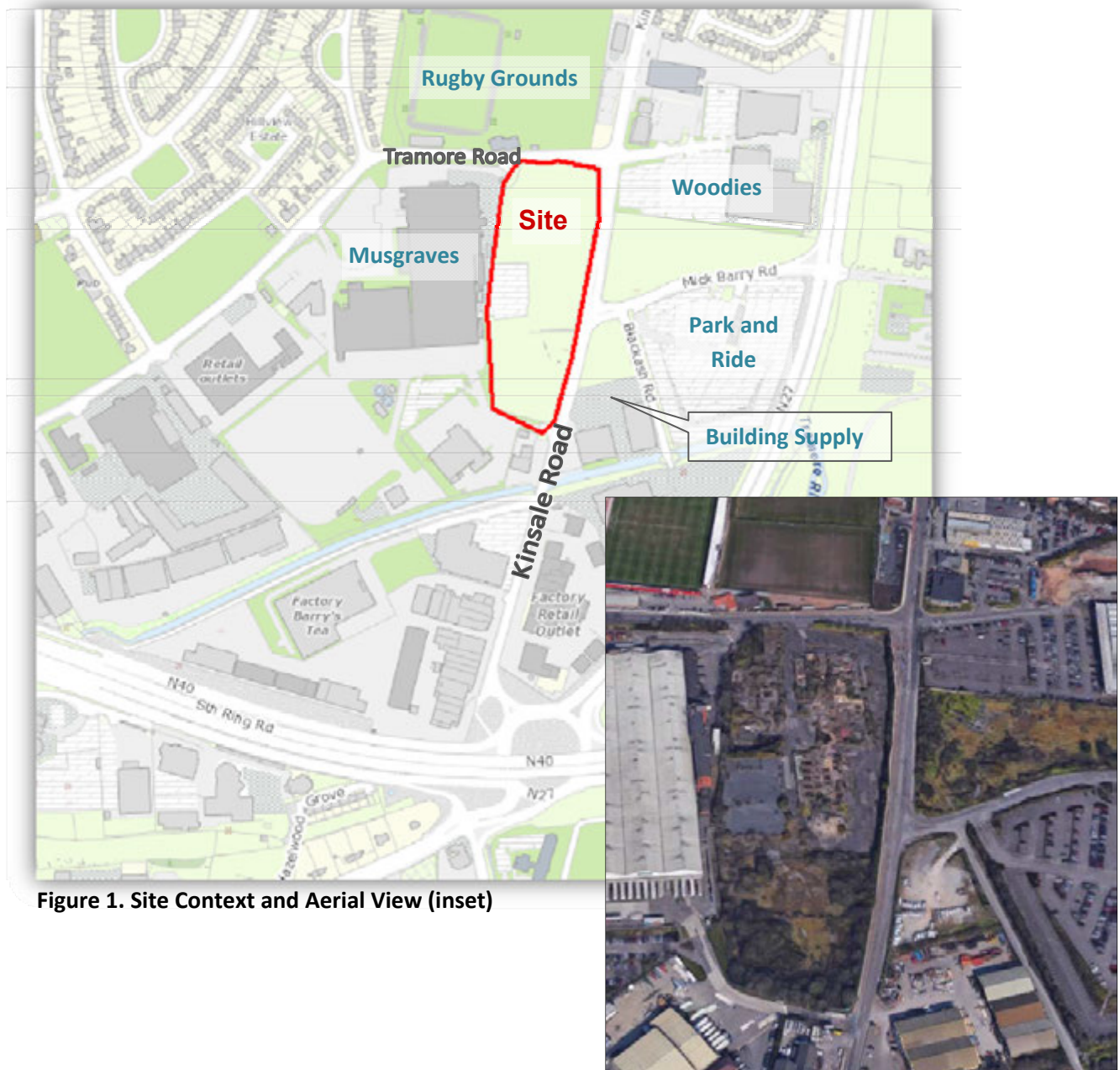


Figure 1. Site Context and Aerial View (inset)

3.0 Strategic Planning Context

- The National Planning Framework includes a target for at least 40% of all new housing to be delivered on infill or brownfield sites within existing built-up areas.
- The Core Strategy in the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 identifies the area in which the site is located as “Future Development Area” (see extract from the plan in Appendix C).
- Chapter 14 of the Development Plan includes an objective for a strategy to facilitate the redevelopment of underutilised land in the area (see Appendix C).

4.0 Reasons for Rezoning Proposal

The proposed rezoning is considered to be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area for the following five key reasons:

- 1) The site is currently vacant. Redevelopment of this vacant and underutilised site is desirable in terms of both general planning principles and national policy on brownfield reuse.
- 2) There is not a strong demand for new light industrial uses at this location (i.e. the current zoning objective for the site) and the rezoning of this site would be in accordance with provisions set out in the Development Plan in relation to light industrial uses. Section 3.35 of the Development Plan states:

*“There is a need to protect space for these uses due to increasing land values and higher density developments and this can be done effectively through zoning. The general strategy will be to retain existing light industrial areas, **apart from those specifically identified for alternative uses or renewal.**” [Emphasis added]*

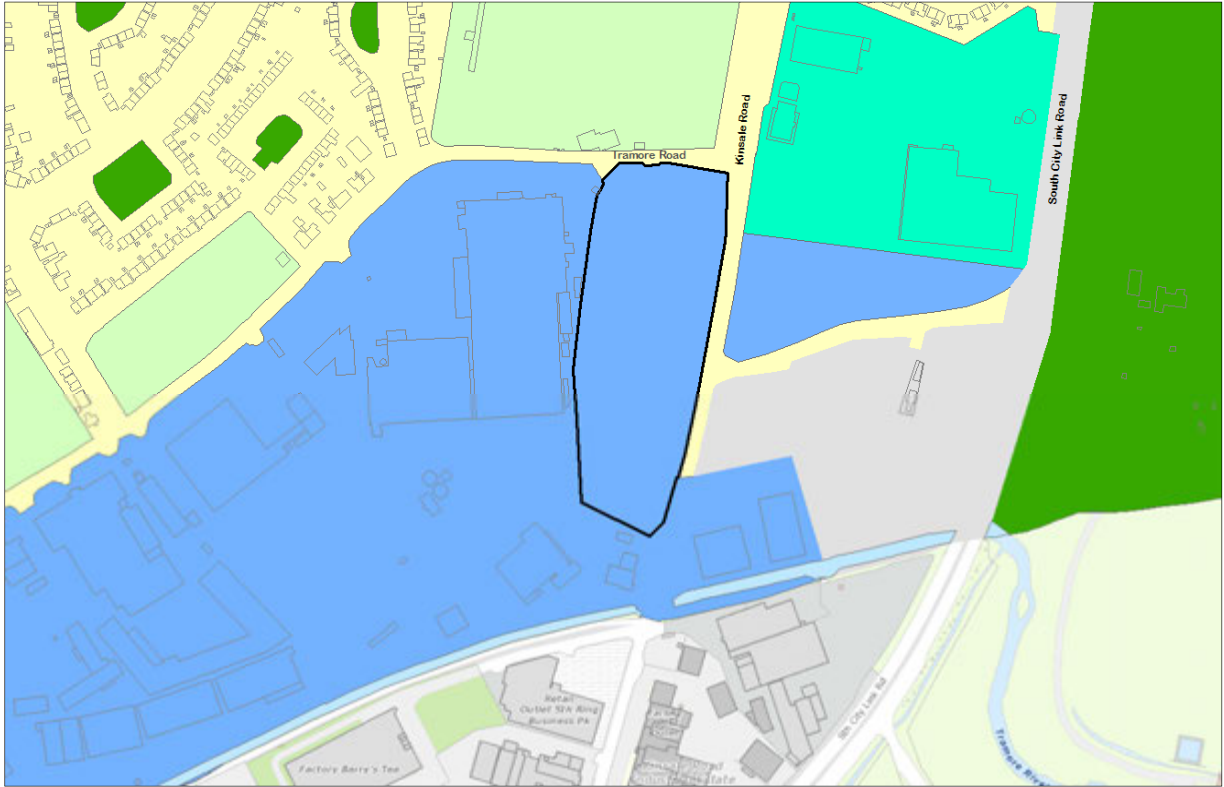
This site has been specifically identified for renewal in Chapter 14 of the Development Plan, so it complies with Section 3.35.

- 3) There is an urgent need for more residential development in Cork City (i.e. the proposed new zoning objective). The site is suitable for residential development with regard to accessibility and proximate amenities. These include:

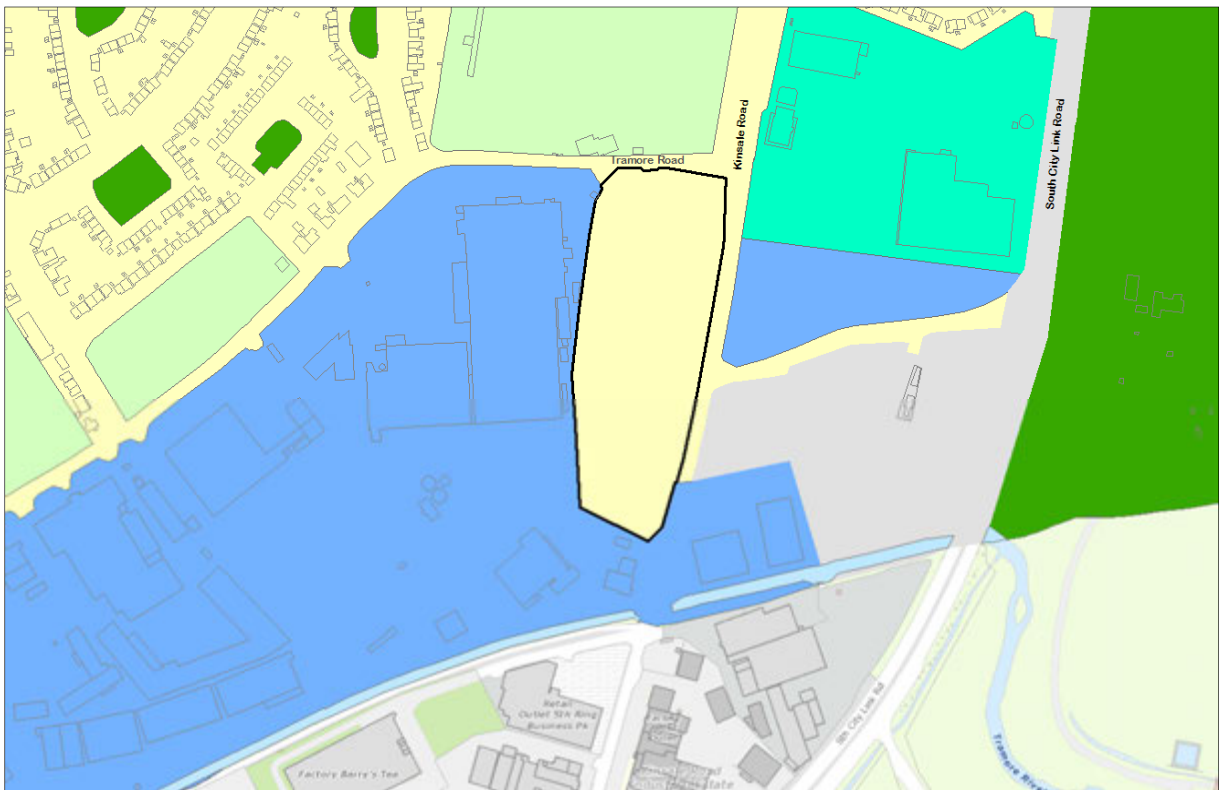
Access	Well developed footpaths 10-15 minute cycle from the heart of the City Centre On a cross-city bus route
Foodshops	3 shops within 500 m of site (Aldi, Mace, Centra). The largest, Aldi, is approximately a ten-minute walk.
Primary Schools	Within 12-20 minute walk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaelscoil an Teaghlaigh • Maria Assumpta National School • Scoil Réalt na Maidaine • Scoil Criost Rí
Amenity Space	Tramore Valley Park (12 minute walk)

- 4) The key uses immediately surrounding the site comprise rugby grounds, light industrial uses, and retail warehousing. It is not considered that a residential use would be incompatible with these existing uses, subject to appropriate site layout and design at the planning

Figure 2. Existing Zoning and Proposed Change to Zoning



Existing Zoning Map 7 (Cork City Development Plan, Volume 2, page 8)



Proposed Amendment to Zoning Map 7

application stage. The site would form an extension of existing residential lands in the vicinity (see Figure 2). It is further envisioned that lands currently in lower value use in the area will transition to other uses in the medium- to long-term.

- 5) Finally, the HSE has established that the development of a primary care centre in the southern part of the city is a high priority and that this is one of the sites that meets HSE criteria, given its location relative to the intended customer base and its location on a bus route. Development Plan policies allow for planning applications for primary care centres to be considered on residentially zoned lands.

5.0 Conclusion

The proposed rezoning of 3.2 hectares of “Light Industry and Related Uses” zoned land to “Residential, Local Services & Institutional Uses” would facilitate an orderly redevelopment of the lands that are the subject of this report for residential and related uses. Providing residential development on this centrally-located brownfield site would be in keeping with policies set out in the National Planning Framework and with objectives for redevelopment in the Tramore Road area as set out in the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021. The proposed rezoning could facilitate further housing in the city, close to existing amenities. Given these factors, the proposed rezoning is considered to be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Appendix A: Notice of Proposed Variation

Notice is hereby given that Cork City Council, in accordance with Section 13(2) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended), has prepared the **Proposed Variation No. 6 (Tramore Road/Kinsale Road Site) of the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021**.

The proposed variation relates to the re-zoning of a 3.2 hectare site of the former creamery at the corner of Tramore Road and Kinsale Road, from “Light Industry and Related Uses” to “Residential, Local Services & Institutional Uses” in order to facilitate an orderly redevelopment of the subject lands for residential and related uses.

Copies of the proposed variation may be inspected at the following locations from 27th September to 25th October 2019, inclusive.

City Hall, Anglesea Street	10.00am - 4.00pm, Mon - Fri
Central Library, Grand Parade	10.00am - 5.30pm, Mon - Sat
Tory Top Library, Ballyphehane	10.00am - 5.30pm, Tues - Sat

The proposed variation can also be viewed online:

<https://www.corkcity.ie/councilservices/planning/developmentplan/citydevelopmentplan>

Written submissions received at City Hall by not later than 5.00 pm, 25th October 2019 will be taken into consideration before the making of the Proposed Variation.

Submissions should be addressed to:

Fearghal Reidy, Director of Services, Strategic & Economic Development Directorate, Cork City Council, City Hall; or email planningpolicy@corkcity.ie.

Dated: 27th September 2019

**Appendix B: Appropriate Assessment Screening
Report & Strategic Environmental Assessment
Screening Report**

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report

Proposed Variation (No.6 Tramore Road/Kinsale Road Site) to the Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021

1. Introduction and Terms of Reference

1.1 Introduction

This is an appropriate assessment screening of the proposed Variation No.6 to the Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021 in accordance with the requirements of Articles 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC). The relevant provisions of the Directive are set out in Section 1.2 of this report. This report evaluates the proposed variation to determine if it needs to be subject to an appropriate assessment.

1.2 Terms of Reference

Appropriate assessment is an assessment carried out under Articles 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive states:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications of the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive states:

“If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of economic or social nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.”

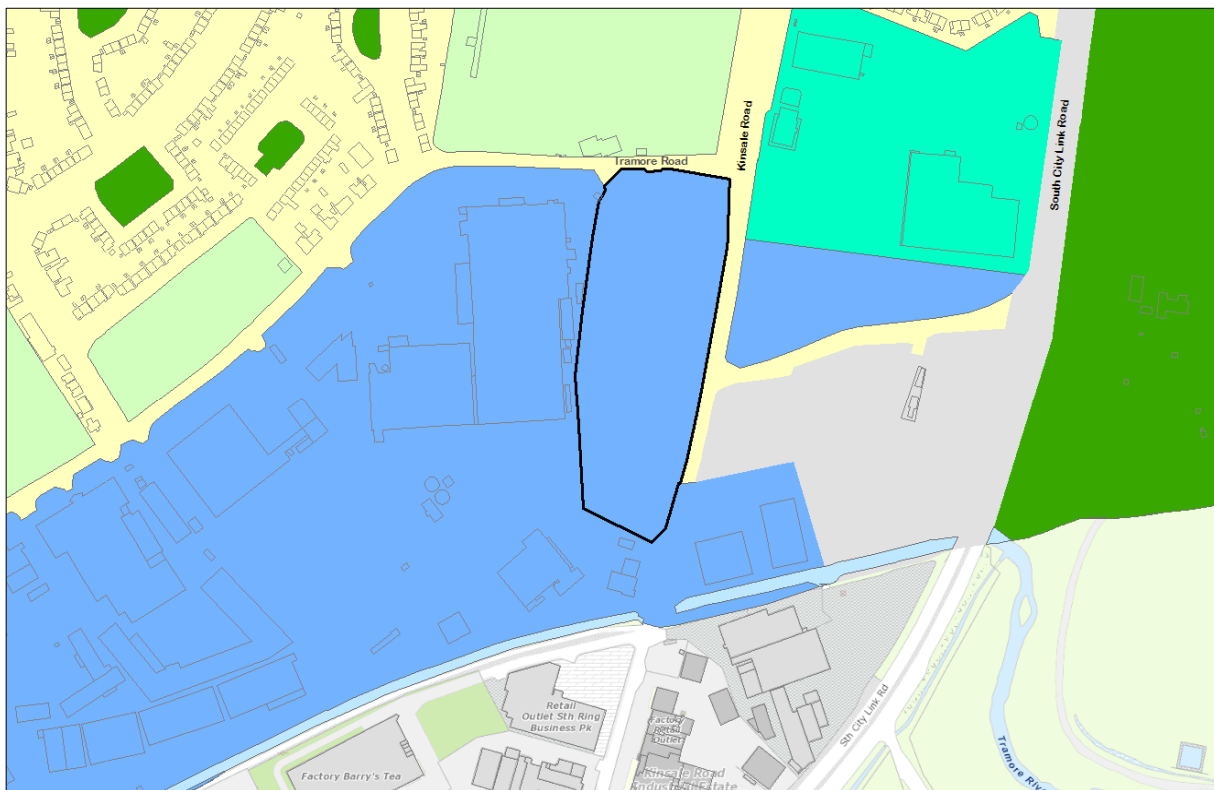
2. Screening Matrix

2.1 Brief description of the variation

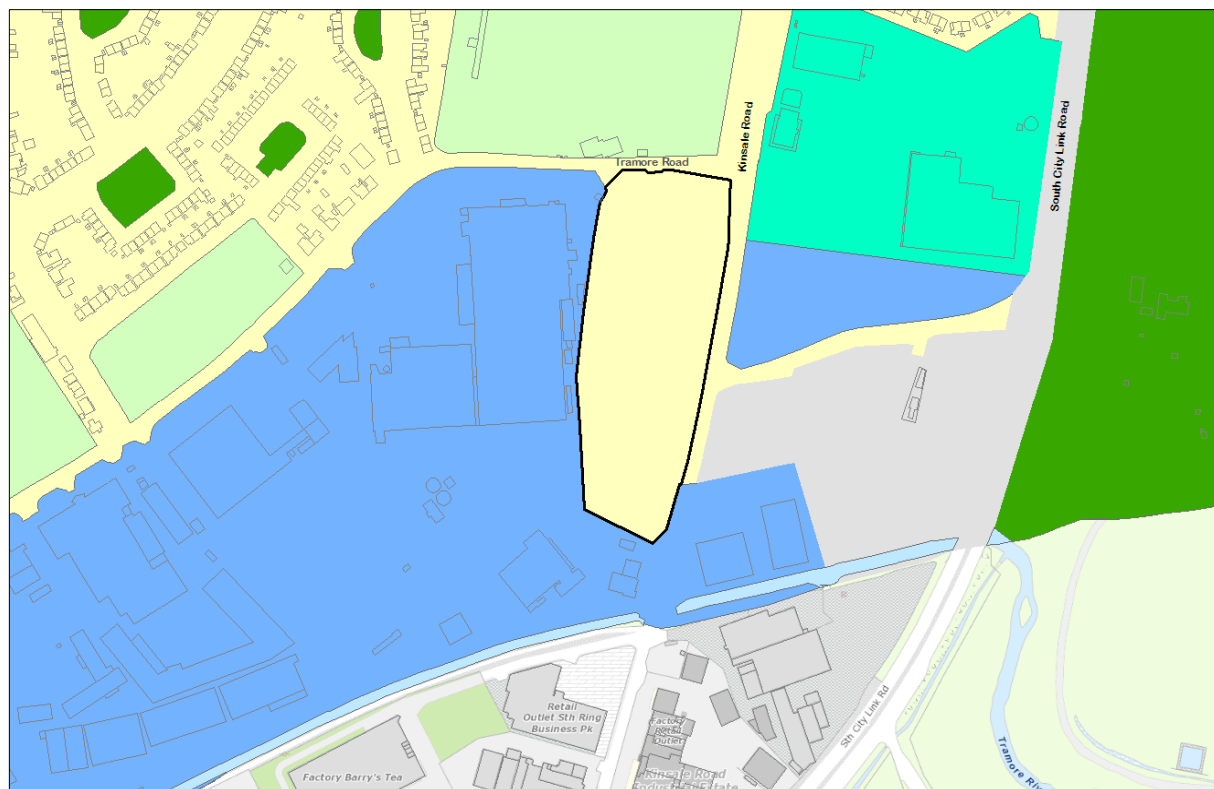
It is proposed to rezone circa 3.2 hectares of ““Light Industry & Related Uses,” zoned lands at the corner of Tramore Road and Kinsale Road; with the stated objective, “to provide for light industry (and related uses),” to “Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses,” with the stated objective “to protect and provide for residential uses, local services, institutional uses, and civic uses, having regard to employment policies outlined in Chapter 3 [of the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021].”

The proposed variation will therefore consist of a land use mapping amendment to Map 7, South Central Suburbs, (page 8) of Volume 2 to rezone the subject site from “Light Industry & Related Uses” to “Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses” as shown below.

Existing Map 7



Proposed Amendment to Map 7



The proposed variation does not propose any intensification of development or population increase for the city over and above that prescribed in the adopted Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021 which has already been the subject of Appropriate Assessment Screening (by RPS Environmental Consultants) prior to its adoption. It is estimated that the said lands may accommodate an increased residential population of up to a maximum of 980 persons in the area, (based on the site owner's estimate of a capacity up to 400 dwellings and the citywide average household size of 2.45 persons) resulting in a reduced number of employees and potential reduced traffic demands on local road network and transport infrastructure.

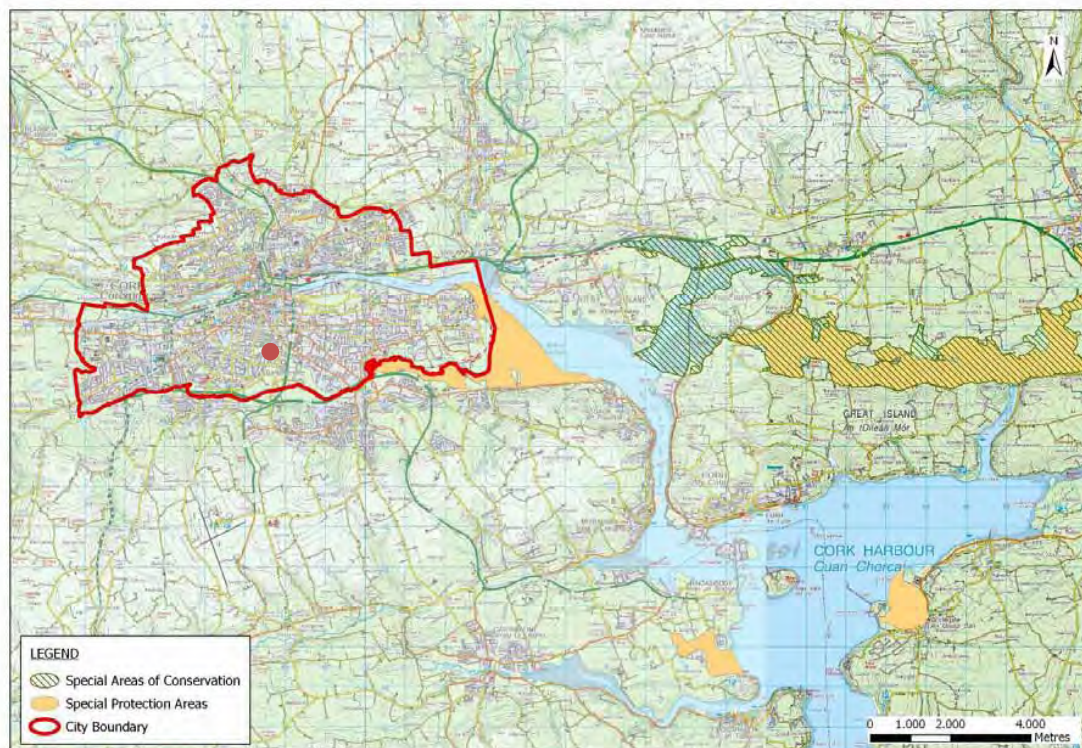
2.2 Brief Description of the Natura 2000 sites

There are no designated Natura 2000 sites within the boundary or within the immediate vicinity of the subject lands. The closest Natura 2000 site is the Cork Harbour SPA, (Site Code 040403) approximately 2.4 km metres east to the Douglas Estuary. The nearest candidate Special Areas of Conservation is 9km east of the subject lands.

Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code: 004030) covers much of the large sheltered, bay system into which the River Lee, which passes through Cork City, flows, including several river estuaries, principally those of the Rivers Lee, Douglas and Owenacurra. The zonings in the area of overlap are for open space and sports grounds. These zonings provide for sports grounds and open space. The SPA abuts the south & south-east boundary of the city, namely, the Mahon Peninsula, stretching from the Douglas Estuary to the Blackrock Observatory.

Great Island Channel cSAC (Site Code: 001058) is located 9 km east of the subject lands. The site stretches from Little Island to Midleton, with its southern boundary formed by Great Island. These Natura sites are identified in the figure below.

Figure 4 Natura 2000 sites downstream of Cork City



2.3 Assessment Criteria

Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to the Natura 2000 sites.

The plan will ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites.

Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 sites by virtue of:

- **Size and Scale**

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their size and scale shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- **Land Take**

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their land take shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- **Distance from the Natura 2000 site or key features of the site**

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites or their key features arising from their proximity shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Emissions (Disposal to land, water or air)

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their emissions (disposal to land, water or air) shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Excavation Requirements

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their excavation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Transportation Requirements

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their transportation requirements shall be permitted on the basis of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from their duration of construction, operation, decommissioning etc. shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Other

No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites arising from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Describe any likely changes to the sites arising as a result of:

- Reduction of habitat area

No projects giving rise to reduction of habitat areas for Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Disturbance of key species

No projects giving rise to significant disturbance to key species in Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Habitat or species fragmentation

No projects giving rise to significant habitat or species fragmentation of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Reduction in species density

No projects giving rise to significant reduction of species on Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.)

No projects giving rise to significant changes in key indicators of conservation value for Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

- Climate Change

No projects giving rise to significant adverse changes in climatological conditions affecting Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Describe any likely impacts on Natura 2000 sites as a whole in terms of:

- Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site:

No projects giving rise to significant, adverse interference with the key relationships that define the structure of Natura 2000 sites shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

- Loss: Not applicable
- Fragmentation: Not applicable
- Disruption: Not applicable
- Change to key elements of the sites (e.g. water quality etc.): Not applicable

Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known: Not applicable.

3. Finding of No Significant Effects Report Matrix

Name of project or plan

Proposed Variation (No. 6 Tramore Road/Kinsale Road Site) to the Cork City Development Plan 2015- 2021

Name and Location of Natura 2000 sites

Cork Harbour SPA. Site Code: 004030
Great Island Channel cSAC Site Code: 001058

Description of the project

The proposed variation consists of the rezoning of circa 3.2 hectares of ““Light Industry & Related Uses,” zoned lands at the corner of Tramore Road and Kinsale Road; with the stated objective, to provide for light industry (and related uses),” to “Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses,” with the stated objective “to protect and provide for residential uses, local services, institutional uses, and civic uses, having regard to employment policies outlined in Chapter 3 [of the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021].”

Description of the nearest Natura 2000 site to proposed project area

Cork Harbour SPA (Site Code 004030). Cork Harbour is a large, sheltered bay system, with several river estuaries – principally those of the Rivers Lee, Douglas and Owenacurra. The SPA

site comprises most of the main intertidal areas of Cork Harbour, including all of the North Channel, the Douglas Estuary, inner Lough Mahon, Lough Beg, Whitegate Bay and the Rostellan inlet. The SPA is 180metres south of the site, at its closest, and 1.3 km to the north and 1.3km to the east. Cork Harbour is an internationally important wetland site, regularly supporting in excess of 20,000 wintering waterfowl, for which it is amongst the top five sites in the country. Several of the species which occur regularly are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, i.e. Whooper Swan, Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruff and Common Tern. The site provides both feeding and roosting sites for the various bird species that use it.

As Cork Harbour is adjacent to a major urban centre and a major industrial centre, water quality is variable, with the estuary of the River Lee and parts of the Inner Harbour being somewhat eutrophic. However, (as noted by the site synopsis from the National Parks and Wildlife Service), the polluted conditions may not be having significant impacts on the bird populations.

Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site

The City Development Plan was formulated to ensure that uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) would not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site. The policies and provisions of the Plan were devised to anticipate and avoid the need for developments that would be likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of and Natura 2000 sites. Furthermore, such developments as will be permitted on foot of the provisions of the plan and the proposed variation shall be required to conform to the relevant regulatory provisions for the prevention of pollution, nuisance or other environmental effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of the any Natura 2000 sites.

4. Conclusion

Following the review of the proposed plan in accordance with the 'Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43' a Screening Matrix and Findings of No Significant Effects Matrix have been completed.

This screening process was carried out to ascertain if the Proposed Variation to the City Development Plan would be likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. The subject site does not contain any Natura 2000 sites nor is located directly adjacent to a Natura 2000 site.

The proposed text amendments are minor in nature, and do not alter the quantum / densities of residential development or population increase over and above that prescribed in the adopted Cork City Development Plan and does not have the potential to significantly impact on the Natura 2000 sites. The proposed variation may result in reduced demands on the said lands and local road and transport infrastructure. Furthermore, the City Development Plan policies relating to drainage systems, storm water management, surface water drainage and sustainable urban drainage systems, the Lee catchment management plan, and flood risk as set in *Chapter 12 -Environmental Infrastructure and Management*, mitigate against potential adverse impacts.

The proposed variation is formulated to ensure that developments and effects arising from the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) shall not give rise to

significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the nearest Natura 2000 site i.e. Cork Harbour SPA. The changes proposed in the variation are set within the context of a development framework already established by the adopted Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021. The impact of the implementation of the variation in terms of the environment and sustainable development is likely to be neutral.

Decision:

There is no potential for significant effects. AA is not required.

Appendix to AA Screening Report

SITE SYNOPSIS

CORK HARBOUR SPA. SITE CODE: 004030

Source: National Parks and Wildlife Service Ireland

Cork Harbour is a large, sheltered bay system, with several river estuaries – principally those of the Rivers Lee, Douglas and Owenacurra. The SPA site comprises most of the main intertidal areas of Cork Harbour, including all of the North Channel, the Douglas Estuary, inner Lough Mahon, Lough Beg, Whitegate Bay and the Rostellan inlet.

Owing to the sheltered conditions, the intertidal flats are often muddy in character. These muds support a range of macro-invertebrates, notably *Macoma balthica*, *Scrobicularia plana*, *Hydrobia ulvae*, *Nephtys hombergi*, *Nereis diversicolor* and *Corophium volutator*. Green algae species occur on the flats, especially *Ulva lactuca* and *Enteromorpha* spp. Cordgrass (*Spartina* spp.) has colonised the intertidal flats in places, especially where good shelter exists, such as at Rossleague and Belvelly in the North Channel. Salt marshes are scattered through the site and these provide high tide roosts for the birds. Salt marsh species present include Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Common Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia maritima*), Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*), Laxflowered Sea-lavender (*Limonium humile*) and Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritima*). Some shallow bay water is included in the site. Cork Harbour is adjacent to a major urban centre and a major industrial centre. Rostellan lake is a small brackish lake that is used by swans throughout the winter. The site also includes some marginal wet grassland areas used by feeding and roosting birds.

Cork Harbour is an internationally important wetland site, regularly supporting in excess of 20,000 wintering waterfowl, for which it is amongst the top five sites in the country. The five-year average annual core count for the entire harbour complex was 34,661 for the period 1996/97-2000/01. Of particular note is that the site supports an internationally important population of Redshank (1,614) – all figures given are average winter means for the 5 winters 1995/96-1999/00. A further 15 species have populations of national importance, as follows: Great Crested Grebe (218), Cormorant (620), Shelduck (1,426), Wigeon (1,750), Gadwall (15), Teal (807), Pintail (84), Shoveler (135), Red-breasted Merganser (90), Oystercatcher (791), Lapwing (3,614), Dunlin (4,936), Black-tailed Godwit (412), Curlew (1,345) and Greenshank (36). The Shelduck population is the largest in the country (9.6% of national total), while those of Shoveler (4.5% of total) and Pintail (4.2% of total) are also very substantial. The site has regionally or locally important populations of a range of other species, including Whooper Swan (10), Pochard (145), Golden Plover (805), Grey Plover (66) and Turnstone (99). Other species using the site include Bat-tailed Godwit (45), Mallard (456), Tufted Duck (97), Goldeneye (15), Coot (77), Mute Swan (39), Ringed Plover (51), Knot (31), Little Grebe (68) and Grey Heron (47). Cork Harbour is an important site for gulls in winter and autumn, especially Common Gull (2,630) and Lesser Black-backed Gull (261); Black-headed Gull (948) also occurs. A range of passage waders occur regularly in autumn, including Ruff (5-10), Spotted Redshank (1-5) and Green Sandpiper (1-5). Numbers vary between years and usually a few of each of these species over-winter. The wintering birds in Cork Harbour have been monitored since the 1970s and are counted annually as part of the I-WeBS scheme.

Cork Harbour has a nationally important breeding colony of Common Tern (3-year mean of 69 pairs for the period 1998-2000, with a maximum of 102 pairs in 1995). The birds have nested in Cork Harbour since about 1970, and since 1983 on various artificial structures, notably derelict steel barges and the roof of a Martello Tower. The birds are monitored annually and the chicks are ringed. Extensive areas of estuarine habitat have been reclaimed since about the 1950s for industrial, port-related and road projects, and further reclamation remains a threat. As Cork Harbour is adjacent to a major urban centre and a major industrial centre, water quality is variable, with the estuary of the River Lee and parts of the Inner Harbour being somewhat eutrophic. However, the polluted conditions may not be having significant impacts on the bird populations. Oil pollution from shipping in Cork Harbour is a general threat. Recreational activities are high in some areas of the harbour, including jet skiing which

causes disturbance to roosting birds. Cork Harbour has is of major ornithological significance, being of international importance both for the total numbers of wintering birds (i.e. > 20,000) and also for its population of Redshank. In addition, there are at least 15 wintering species that have populations of national importance, as well as a nationally important breeding colony of Common Tern. Several of the species which occur regularly are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, i.e. Whooper Swan, Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Ruff and Common Tern. The site provides both feeding and roosting sites for the various bird species that use it.

GREAT ISLAND CHANNEL CANDIDATE SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA.

SITE CODE: 001058

Source: National Parks and Wildlife Service Ireland

The Great Island Channel stretches from Little Island to Midleton, with its southern boundary being formed by Great Island. It is an integral part of Cork Harbour which contains several other sites of conservation interest. Geologically, Cork Harbour consists of two large areas of open water in a limestone basin, separated from each other and the open sea by ridges of Old Red Sandstone. Within this system, Great Island Channel forms the eastern stretch of the river basin and, compared to the rest of Cork Harbour, is relatively undisturbed. Within the site is the estuary of the Owennacurra and Dungourney Rivers. These rivers, which flow through Midleton, provide the main source of freshwater to the North Channel.

The main habitats of conservation interest are the sheltered tidal sand and mudflats and Atlantic salt meadows, both habitats listed on Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive. Owing to the sheltered conditions, the intertidal flats are composed mainly of soft muds. These muds support a range of macro-invertebrates, notably *Macoma balthica*, *Scrobicularia plana*, *Hydrobia ulvae*, *Nephtys hombergi*, *Nereis diversicolor* and *Corophium volutator*. Green algal species occur on the flats, especially *Ulva lactuca* and *Enteromorpha* spp. Cordgrass (*Spartina* spp.) has colonised the intertidal flats in places, especially at Rossleague and Belvelly. The salt marshes are scattered through the site and are all of the estuarine type on mud substrate.

Species present include Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*), Sea Aster (*Aster tripolium*), Thrift (*Armeria maritima*), Common Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia maritima*), Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*), Greater Sea-spurry (*Spergularia media*), Sea Lavender (*Limonium humile*), Sea Arrowgrass (*Triglochin maritimum*), Mayweed (*Matricaria maritima*) and Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*).

The site is extremely important for wintering waterfowl and is considered to contain three of the top five areas within Cork Harbour, namely North Channel, Harper's Island and Belvelly-Marino Point. Shelduck are the most frequent duck species with 800-1000 birds centred on the Fota/Marino Point area. There are also large flocks of Teal and Wigeon, especially at the eastern end. Waders occur in the greatest density north of Rosslare, with Dunlin, Godwit, Curlew and Golden Plover the commonest species. A population of about 80 Grey Plover is a notable feature of the area. All the mudflats support feeding birds; the main roost sites are at Weir Island and Brown Island and to the north of Fota at Killacloyne and Harper's Island. Ahanesk supports a roost also but is subject to disturbance. The numbers of Grey Plover and Shelduck, as given above, are of national importance.

The site is an integral part of Cork Harbour which is a wetland of international importance for the birds it supports. Overall, Cork Harbour regularly holds over 20,000 waterfowl and contains Internationally important numbers of Black-tailed Godwit (1,181) and Redshank (1,896) along with Nationally important numbers of nineteen other species. Furthermore, it contains the large Dunlin (12,019) and Lapwing (12,528) flocks. All counts are average peaks, 1994/95 – 1996/97. Much of the site forms part of Cork Harbour Special Protection Area, an important bird area designated under the EU Birds Directive.

While the main land use within the site is aquaculture (Oyster farming), the greatest threats to its conservation significance come from road works, infilling, sewage outflows and possible marina developments.

The site is of major importance for the two habitats listed on the EU Habitats Directive that it contains, as well as for its important numbers of wintering waders and wildfowl. It also supports a good invertebrate fauna.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report

Proposed Variation No. 6 (Tramore Road/Kinsale Road Site) to the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021

Introduction

The purpose of carrying out this screening statement is to consider whether the proposed variation to the City Development Plan 2015 - 2021 requires a Strategic Environment Assessment under the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 as amended.

Section 13(K)(1) of the Regulations states that *“where a Planning Authority proposes to make a variation of a development plan under section 13 of the Act, it shall, before giving notice under section 13(2) of the Act consider whether or not the proposed variation would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, taking into account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A”*.

Where a planning authority considers that there are significant effects on the environment and that there is a prima facie case for SEA, it should proceed to the scoping stage of the SEA. If the planning authority is uncertain as to the need for SEA the designated environmental authorities as set out in section 13A (4) of the Regulations should be formally consulted during the screening process.

Proposed Variation

Cork City Council intends to make a variation to the Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021 under Section 13 of the Planning and Development Act, 2004 as amended. The proposed variation (copy attached) relates to material changes in the Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021 as follows:

It is proposed to rezone 3.2 ha of **“Light Industry & Related Uses,”** zoned lands at the corner of Tramore Road and Kinsale Road, with the objective *“to provide for light industry (and related uses),”* to **“Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses,”** with the stated objective *“to protect and provide for residential uses, local services, institutional uses, and civic uses, having regard to employment policies outlined in Chapter 3 [of the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021].”*

Background to the Variation

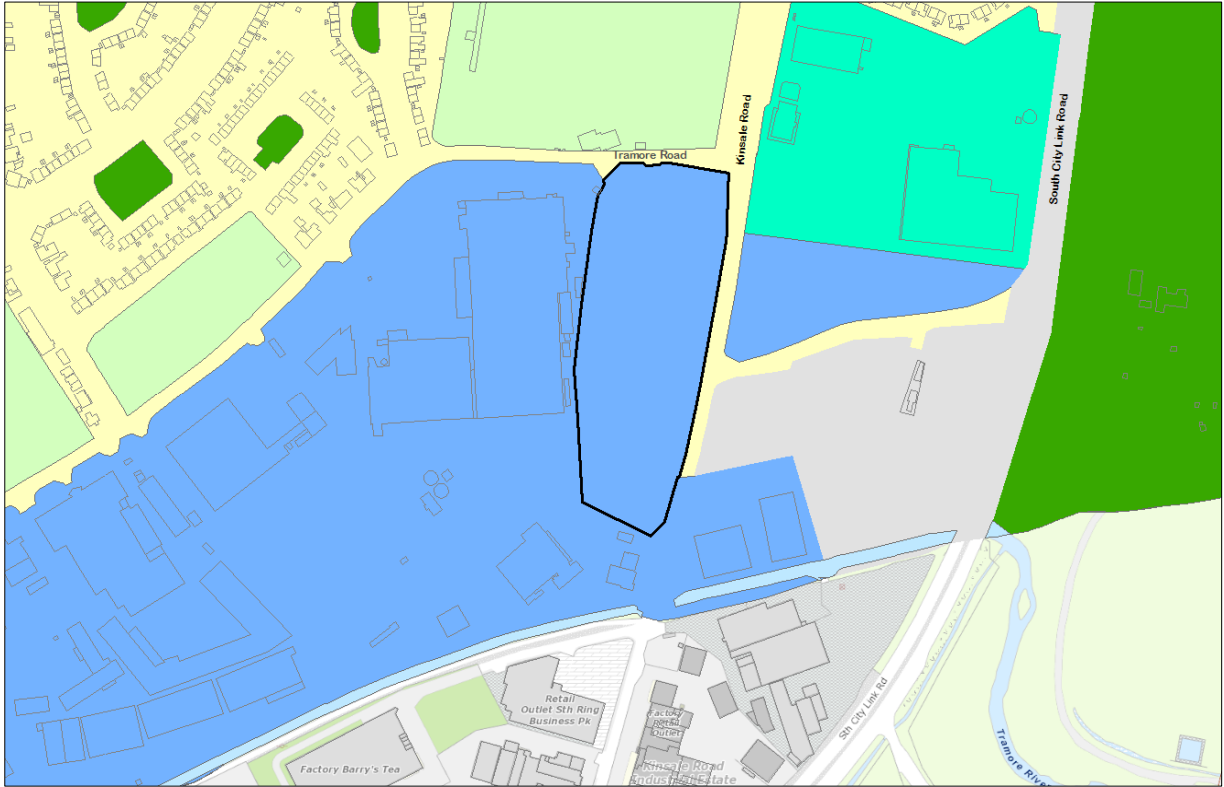
There is both an urgent need to increase housing supply in the Cork Metropolitan area and an excess of now redundant lands zoned for light industry within central areas of the metropolitan area. The subject lands were developed as a creamery in the 1950’s; however, all buildings associated with this previous use have since been demolished and the site is currently vacant. The land owner has approached Cork City Council with a proposal to redevelop the site for residential use and for a primary care centre.

The Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 identifies the Tramore Road Area (in which the site is located) as a “Future Development Area.”

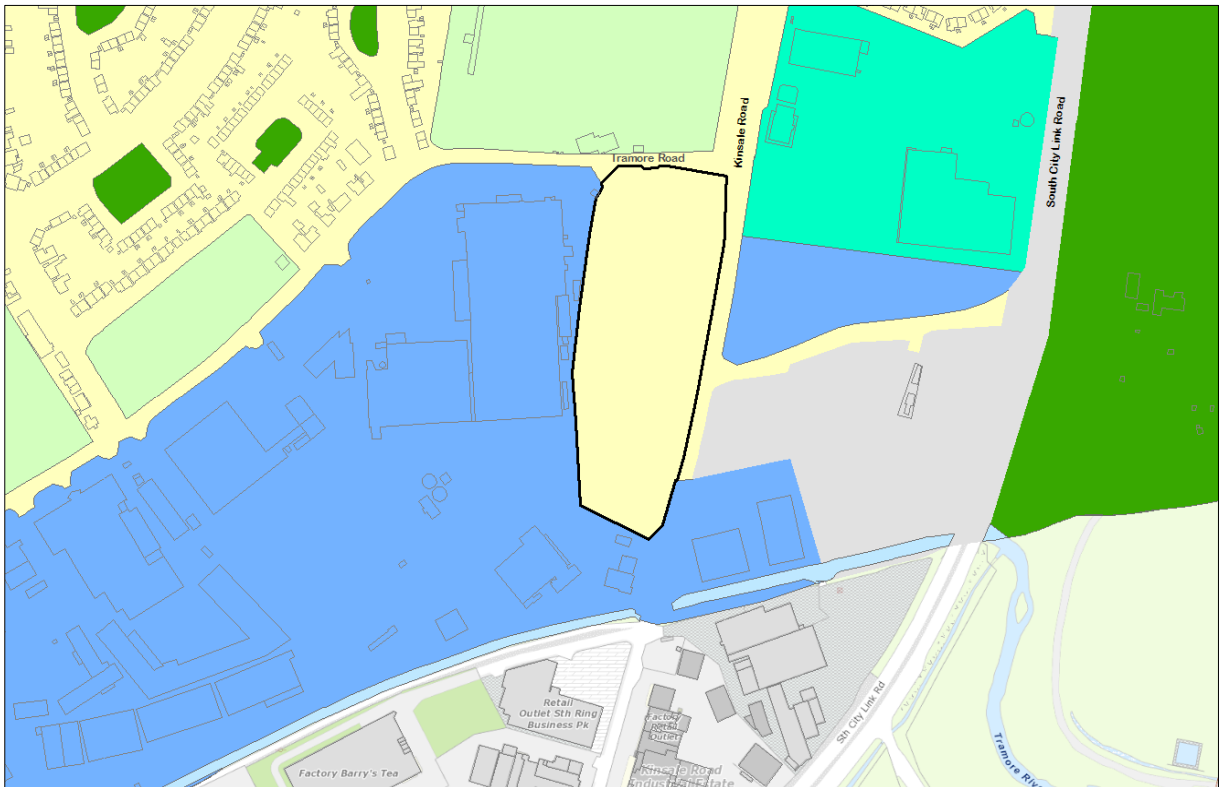
Amendment

The specific variation proposed will therefore consist of a land use mapping amendment to Map 7, South Central Suburbs, (page 8) of Volume 2 to rezone the subject site from *“Light Industry & Related Uses”* to *“Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses”* as shown on the following page.

Existing Map 7



Proposed Amendment to Map 7



Screening Report

It is considered that the proposed variation represents a minor modification to the Cork City Development Plan and that it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. The proposed rezoning could result in the redevelopment of the subject site as housing, a primary care centre, or potentially other “local services” or “institutional uses”. It is considered that should such redevelopment occur, it would have a beneficial impact on the natural environment, primarily due to facilitating the reuse of a vacant brownfield site (reducing greenfield land take) and by providing housing (or related development) in a central location near existing public transport, employment, and local community infrastructure. The details leading to this assessment are set out below within a framework provided by the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004:

1. The characteristics of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, having regard, in particular, to

(a) the degree to which the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.

The subject variation (i.e. proposed modification to the plan) would only affect the plan to a small degree, by establishing new potential uses for one particular brownfield site. The variation does not set a framework, but rather is being proposed to implement the broad policy framework that has been set by the Cork City Development Plan and by higher-level plans (i.e. the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the National Planning Framework).

(b) the degree to which the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, influences other plans including those in a hierarchy,

The proposed variation would not influence other plans in a hierarchy but rather responds to higher-level policies set out in the current City Development Plan and higher-level strategies.

(c) the relevance of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,

The proposed modification of the Development Plan (i.e. rezoning this site) would represent the integration of environmental considerations, in particularly aligning with higher-level policies that call for a reduction in land take and the siting of residential development in areas where sustainable transport is possible, thereby potentially reducing emissions, noise, and traffic congestion.

(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme,

There are no significant environmental problems to the plan or programme resulting from the proposed variation. The subject site is not subject to flooding (Lee CFRAMS) and is categorised as suitable for development, but an assessment of surface water discharge from the site will be undertaken as part of the design process of any future scheme.

(e) the relevance of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

There is no relevance of the proposed variation in relation to the implementation of European Legislation.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,

It is considered that the proposed variation will not have any significant effects. The potential delivery of residential development may lower the overall capacity or quantum of development and in a decrease in traffic at peak times, in particular. Residential development should result in environmental improvements to the area.

(b) the cumulative nature of the effects,

It is considered that there will not be any cumulative effects resulting from the proposed variation.

(c) the transboundary nature of the effects,

It is considered that there will be no transboundary effect resulting from the proposed variation.

(d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),

It is considered that the proposed variation will not create any direct risks to human health or the environment, subject to appropriate road design standards being adhered to within any future application.

(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),

The absolute number of persons who will be affected by the variation in the City areas is not known at this time. However, the site owner has submitted that the lands would have the capacity for up to 400 no. dwellings. Assuming a citywide average of 2.45 persons per household, we can estimate that a maximum of 980 no. persons could be accommodated in these strategically located brownfield lands, within walking distance of schools and convenience shops and a fifteen-minute cycle from the city centre.

(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,

Any adverse impacts will be mitigated through the development management process following adherence to the overriding policies and objectives contained in the City Development Plan.

(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,

The variation will not affect environmental quality standards or limit values

(iii) intensive land-use,

The proposed variation does not in itself represent an intensification of land-use, but represents a potential decrease if measured in terms of traffic generated strategically, and a potential increase in residents as opposed to employees as envisaged for industrial use.

(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.

The site is not subject of any recognised national, European Union or international protection status, and therefore the variation is unlikely to have any effect on any such designated areas or landscapes.

Conclusion

The changes proposed in the variation are set within the context of a development framework already established by the adopted Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021.

The impact of the implementation of the variation in terms of the environment and sustainable development is likely to be neutral/ positive from a strategic perspective. Therefore, it does not appear that there is a need for a SEA in this instance as the proposed variation is unlikely to result in development which would have significant effects on the environment.

It is therefore recommended that Cork City Council does not proceed to SEA scoping in this case.

Erin O'Brien
Executive Planner

Strategic Environmental Assessment Appendix A:

Flood Risk Assessment

Proposed Variation No. 6 (Tramore Road/Kinsale Road Site) to the Cork City Development Plan 2015 - 2021.

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities, November 2009. DEHLG & OPW

The Guidelines advocate a *sequential approach* that is:

Avoid or choose lower risk flood zones for new development;

Substitute or ensure type of development is not especially vulnerable to adverse impacts of flooding;

Justify, ensure the development is strategic;

Mitigate, ensure flood risk is reduced to acceptable levels; i.e. prepare detailed proposals for surface water management

Proceed where justification test is passed.

The *sequential approach* requires that mitigation measures such as surface water management proposals are prepared as part of a decision to grant permission.

Flood Risk Assessment

(1) Identify flood zones and classify vulnerability

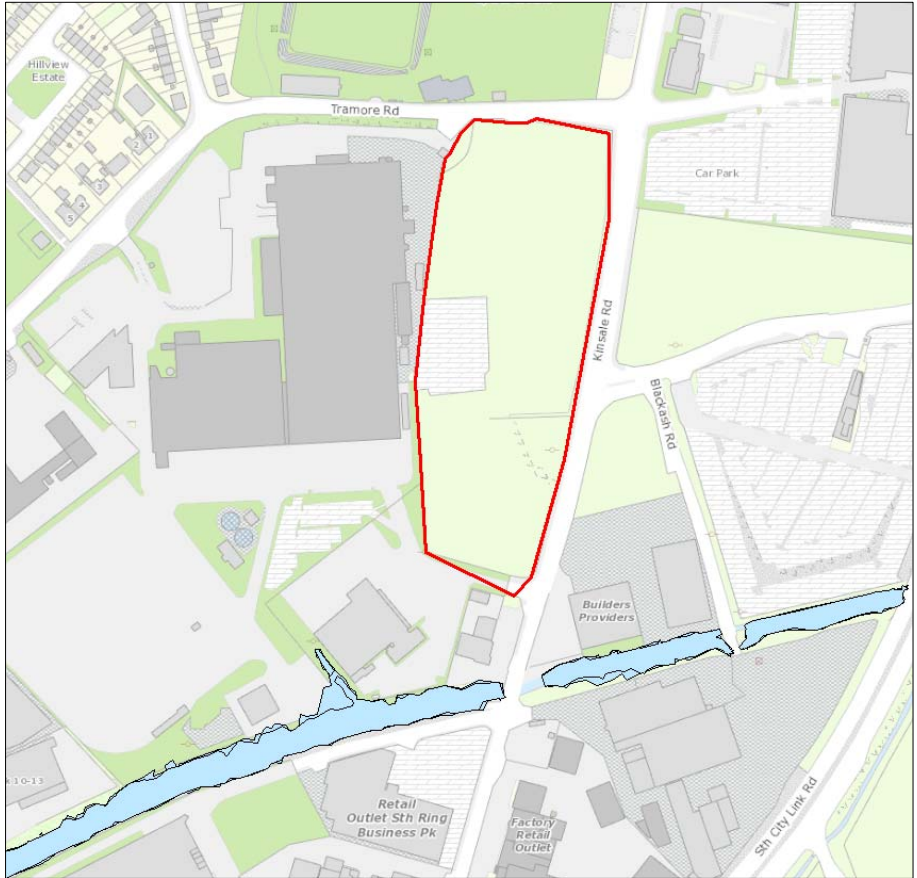
The Lee CFRAMS does not classify the subject lands as Flood Zone A or B and as such is classified as Flood Zone C, having a low probability of flooding. A small flood event occurred in December 2009 in the vicinity of the site at the bridge over the Tramore River in the vicinity of the site, due to a blockage. However, this event was not significant in the context of the site, and development in the C Flood Zone is considered appropriate.

(2) Classify the vulnerability of types of development

Although residential dwellings are a highly vulnerable class of development and light-industrial employment (commercial buildings) are a less vulnerable class of development, their location within Flood Zone C is considered appropriate. A Justification Test is not warranted.

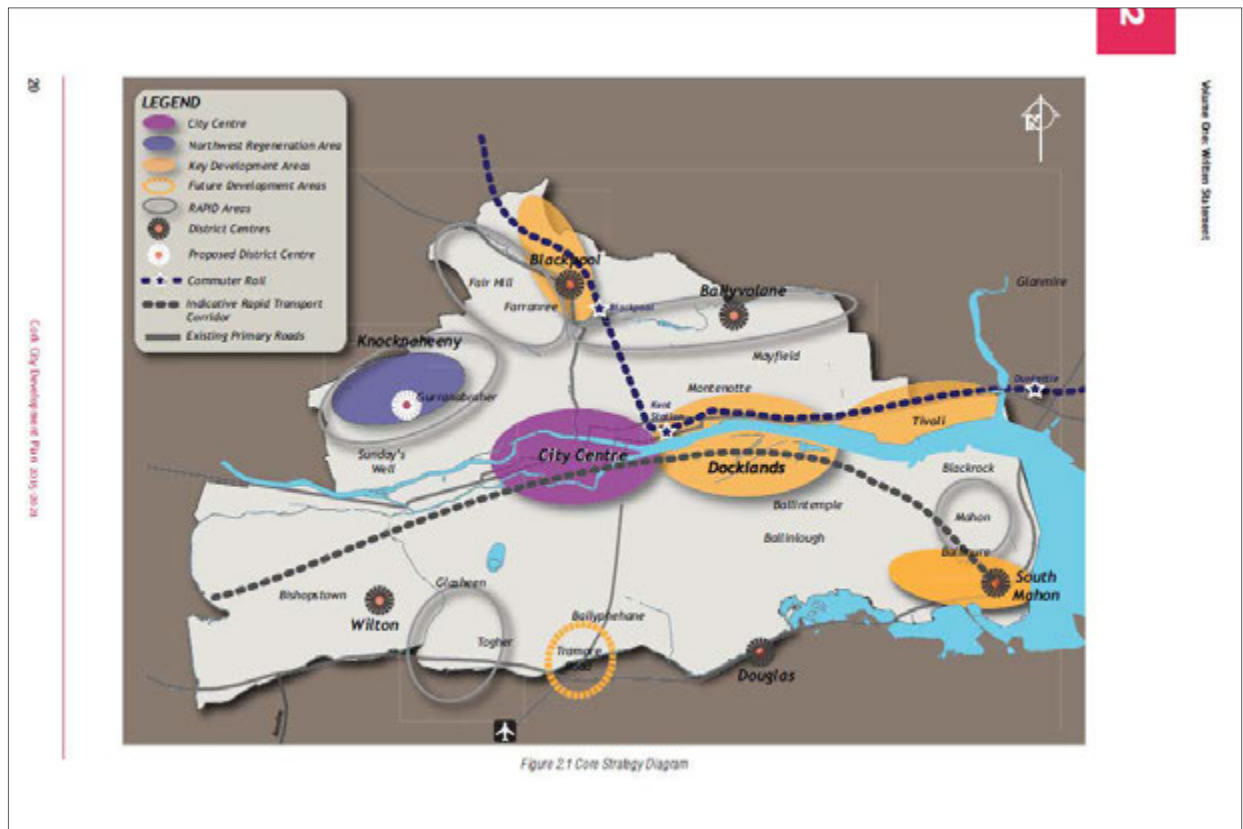
Conclusion

The subject lands are classified with a low probability of flooding, namely, Flood Zone C (Lee CFRAMS / Lee CFRAMP) and as such development is considered appropriate. It is considered that in accordance with the sequential approach advocated by the Guidelines, that mitigation measures in the form of a surface water management plan be prepared as part of any decision to develop.



The site in context of Flood Zones A & B (floodzones shown in blue)

Appendix C: Extracts from Development Plan



Tramore Road / Kinsale Road

- 14.17 The mixed industrial / commercial area centred on the Tramore Road and Kinsale Road was identified by the CASP Update as an area with potential for intensification of development, linked to the development of a high quality public transport route linking the northside to the City Centre and the Airport. Since then, the *Cork Area Transit Study (CATS)* study concluded that the North South route would not sustain a Rapid Transit Route, but should be served by a good quality bus transport system. The area is proximate to the southern gateway to the city, namely, the South City Link Road, (N27).
- 14.18 The range of existing land-uses in the area includes light industry, trade showrooms, retail and retail warehouses. It is important that locations for light industrial and trade uses are retained within or close to the city, however there is a somewhat disorderly appearance to the area and some vacant and underutilised land. There is an extensive area of similar development in the adjoining County Council area and there is a need for a co-ordinated approach to the future planning of the area on both sides of the administrative boundary. Nearby uses within the city include sports facilities and residential neighbourhoods.
- 14.19 A redevelopment strategy for the area will need take account of the context of the overall employment and population targets for the city and any significant intensification would be dependent on the development of high quality public transport infrastructure and an assessment of impact on the existing road infrastructure including South Ring Road, (N40). A future strategy for the area may be in the form of a local area plan or a non-statutory plan.

Objective 14.5 Tramore Road/Kinsale Road

- a. To develop a vision for the future of the area; including identifying a suitable mix of uses and appropriate quantum of development, taking into account the need to retain locations for light industry while facilitating suitable reuse of vacant and underutilised land;
- b. To co-operate with Cork County Council in devising a co-ordinated approach to the future development of the adjoining areas on each side of the administrative boundary;
- c. To take account of transport and access issues including potential impact on the adjoining national road and the provision of sustainable modes of transport.