

Aim: To provide a strategy for the development of retailing in Cork City



## Introduction

- 4.1** The *Retail Planning Guidelines* published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in January 2005 require the larger urban areas of the country, including Cork City and County, to prepare retail strategies and policies for their areas. The strategies, to be included in all future development plans, are to comprehensively address the following matters:
- Confirm the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres;
  - Define the boundaries of the core shopping areas;
  - Identify additional retail floor-space requirements;
  - Provide strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development;
  - Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres;
  - Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.
- 4.2** Cork City Council and Cork County Council jointly commissioned consultants to prepare the *Cork Strategic Retail Study* (March 2008), hereafter referred to as the CSRS. The strategy set out in this document is based on the findings of that study and will replace the existing Joint Retail Strategy. All the planning authorities in Cork including the City and County Councils, and the nine Town Councils who are planning authorities, will adopt the strategy and include it within their development plans. It will form the agreed basis on which each authority will be able to formulate appropriate development plan objectives or policies for retail development in its area and which will be used in the determination of applications for planning permission.

### POLICY 4.1

#### **Role of the Retail Strategy**

To include the Cork Planning Authorities' Joint Retail Strategy in current and future development plans together with appropriate objectives that will secure its implementation.

To have regard to the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities, in determining planning applications for retail development.

## Retail Hierarchy

- 4.3** At the heart of this strategy is a hierarchy of retail locations that forms the basis for determining the quantum and location of new retail development.
- 4.4** In July 2007 there was a total of 384,625 sq m. of net retail floor space in Cork City and County. 74% of this was comparison floor space (including retail warehousing) and the remainder convenience goods space. Some 37% of retail floor space is in the City Centre and suburbs and the remainder is distributed relatively evenly elsewhere in the county. The City Centre is the main comparison goods shopping destination with 55% of pure comparison expenditure (excluding retail warehousing). Mahon has been developed since the last strategy was adopted and now has a 10% share of comparison expenditure. Other significant comparison goods centres are Douglas at 6% and Mallow at 5%.



**4.5** The hierarchy is summarised in Table 4.1

**Table 4.1** Retail Hierarchy

Description	Locations	Overall Strategy
Cork City	City Centre	Expansion to provide large floor plates to attract more premium occupiers
Cork City Docklands - District Centre	South Docks	Provision of a new District Centre as set out in South Docks Local Area Plan to serve new residential and employment development
Cork City Suburbs - District Centres	Blackpool, Douglas, Wilton, Ballyvolane	Development of mixed use to include retail, with urban design and access improvements Possibility of new/expanded district centre to serve north-west.
	Mahon Point	No significant retail expansion envisaged. Mixed use with urban design and access improvements desirable
Cork City - Neighbourhood Centres	North and South Docks	Provision of new neighbourhood retailing in Docklands incorporating 1 new Neighbourhood Centre in the North Docks and 2 new Neighbourhood Centres in the South Docks in accordance with adopted Local Area Plans for the Docklands area
Cork Suburbs - Neighbourhood Centres	Bishopstown, Bishopstown Court, Togher, Tory Top Road/Curragh Road, Hollyhill, Ballinure, Clashduv Rd, Mount Agnes Rd, Avenue de Rennes, Skehard Rd, Blackpool Village, Mayfield, the Lough	Prevention of change of use of local shops to non-retail. Small-scale expansion
Metropolitan Towns	Ballincollig, Blarney, Midleton, Carrigaline	Expansion in line with planned population increase
	Monard	Provision of retailing as part of new settlement
	Carrigtwohill	Expansion when new housing or employment developments come forward
	Glanmire, Tower, Little Island, Passage West	Incremental growth in line with current and planned population levels

Description	Locations	Overall Strategy
	Cobh	Provision of more convenience and tourism comparison floorspace.
Ring Towns	Mallow	Expansion in line with hub town status to provide large floor plates to attract more premium occupiers. Should be developed as one of the largest towns in the County.
	Youghal, Macroom	Expansion in line with planned population growth
	Bandon, Fermoy	Expansion with potential for town centre regeneration
	Kinsale	Consolidation as local service and tourism centre
County Towns	Clonakilty	Expansion to become the main retail centre in West Cork
	Kanturk, Charleville, Bantry, Mitchelstown, Skibbereen, Buttevant	Incremental growth in line with current and planned population levels
	Millstreet, Newmarket, Dunmanway, Castletownbere, Schull	Consolidation as local service centres.

### Cork City Centre

- 4.6 Cork City Centre is the primary retail centre in the County and the focus for comparison retail development. It currently supports 84,770 square metres of net retail floorspace, of which 73,765 square metres (or 87%) is for comparison goods. The City Centre is undergoing major redevelopment at present with large retail developments under construction at Cornmarket Street and St. Patrick's Street/Emmet Place and others planned for Grand Parade.
- 4.7 Cork City Centre provides the main venue for higher order comparison goods and “fashion” goods within the Cork Metropolitan Area. It is therefore at the top of the hierarchy within the region. The CSRS proposes, in line with national guidance, that this dominant position of the City Centre be protected in terms of comparison goods, and particularly higher order comparison goods.
- 4.8 Major redevelopment of the Docklands areas close to the City Centre is planned over the coming decades. While the Docklands will not primarily be developed as a retail destination it will include retailing in the form of a district centre and 3 neighbourhood centres, which will be rolled out in tandem with the needs of the expanding population and in accordance with the North and South Docks Local Area Plans.



**POLICY 4.3**

**Strategic Role of Suburban District Centres**

To acknowledge the importance of Cork Suburban District Centres in providing a wide range of both convenience and comparison shopping in locations close to significant centres of population.

To recognise the need to carefully control the future expansion of suburban District Centres so that they progressively develop as mixed use urban centres and that the planned development of Cork City Centre and the Metropolitan Towns can be successfully achieved.

To ensure an even distribution of comparison floorspace in the city suburbs by allocating new floorspace (as shown in Table 4.3) at the ratio of 40/60 to the northside /southside respectively. No suburban centres will have a greater amount of comparison floorspace than the current largest centre (Mahon), which will not grow significantly over the period of the strategy. On the northside there is scope for consolidation of Blackpool as well as additional provision in the north east through upgrading Ballyvolane to a district centre and in the north west of the city, either through upgrading an existing neighbourhood centre or development of a new district centre. On the south side there is scope for expansion of comparison retailing in Douglas and an opportunity for remodelling and expansion of Wilton District Centre, so that they evolve into mixed-use centres with high quality design.

**Cork Suburbs - Neighbourhood Centres**

**4.12** Neighbourhood centres generally serve smaller, more localised communities in the Cork suburbs, where many of the inhabitants are able to access their daily needs within easy reach of their homes, preferably within walking distance. These include the various suburbs of Cork namely Bishopstown and Togher on the southside and Mayfield and Holyhill on the northside. The concept of neighbourhood retail centres is fundamental to the principle of sustainable development, where the provision of retail facilities are provided in tandem with the location of educational, commercial, recreational facilities within easy reach of the local inhabitants. In this retail sector there is greater emphasis on food and convenience goods and these centres are typically anchored by a convenience shop, often a supermarket, but also usually include a limited range of comparison shops, service outlets, and possibly retail offices (e.g. banks) to serve a local need.

**4.13** Whilst the more significant neighbourhood centres are specifically identified in the Cork Retail Centres Hierarchy (see Table 4.1), additional neighbourhood centres have been identified where areas are being planned for significant additional population growth e.g. the Docklands.

**POLICY 4.4**

**Strategic Role of Suburban Neighbourhood Centres**

To acknowledge the importance of suburban neighbourhood centres in meeting local needs primarily for convenience shopping, local service provision and also for a limited range of comparison goods.

**Metropolitan Towns**

**4.14** Of the Metropolitan towns, Midleton, Blarney, Ballincollig and Carrigaline should be expanded. Midleton and Blarney are located on the suburban rail project and so are focal points for new higher density housing and employment development. Therefore, there will need to be further retail development in these towns to provide for the needs of new residents and workers. Midleton has a specific role in serving a wider catchment area and there are ambitious projects being considered in and around the central area that should be promoted. In Blarney, a town centre extension is planned in addition to recognizing the tourism potential of the town. Ballincollig and Carrigaline are large towns which have expanded significantly in recent years and there are further opportunities for growth in both.



- 4.15 Near to Blarney will be the planned new settlement of Monard. New retail development should be provided here of a scale appropriate to the population; initially a large neighbourhood centre and, if the full compliment of 5,000 dwellings are constructed, a small district centre could emerge in time.
- 4.16 Carrigtwohill is also located on the suburban rail corridor and is already a focus for retail warehousing. New “town centre” retailing will also be required when the planned large housing and employment developments go ahead, to cater for the expanded population.
- 4.17 Cobh is a town with tourism potential but is also a major centre of population in the metropolitan area and requires development of adequate convenience and comparison shopping. It has a tightly constrained town centre that can accommodate an additional element of comparison retail aimed at tourism. Passage West is a long established small centre that has had no significant retail development in recent years. The old dockyards present a potential redevelopment area. Glanmire has a suburban neighbourhood centre that can be expanded incrementally, in line with population needs.

#### POLICY 4.5

##### **Strategic Role of Metropolitan Centre**

To acknowledge the importance of the Metropolitan Towns in providing a wide range of both convenience and comparison shopping in locations close to significant centres of population.

#### **Ring towns**

- 4.18 The Ring towns have relatively greater independence from the City Centre, and serve well-defined catchments and it is important that they maintain their attractiveness as self-sufficient towns by developing the range and quality of retail development in their town centres. These towns will be encouraged to improve their town centre retail functions, within the capacity of their respective catchments, with emphasis upon central retail expansion as a priority.
- 4.19 Mallow is one of the largest retail centres in the County and it has a sub-regional significance as an urban centre (hub) in the National Spatial Strategy but it is also a key centre for retail development in North Cork. Significant retail development has taken place in Mallow and it is anticipated that this will continue. Mallow is an attractive town for retailers and there are now more retailers than were previously represented. A special Local Area Plan has been produced which identifies opportunity sites for growth. Retail development should provide large floor plates to attract more premium occupiers.
- 4.20 Youghal and Macroom serve well defined catchments. These towns should improve their town centre retail function by increasing the range and quantum of retail floorspace. There are opportunities in both towns to provide new comparison and retail warehouse development.
- 4.21 In Fermoy and Bandon there are also some opportunities for new retail development. Both towns are in need of regeneration to make them more attractive shopping destinations.
- 4.22 Kinsale is a significant tourist town for the county with several comparison and convenience developments. Future retail development would be to satisfy any growth in the tourism retail markets and to satisfy the requirements of the residents and visitors to the town.

#### POLICY 4.6

##### **Strategic Role of Ring Town Centres**

To acknowledge the importance of the ring towns in providing a wide range of both convenience and comparison shopping in locations close to significant centres of population and rural hinterlands.

To recognise the need to encourage the future expansion of ring town centres in line with anticipated future population growth and the need for regeneration of town centres in certain ring towns.

**County Towns**

- 4.23 The largely self sufficient county towns of North and West Cork are also designated as town centres in the retail hierarchy. They are located further away from the influence of Cork City and its metropolitan area, often have well defined catchments and are centres for convenience and comparison retail development often serving extensive rural areas. Although the rate of population growth for these towns is generally lower; they are the principal locations for both convenience and comparison retail development in the rural areas of the County.
- 4.24 In the retail hierarchy the County Towns of Charleville, Mitchelstown, located along the proposed Atlantic Gateway Corridor, have been designated with the role of expansion towns, which require headroom for expansion if they are to continue to cater for the needs of their catchment area. These are towns that can accommodate more growth than would be expected for such a centre in rural County Cork, but without growth, could suffer from severe leakage to other towns outside the county.
- 4.25 Clonakilty has been designated an integrated employment centre, which will require significant expansion to become the prime retail centre for West Cork. Skibbereen, Kanturk and Bantry are towns that need expanded retail capacity to overcome potential isolation from higher order markets and a tendency to leakage to other competitive centres. Bantry is a small urban centre serving a large rural hinterland, with marine related industry and services and tourism functions, with an attractive setting and town centre. There are potential town centre redevelopment opportunities, subject to land assembly.
- 4.26 Millstreet, Newmarket, Dunmanway, Castletownbere and Schull are small towns that will continue to operate as local service centres, with small scale redevelopment and public realm improvements where appropriate. Although these towns will experience lower population growth than other areas of the County they should be the principal locations for both convenience and comparison retail development in the rural areas of the County.

**POLICY 4.7**

**Strategic Role of County Town Centres**

To acknowledge the importance of the county towns in providing a wide range of both convenience and comparison shopping in locations close to centres of population and larger, more remote rural hinterlands.

**Local Retail Centres**

- 4.27 These retail centres serve local needs generally and provide primarily convenience goods within residential, commercial or mixed-use areas or in village communities. The amount of floor-space provided is small in size and it may be appropriate to group a small number of local shops together to create more sustainable development forms. They may also form the focus of smaller villages where they could serve a rural catchment area. Local centres in a city context facilitate the provision of appropriate local based retail and service outlets for the daily needs of nearby residential areas. They are aimed at ensuring that all residential areas are within easy access of and are adequately serviced by local facilities and services, and comprise retail and commercial outlets, such as foodstores, pharmacies, hairdressers and small scale retail offices and medical uses.
- 4.28 Planning authorities may identify local shopping locations when preparing development plans and local area plans but retail development at this scale may also be appropriate as an ancillary element of proposals that are predominantly for other uses (e.g. housing, industry etc.). There is need for planning authorities to seek quality design and layout of new local retail centres and to enhance the public realm and attraction of existing centres where possible.





## POLICY 4.9

**Role of Corner Shops**

To acknowledge the importance of local convenience stores or corner shops in meeting local shopping needs and support new local convenience shops of less than 100 net sq.m where there is a proven deficiency in local service provision. In the South Docks area, within the Mixed Use Zone local convenience stores/corner shops of 100-400 net sq.m are open for consideration.

## Core Retail Area Boundaries

- 4.30** It is important to identify these core areas so that an appropriate framework of objectives can regulate new development so that it occurs at the correct scale and in the right locations. These City/Town and District Centres will form the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development and they are defined in development and local area plans.
- 4.31** The core areas are usually based around a compact retail core, incorporating a range of other activities, and they rely on high levels of accessibility, particularly for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. Centres will provide a range of uses appropriate to their scale and function.
- 4.32** In all these centres it is important to develop and maintain a compact core where retail and commercial uses are close enough to each other to benefit from each other's pedestrian flows and to maintain their role. New development must enhance their attractiveness and safety for pedestrians and reinforce the diversity of uses throughout the day and evening.
- 4.33** As far as possible, new development will be sited within these core areas/centres. Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the core area/centre then consideration of the development proposals will be determined through the provisions of the Retail Planning Guidelines and the relevant Development Plan or Local Area Plans.

## POLICY 4.10

**Core Retail Area Boundaries**

Core retail areas will form the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development, appropriate to the scale and function of each centre.

Consideration of any new retail development outside of the core retail areas will be guided by the provisions of the Retail Planning Guidelines and the relevant Development Plan/Local Area Plans.

## The Need for Additional Retail Floor Space

- 4.34** In this strategy, the quantity of additional floorspace required by the market to the year 2020 is based on the findings of The Cork Strategic Retail Study. The quantum of new retail development is based on meeting the needs of the revised population targets for 2020 provided by the SWRA/DoEHLG to meet the objectives of the NSS National Spatial Strategy for 2020.
- 4.35** The CSRS 2008 made forecasts of additional floorspace and this is summarised in Table 4.3 (Convenience and Comparison Shopping) below.



**Table 4.3 Additional Retail Floorspace (Convenience and Comparison Shopping)  
2006 - 2020 (net square metres)**

Location	Convenience Shopping	Comparison Shopping	Total
Cork City Centre	12,040	77,610	116,280
Suburbs of Cork		26,630	
Metropolitan Cork Towns	27,440	22,130	49,570
Ring Towns	5,590	19,200	24,790
County Towns	5,860	20,500	26,360
Retail Warehousing			93,610
<b>Total (Net Square Metres)</b>	<b>50,930</b>	<b>166,070</b>	<b>310,610</b>

- Notes:** (1) These guidelines are rounded to the nearest 10 square metres  
 (2) The areas shown for convenience goods are an average of the large format and medium sized supermarket format scenarios  
 (3) Figures for the City Centre include Docklands

**4.36** Up to 2013, committed convenience and comparison goods development roughly matches projected expenditure growth, although there is a clear short term need to bring forward more foodstore development in the Outer Metropolitan Area. However, given the long lead time for retail development, particularly town centre or edge-of-centre development, it is important to plan now for development which will be built and occupied in 2013 or shortly afterwards.

**4.37** The quantities of additional floorspace identified in Table 4.3 are, generally, to be interpreted as guideline targets. In particular, the guideline targets for the ring towns and county towns are approximate estimates based on anticipated share of the expenditure on comparison goods by 2020. Provision will be made in the relevant Development Plans and Local Area Plans for the towns to secure new floorspace broadly in line with this table. It will be necessary to monitor and if appropriate adjust these figures over the fourteen-year period to which they apply to reflect the changes that may occur in Cork City, Cork County and in the retail market. However, in order to encourage the scale of development required, particularly in the City Centre and in the metropolitan town centres, there will be a presumption against growth of the suburban district centres above the level set in Table 4.3. Furthermore the 40/60 northside/southside split in the provision of comparison shopping development in the Suburbs of Cork outlined above will be maintained.

**4.38** New convenience space should be located to correspond with areas where population increase is occurring. In the towns new convenience floorspace should be located as close as possible to the town centre. In the city suburbs it should be integrated with other retailing and local services in District, Neighbourhood and Local Centres. In the city the 12,000 net square metres of convenience space (see table 4.3) should be distributed according to current and future population levels and expenditure patterns, taking into account the objective of redressing the northside/southside imbalance. Discount stores offer a limited range of products in stores with an average size of 1300 sq m. and they are usually located within or on the edge of town or district centres. As they mainly trade in convenience goods they are included in the convenience allocation in Table 4.3.

#### POLICY 4.11

##### **Additional Retail Floor Space**

To provide for the distribution of new retail floorspace as outlined in Table 4.3 above.

To ensure that there will be a rebalancing of comparison shopping development in the city suburbs in accordance with the 40/60 northside/southside split proposed and in accordance with Policy 4.3 and the targets in Table 4.3



**POLICY 4.12**

**Location and Scale of Additional Retail Floorspace**

To acknowledge Cork City Centre as the primary retail centre in the County and the focus for comparison retail development.

Within the Cork City Suburbs, the available floor-space should be distributed around the district centres, in order to avoid an imbalance of provision (as set out in Table 4.3 in relation to comparison shopping).

Within the Metropolitan Cork Towns, the available floor-space should be distributed among the main centres at Ballincollig, Midleton and Carrigaline, whilst also allowing for new floorspace at the principal neighbourhood centres, in order to avoid an imbalance of provision.

To encourage an appropriate mix of convenience and comparison shopping in the Ring Towns and County Towns outside Metropolitan Cork, through appropriate objectives in development/local plans.

**Retail Warehouses and Retail Parks**

**4.39** Retail warehouses are large stores specialising in the sale of household goods and bulky items catering mainly for car-borne customers. Under the Retail Planning Guidelines they can be a maximum size of 6,000 sq metres (gross), including garden centre, and a minimum size of 700 square metres (gross), and there will be a presumption against their sub-division resulting in units less than this minimum. The range of goods sold shall be restricted to the sale of bulky household goods including: carpets, furniture, automotive products, white electrical goods, DIY items, garden materials, office equipment, industrial plant and equipment. Car showrooms can also be accommodated in retail parks.



- 4.40** Acceptable uses also include the sale of computers, toys and sports goods, subject to the following restrictions:
- The size of stores selling computers, toys and sports goods shall be restricted to a maximum of 2,000 square metres (gross). This will allow current market requirements to be met without encouraging an excessive scale of provision. Sports stores shall be limited to the sale of bulky goods only, such as golfing equipment or gym equipment. The sale of footwear and clothing is limited to 15% of floor or wall space.
  - In order to ensure that retail warehouse developments and retail parks incorporate a high proportion of bulky goods it is appropriate to limit the proportion of total space within a retail warehouse development or retail park which is devoted to the sale of computers, toys and sports goods. It is therefore, proposed that no more than 20% of the floorspace of a warehousing development or Retail Park be devoted to the sale of computers, toys or sports goods.
- 4.41** While the uses listed above are not a complete list of acceptable uses, the range listed is a good indication of the types of uses considered appropriate for Retail Warehouse Units. The permitted uses exclude the sale of goods which are not bulky such as food, clothing and footwear items.
- 4.42** Retail parks involve the development of three, or more, retail warehouses, together comprising 8,000 to 15,000 square metres, around a shared car park. They can be anchored by a single unit of up to 6,000 square metres (including garden centre). There can be benefits in grouping retail warehouses selling bulky goods on planned retail parks so that the number of trips by car are minimised outside the town centre so that there is relief from additional traffic within a congested town centre. The Retail Planning Guidelines suggest that retail parks in the Metropolitan Cork area should be within this range. The size of retail warehouse provision in the ring and county towns will generally be smaller than those in Metropolitan Cork due to population size.
- 4.43** Particularly outside the city and its suburbs, there is concern that poorly planned retail warehouses could seriously undermine the sometimes fragile comparison shopping element in many town centres. Where the range of goods sold from retail warehouse parks extends to the type of non-bulky durables which are normally retailed from town centres then there is much more potential for an adverse impact on a nearby town centre. Yet, properly planned, retail warehouses can add to the overall shopping attraction of any place.
- 4.44** In this strategy the preferred location for all new retail development is within the core shopping areas of the city, town and district centres. However, in general, retail warehouses do not fit easily into city and town centres, given their size requirements and the need for good car parking facilities and ease of servicing. There may, however, be suitable locations for retail warehouses or parks at the edge of town or district centres.
- 4.45** It is proposed that new retail warehouse space be allocated on the basis of 20% city suburbs, 50% metropolitan towns, 30% ring and county towns.
- 4.46** Within the suburbs of Cork, an allocation of 18,690 square metres of new retail warehouse floorspace is proposed. The Planning Authorities will seek to secure a reasonably even distribution of retail warehouse floorspace around the city and suburbs so that there is good accessibility for all residents. In order to secure this even spread of floorspace, locations in or close to District Centres, as well as a limited amount of development on appropriate edge of City Centre sites, are considered appropriate locations for additional retail warehousing developments.
- 4.47** In the Metropolitan Cork towns, an allocation of 46,720 square metres of new retail warehouse floorspace is proposed. Here, self-standing individual retail warehouse units could be more easily assimilated as part of town centre or edge of centre development.
- 4.48** In the ring and county towns, an allocation of 28,030 square metres of new retail warehouse floor-space is proposed. In these locations, self-standing individual retail warehouse units could be more easily assimilated as part of town centre or edge of centre development.

**4.49** Not only must applications for development demonstrate that they will not impact on existing centres, they should also show that, taking into account the location of the proposed development, they will add to the centres overall attractiveness for shopping. In addition, proposals must also show that they are accessible by public transport, and that there is sufficient capacity in the road network to accommodate the development.

**POLICY 4.13**

**Retail Warehousing and Retail Parks**

The Planning Authorities will make provision in development plans for new retail warehouse development in general accordance with the scale of provision indicated above.

The preferred location for retail warehousing is in or near the edge of town or district centres, or other sustainable locations in accordance with the sequential test. In Metropolitan Cork it should be in the Metropolitan Towns, to coincide with areas of population growth.

It is an objective that the range of goods sold in retail warehouses be restricted to the sale of bulky household items including: carpets, furniture, automotive products, 'white' electrical goods, DIY items, garden materials, office equipment, industrial plant and equipment. Car showrooms can also be accommodated in retail parks.

Acceptable uses may also include limited sale of computers, toys and sports goods, subject to

- The size of store selling computers, toys and sports goods shall be restricted to 2,000 sq. m. gross.
- Sports stores shall be limited to the sale of bulky goods only such as golfing or gym equipment. The sale of sports footwear and clothing is limited to 15% of floor or wall space.
- The total floorspace devoted to the sale of computers, toys or sports goods shall be limited to not more than 20% of the total floorspace in individual retail parks.

The permitted uses exclude the sale of goods which are not bulky such as food, clothing and footwear items.

Applications for planning permission must demonstrate that not only will the proposal not impact on existing centres, but it will add to the centres overall attractiveness for shopping.

In addition, proposals should normally show that they are or are planned to be accessible by public transport, and that there is sufficient capacity in the road network to accommodate the development.

## New Neighbourhood and Local Centres

**4.50** The purpose of local/ neighbourhood centres is to ensure that all residential areas are within easy access of and are adequately serviced by local/neighbourhood facilities and services. Neighbourhood Centres serve a pedestrian catchment of approximately 600-800m while Local Centres have a smaller pedestrian catchment of approximately 200-500m.

**4.51** New centres will generally be anchored by a small/medium sized convenience store and should also include a number of smaller associated local service units to enhance the overall appeal of the centre in terms of service provision and design. Anchor supermarkets should be medium sized and not exceed 1,500net sq.m. in the case of Neighbourhood Centres and not exceed 400 net sq.m. in the case of Local



Centres. The centres should contain a comparable amount of local services floorspace to anchor floorspace with the former constructed at the same time as the main anchor store (see Policy 4.15 below). Conditions of planning may be applied to limit the opening of the new anchor store until such a time as the associated units are constructed and fit for occupation. The nature of associated uses appropriate within existing and new neighbourhood and local centres is outlined in Chapter 15, Land Use Zoning Objectives. The list of existing Neighbourhood Centres in the city is provided in Table 4.1 and the list of Local Centres in the city is outlined in Table 4.2.

- 4.52** Proposed new Neighbourhood Centres for the North and South Docks are identified in Map 1. Possible new Local Centres in the suburbs where gaps in provision exist at present are shown indicatively in Zoning and Objectives Maps in Volume 2. These centres will provide the location for convenience shopping and local/neighbourhood services to facilitate existing and emerging populations. The design, layout and parking arrangements for these new centres should conform to Urban Design and Development Management Standards in Chapters 16 and 17.
- 4.53** In all cases developments for new Neighbourhood/Local Centres should be conceived as mixed-use schemes, incorporating a range of local services, a vertical mix of uses where possible, and a high quality of urban design appropriate to their scale and character. The range of uses permitted should conform to specific zoning policies in the plan but where suitable uses could include residential and complementary local services, such as childcare, retail offices, pharmacies, medical consultancies, public houses, small shops, etc.
- 4.54** Where it can be justified on the basis of a detailed Retail Impact Assessment that the current shortfall in local/neighbourhood service provision outside of the areas identified in the zoning and development objectives maps in Volume 2, warrants the provision of a new local/neighbourhood centre the planning authority will assess the proposal on its merits. If a Neighbourhood Centre can be justified in place of the proposed local centre in the south eastern suburbs shown on Map 8 of the Plan then the objective for this location will change from Local Centre to Neighbourhood Centre. The design, layout and parking arrangements for any new centres should conform to Urban Design and Development Management Standards in Chapters 16 and 17.

#### POLICY 4.14

##### **New Neighbourhood and Local Centres**

To encourage the provision of new Neighbourhood and Local Centres provided they:

- Demonstrate the need for the centre;
- Demonstrate the retail impact;
- Demonstrate the appropriateness of the site by means of a Sequential Test Statement;
- Provide a mix of uses and services suited to the scale of the centre;
- Ensure a high standard of urban design, and particularly ensure that developments address the street appropriately, avoid the development of extensive blank frontages, and incorporate a mixture of uses vertically and horizontally;
- Are adequately served by public transport.

#### POLICY 4.15

##### **Associated Local Service Units within Neighbourhood and Local Centres**

It is the policy of Cork City Council to restrict the opening of the main anchor stores within new neighbourhood and local centres until such a time as any associated local service units are constructed and fit for occupation.

## Assessing New Retail Development

- 4.55** The Retail Planning Guidelines set out general principles for assessing new retail proposals. The planning authorities will implement these through the inclusion of appropriate objectives in their development plans.
- 4.56** The local authorities have agreed that the preferred location for retail development is within existing centres. The general scale and nature of retail development that is appropriate to such centres in Cork is set out in this strategy.

### POLICY 4.16

#### **Assessment of Retail Development Proposals**

Applications for new retail development shall accord with the retail policies of the plan and government guidance in the form of the Retail Planning Guidelines. Applications shall also:

- Provide a detailed retail impact assessment to accompany the application where appropriate;
- Demonstrate the need for the additional retail space;
- Be of a high quality design and layout encouraging active and engaging frontages where appropriate.

## Monitoring and Review of Retail Strategy

- 4.57** The Retail Planning Guidelines advise the relevant planning authorities to regularly monitor trends in their area and update retail policies if appropriate. A monitoring system will be put in place by the city and county authorities to ensure that any necessary adjustments in policy can be made. The quantum of new retail development is based on the revised population targets set in 2007 by the South West Regional Authority, to further the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy. The retail strategy will be monitored annually and if necessary reviewed to take account of a slowdown in the economy resulting in lower than expected in-migration and consequent lower growth in consumer expenditure.