

Proposed Variation No. 8 Knocknaheeny to the City Development Plan 2009-2015

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report

9th March 2012



Cork City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí

Proposed Variation No. 8 Knocknaheeny to the City Development Plan 2009-2015 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report

Introduction

The purpose of carrying out this screening statement is to consider whether the Proposed Variation No. 8 (Knocknaheeny) of the City Development Plan requires a Strategic Environment Assessment under the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004.

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*”.

The Proposed Variation consists of:

(a) the removal of the ‘Walkway / Cycleway’ objective along the length of the Hollyhill Road (Lane) between Kilmore Heights and Harbour View Road, as illustrated on ‘Map 11 North Western Suburbs Objectives’ of Volume 2, and to relocate / realign the same objective onto Kilmore Heights, Courtown Drive and Harbour View Road.

(b) the rezoning of (approximately 3,100sq.m.) 0.31 hectares of ‘Residential, Local Services & Institutions’ zoned land to ‘Light Industry’ abutting Holyhill Road and the Ardculen Estate.

(c) the insertion of additional text to section 6.20 of Volume 1 Written Statement of the Cork City Development Plan as follows:

“The Cork City North West Regeneration Masterplan, (adopted 14/11/11) sets out the implementation strategy for the regeneration of the area. The Masterplan covers an area of 80 hectares, extending from Kilmore Rd Upper in the north, to Harbour View Rd and St. Mary’s Hospital in the south; and from Baker’s Rd and Churchfield Rd in the east to the City boundary in the west. The Masterplan sets out a detailed strategy for new residential neighbourhoods, local services and public open spaces for recreational and amenity purposes. This will involve the demolition of existing neighbourhoods and the reconfiguration of a new residential layout on a gross area of 15.6 hectares over 5 phases. The Masterplan aims to create a better balance of dwelling type and tenure; to improve the physical condition of the neighbourhood; to evaluate

the needs of the community in terms of job opportunities, learning initiatives, and community development and facilities; to enhance the image of the area; to combat crime and anti social behaviour.”

Background

The Proposed Variation is a result of the adoption of the ‘Cork City North West Regeneration Masterplan’ in November 2011. The Masterplan provides for the regeneration and sustainable development of Knocknaheeny and Hollyhill located in the north-western fringe of Cork city.

The Masterplan sets out a strategy for new residential neighbourhoods, retail and public open spaces for recreational and amenity purposes. It is proposed to demolish 432 no. dwellings and to reconfigure a new residential layout of varying unit types and the construction of 641 no. units (apartments & houses) on a gross area of 15.6 hectares over 5 phases or a 9 year period.

The proposed Variation seeks to address inconsistent objectives (relating to Holyhill Road) between the Cork City North West Regeneration Plan, (adopted 14/11/11) and the Cork City Development Plan 2009-2015.

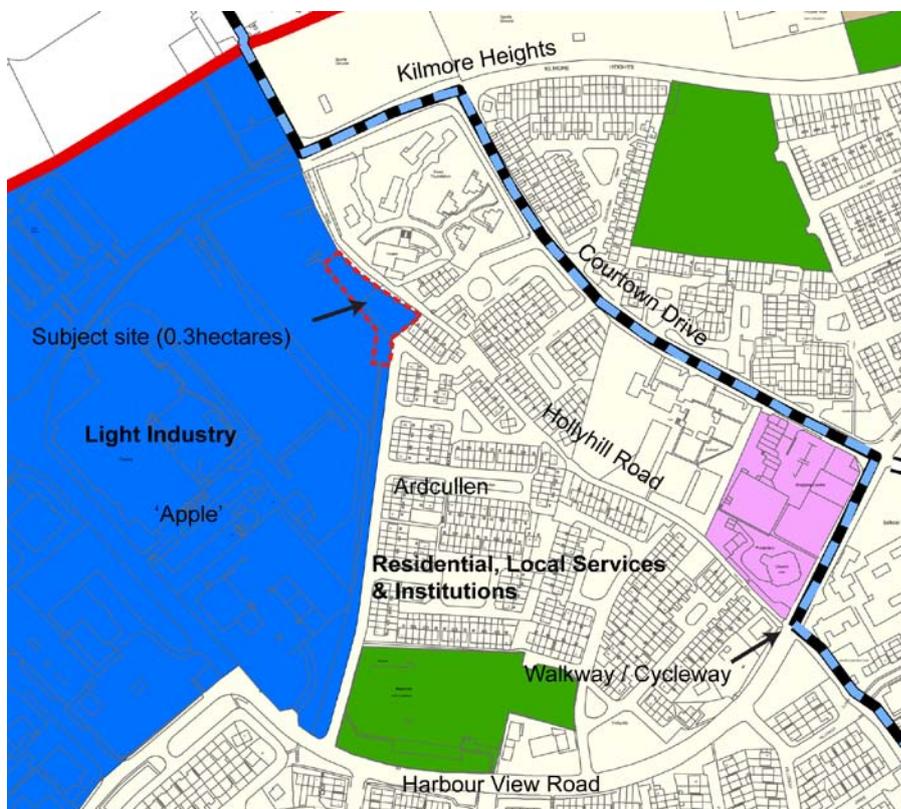
It is an objective of the City Development Plan to provide for / upgrade a Walkway/Cycleway along Hollyhill Road. Whereas, the North West Regeneration Masterplan seeks to close Hollyhill Road as a through route between Kilmore Heights to the north and Harbour View Road to the south.

Furthermore, the proposed Variation seeks to rezone 0.31 hectares of ‘Residential’ zoned land to ‘Light Industry’ within the ownership of ‘Apple’ in order to facilitate future potential development by Apple.

Figure 1 Exiting Zoning of Cork City Development Plan 2009 - 2015



Figure 2 Proposed Amendments to Cork City Development Plan



Schedule 2A Screening Assessment

The Proposed Variation has been screened under the following criteria set out under Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2001 - 2011.

1. The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to	
(a)	<p>The degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,</p> <p>The proposed variation to the Cork City Development Plan 2009 - 2015 sets out the context and framework for projects and other activities. The proposed rezoning of 0.31 hectares facilitates the potential redevelopment / expansion of 'Apple,' whereas the relocation of the walkway / cycleway objective facilitates the closure of this stretch of the Hollyhill Road as part of environmental improvements to the area, an objective of the Cork City North-West Regeneration Masterplan.</p>
(b)	<p>The degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy,</p> <p>The City Development Plan sets out the context and framework for the area. The objectives of the North West Regeneration Masterplan should be consistent with that of the City Development Plan. The proposed relocation / realignment of the Walkway / Cycleway objective seeks to address the conflicting objectives relating to Hollyhill Road.</p>
(c)	<p>The relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,</p> <p>The proposed variation is being prepared in the context of a range of EU, national, regional and local guidance and plans in particular, CASP, the City Development Plan, the Joint Housing Strategy and the Cork City Regeneration Masterplan which have been prepared on the basis of promoting proper planning and sustainable development.</p>
(d)	<p>Environmental problems relevant to the plan,</p> <p>There are no strategically significant environmental problems identified in relation to the proposed variation. The overall strategy for the city (as per the City Development Plan) has already been considered under the SEA process and the proposed variation does not materially alter this strategy.</p> <p>A brief overview of environmental issues pertaining to the plan area is detailed below.</p> <p>Water Supply The Cork Strategic Water Study outlines the development of water supply infrastructure to meet anticipated water supply needs over the next 25 years. The River Lee is the main source of water for the city. The Lee Road Waterworks Treatment Plant caters for the volumes required to satisfy current and predicted future demand and as such the planned regeneration is not likely to result in significant environmental effects.</p> <p>Foul Drainage The Cork Main Drainage Scheme, operating since 2004, has improved the treatment of the City's wastewater effluent in excess of EU Wastewater Directive requirements. There is sufficient capacity to cater for the increased demand for foul drainage and as such the planned regeneration is not likely to result in significant environmental effects.</p> <p>Ground Water Vulnerability Ground water is not a source of drinking water supply. The study area is categorised as being 'extreme' in terms of its ground water vulnerability, (Geological Survey of Ireland). i.e. the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter underground water. This may require specific drainage design measures to prevent surface activity from polluting the underlying groundwater.</p>

	<p>The development (rezoning) site is a 'brownfield' site and consists of 'made' ground, a result of prior construction. The existing surface water and sewerage infrastructure mitigates the potential risk to groundwater. Furthermore, it is Council policy to continue to upgrade and develop the drainage system in order to facilitate predicted population and economic growth; and to protect the City's groundwater resource as a future potable water supply.</p> <p>Flooding The River Lee catchment-based flood risk assessment and management study, (LeeCFRAMS) does not classify the subject lands as Flood Zone A or B and as such it is classified as Flood Zone C, having a low probability of flooding. There is no evidence of flooding in the area and as such development is considered appropriate. It is considered that the masterplan will not have significant effects on flooding in the area.</p> <p>Cultural / Built Heritage There are no Recorded Monuments or Protected Structures within the plan area, and as such no significant impact on cultural heritage.</p>
(e)	<p>The relevance of the plan for implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste management or water protection).</p> <p>The proposed variation is considered under the overarching policies of the Cork City Development Plan which includes policies relating to water supply, water quality, foul and surface water drainage, surface water quality, ground water and waste management, in compliance with EU legislation such as the Water Framework Directive and Groundwater Directive. The proposed variation will have no effect on the implementation of the European Union legislation.</p>
2. The characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected having regard, in particular, to	
(a)	<p>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,</p> <p>Any development proposals resulting from the proposed rezoning must accord with the Cork City Development Plan and its environmental protection policies as well as the availability of adequate infrastructure to service new development. It is considered that the proposed variation will not have significant environmental effects.</p>
(b)	<p>The cumulative nature of effects,</p> <p>The City Development Plan anticipates a population increase of 30,582 persons and 23,438 housing units by year 2022 and 15,433 jobs by year 2020. The CDP has already been considered under the SEA process and the proposed variation does not materially alter this strategy.</p> <p>The development proposal accords with the CDP including its environmental protection policies as well as the availability of adequate infrastructure to service any proposed development. It is not anticipated that the proposed variation will experience any unacceptable cumulative environmental effects.</p>
(c)	<p>The trans-boundary nature of the effects,</p> <p>The proposed variation will have no trans-boundary effects.</p>
(d)	<p>The risks to human health of the environment (e.g. due to accidents),</p> <p>The proposed variation seeks to improve environmental quality of the area through good layout and design and consequently improve the health and well being of the population. It is considered that there will be no risks to human health or the environment.</p>
(e)	<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of</p>

	<p>population likely to be affected),</p> <p>The site area of the proposed rezoning is 0.31 hectares. The proposed variation will not result in an increased population.</p>
(f)	<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p>(i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, The subject area is characterised as 'suburban residential' (Landscape Character Assessment, Mosart 2003). This is 'made ground' of varying depths (Geological Survey of Ireland) and is associated with prior road construction and significant residential developments. This is 'brownfield' land. There are no pits, quarries or landfills within the study area. There is no built heritage or archaeological designations within the plan area, nor any natural heritage or biodiversity protection areas.</p> <p>(ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, Environmental policies and objectives contained within the City Development Plan will ensure that the impact of the proposed development on existing habitats, species and the value of the existing landscape are kept to a minimum. The proposed variation will not detrimentally impact on environmental quality standards or limit values.</p> <p>(iii) Intensive land-use. The subject area lies within the existing built form of the City. It is a relatively poor quality environment. Future development will be no more intensive than that envisaged by the City Development Plan which has already been considered under SEA.</p>
(g)	<p>The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised National, European Union or International protection status.</p> <p>The plan area is not subject of any recognised National, European Union or International protection status and is unlikely to have any effect on any such designated areas or landscapes.</p>

Conclusion

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

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

Thomas Watt

Senior Executive Planner

Planning Policy Section
Strategic Planning & Economic Development Directorate
City Hall, Cork.
Tel: 021-4924086
e-mail: planningpolicy@corkcity.ie



Cork City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí