

Draft Plan stage

Cork City Active Recreation Infrastructure Study



**CORK CITY
DEVELOPMENT
PLAN 2022-2028**



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Turley

Active Recreation Infrastructure Needs Study

Cork City Council – Draft Report

June 2021

Turley

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Client

Cork City Council

June 2021

Glossary

We set out below a glossary of the sporting abbreviations/acronyms used within this Study.

- AGP – Artificial Grass Pitch
- BAME – Black Asian and Ethnic Minority
- Carrying Capacity – Amount of play a site can regularly accommodate.
- COB – City of Bristol
- CSP – Cork Sports Partnership
- Exported Demand – Play by teams or other users of sports pitches from within the study area.
- FPM – Facility Planning Model
- FTP – Fine Turf Pitch
- Future Demand – Informed estimate made of the likely future demand of pitches.
- IMD- Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Latent Demand – Demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population.
- LSOA's – Lower Super Output Areas
- MTU – Munster Technology University
- NGB's – National governing Body's
- Overplay – When a pitch is used over the amount of that carrying capacity.
- PPS – Playing Pitch Strategy
- SDCC – South Dublin County Council
- SDDP – South Dublin Development Plan
- SDZ's – Strategic Development Zones
- SE – Sport England
- SI – Sport Ireland
- SPS – Sports Pitch Strategy
- UCC – University College Cork
- Unmet Demand – Demand that exist but unable to accommodate on current supply.

Executive Summary

Purpose

- 1.1 The Study seeks to provide CCC with an up-to-date understanding of the quantity and quality of existing Active Recreation Infrastructure (hereafter 'ARI') within the recently enlarged administrative boundary of CCC and to identify the current and future ARI needs of the City up to 2028 and to 2040.

Study Inputs/Outputs

- 1.2 The principal workstreams undertaken as part of, and to inform, the Study include:
 - desktop research and analysis;
 - detailed stakeholder audit;
 - audit of existing ARI in the Study Area by digital means via an Online Survey;
 - one-to-one engagement with key stakeholders; and
 - comparative analysis of Cork City with Bristol City and South Dublin.

Data Collection and Analysis

- 1.3 The Study Team undertook initial desktop research and analysis to gain a comprehensive understanding of the relevant international, national, regional and local planning and recreation/sport/health policy context and relevant requirements.
- 1.4 Our review outlines clear national, regional and local planning policy support for the protection/maintenance/promotion/improvement of, and investment in, existing and new ARI, which is aligned with, and reinforced by, the relevant body of international, national/regional and local recreation, sport and health plans/strategies/policies. See Section 3 of the Study for further details.

Stakeholder Audit

- 1.5 The Study Team has prepared an updated Stakeholder Audit List and contains the details of over 400 recreation and sporting organisations located within the Study Area. The updated list is an important and comprehensive database resource that will act as a baseline for CCC and which can be updated as part of any future ARI studies.

Active Recreation Infrastructure (ARI) Audit

- 1.6 The audit of ARI represents a core component of the Study Brief. Due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, and noting the requirement for CCC to progress its Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, the Study Team was required to adapt the Study methodology by using digital data gathering/recruitment and engagement tools.

- 1.7 The Study Team agreed an amended Consultation Plan with CCC and the stakeholder engagement components of the Study (i.e. the online survey and one-to-one meetings) were expanded to enable the Study Team to progress the ARI Audit and deliver the scope of work outlined in the Study Brief.
- 1.8 The Online Survey Audit (OSA) was published on freeonlinesurveys.com and was live for two weeks from 8 February 2021 to 21 February 2021. A total of 156 responses were received from a diverse range of active recreation organisations across the Study Area.
- 1.9 A significant finding from the OSA is that more than three quarters (76%) of the survey respondents do not consider there to be adequate ARI within Cork City to support their organisations and members.
- 1.10 This finding is quite surprising noting that Cork City is home to both nationally and regionally significant ARI, and it is also benefited by a diverse network of city and local level ARI including sport pitches, courts, courses, tracks, etc with a range of surface types (such as green field and all-weather). This existing network of ARI is reinforced and complemented by a number of existing parks and walking and cycling routes.
- 1.11 Another important finding from the OSA is that the majority (88%) of survey respondents expect the membership of their organisations to grow over the next six years. Indeed, of the 101 organisations that provided a response to Question 6 of the OSA, all predicted growth in their membership bases with an overall total growth of over 25,000 new members indicated.
- 1.12 This finding is not surprising noting the ever increasing importance and popularity of recreation and sporting activities, as well as the level of population growth within the Study Area. Indeed, it provides evidence that there is a need for additional and/or improved ARI within the Study Area to accommodate the expected increases in memberships.
- 1.13 Noting the significant quantum of growth that is planned for Cork City over the next 20 years, it is important that CCC plans for/seek to improve the existing ARI network and delivers new ARI to ensure a healthy, green and connected City with appropriate levels of ARI along with inter-connected parks, open spaces, greenways and public transport.
- 1.14 Section 5 of this Study provides a detailed overview of the quantitative findings from the OSA and the qualitative findings from the OSA have informed:
- our spatial analysis of ARI within Section 6 of the Study;
 - our understanding of ARI requirements as set out in Section 9 of the Study; and
 - our conclusions and recommendations outlined in Section 12 of the Study.

Stakeholder Engagement

- 1.15 Stakeholder consultations represent another key component of, and input to, the Study. The Study Team agreed a list of key stakeholders with CCC before conducting a series of focused consultations to help inform the Study.
- 1.16 The focused consultations with key stakeholders allowed the Study Team to obtain important insights and information with respect to a number of strategic themes relating to ARI within the Study Area, as detailed further in Section 6 of the Study.
- 1.17 The one-to-one meetings also enabled the Study Team to validate the initial findings from our desktop analysis, the comparative analysis exercise and initial feedback from the online survey responses.
- 1.18 The stakeholder engagement exercise identified some key recommendations:
- Increase the quantity of AGP pitches throughout the city to provide more teams with access to these facilities for training and matches. This in turn will reduce the demand on grass pitches and improve the overall quality of the pitches, this is especially important for the dominant sports of GAA, Soccer and Rugby Union.
 - Align future health and wellbeing strategies with the strategic plans for the individual national governing bodies of sport and community sport groups.
 - Support clubs and organisations to access capital grant funding opportunities.
 - Develop a feasibility study to determine the scope and facility mix for 3 multi-use sport hubs that are strategically located throughout the City, predominantly in areas of significant growth.
 - A Sports Development Officer should be appointed to identify, promote, establish and maintain important relationships between educational establishments and national government bodies.
 - Coordinate and develop workshops and other forms of engagement with external key stakeholders to plan for this current and future growth.

Comparative Analysis

- 1.19 A detailed desktop comparative analysis exercise was undertaken by the Study Team to assist in benchmarking the ARI provision in Cork City with Bristol City and South Dublin.
- 1.20 The key findings and recommendations from the comparative analysis exercise include:
- The three cities highlighted within the comparative study are similar in terms of the number of pitches per total population, in terms of population trends and with a shared emphasis on increasing participation levels.
 - CCC need to prepare a robust Pitch Based Sports Strategy which reviews in detail the carrying capacity and investigation of individual sites, such as GAA, soccer

and rugby pitches to accurately determine the current and future need, much like the strategy completed in South Dublin.

- Following the completion of a pitch-based sport specific strategy further work then can be undertaken on designated options appraisals and studies.
- Liaise with schools and other community groups to explore the opportunity to utilise their facilities after official hours for wider community and club use which will also help to establish greater links between the schools, the community and local clubs. This will also allow CCC to reduce capital expenditure on new pitches and sites if current facilities are better utilised.
- The City of Bristol work closely with national governing bodies and regional sports partnerships to develop common strategies and participation goals. CCC should increase communication and develop closer relationships with these entities to align similar goals/objectives.
- CCC should further explore detailed feasibility studies for large capital builds such as swimming pools and leisure centres within the MDA areas to determine the correct size and facility mix required.

Other Findings and Recommendations

1.21 In addition, this Study provides a range of detailed findings and recommendations with respect to the following:

- ARI Spatial Analysis – see Section 6;
- ARI Requirements (Pitch, Non-Pitch and Water Based) – see Section 9;
- Major Development Areas – see Section 10;
- Delivery of ARI within the Study Area – See Section 11:
 - including recommendations on protecting, enhancing, increasing, embedding and retrofitting ARI within the Study Area; and
 - commentary with respect to interrelationship/opportunities of ARI and Green & Blue Infrastructure, Green Belts and Climate Change.
- Planning Policy Objectives – see Section 12.

1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 Turley Ireland and LK2 Sport & Leisure Ltd (hereafter the 'Study Team'), in partnership, and following a competitive tendering process, were instructed by Cork City Council (hereafter 'CCC') to prepare an Active Recreation Infrastructure Needs Study for Cork City (hereafter 'the Study').

Purpose

- 1.2 The Study seeks to provide CCC with an up-to-date understanding of the quantity and quality of existing Active Recreation Infrastructure (hereafter 'ARI') within the recently enlarged administrative boundary of CCC and to identify the current and future ARI needs of the City up to 2028 and to 2040.

Need for the Study

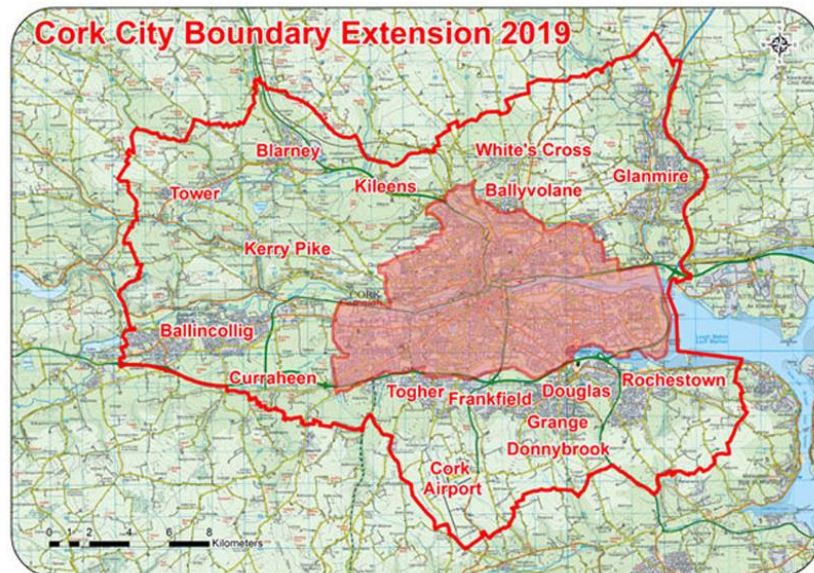
- 1.3 The requirement for this Study is due to a number of factors, namely¹:
- The outdated nature of the Cork Recreational Needs Study 2003.
 - The extension of Cork City Council's administrative area on 31 May 2019 and the inclusion of new areas, such as Douglas, Rochestown, Ballincollig, Blarney and Glanmire.
 - Objective 11.3 - Active Recreational Needs Study of the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 (hereafter 'the CCDP') which contains a commitment for CCC to progress a review of the Recreational Needs Study 2003.
 - The requirements of Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000.
 - The need for the emerging Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 to include relevant objectives for the City Centre and its new areas.
- 1.4 The Study will also provide a key input into the Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028; Local Area Plans and area-specific development strategies and briefs; Development Contribution Schemes for the city to enable land purchase and infrastructure provision; strategic investment in capital and revenue budgetary decisions by state, private sector, third sector organizations and collaborations between multiple parties; bids for necessary capital funds required to deliver strategic and local recreational infrastructure and projects; and any ongoing Local Sports Plans.
- 1.5 It is further noted that Cork City Council is preparing a Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Study parallel to this Study.

¹ Each of these factors are considered in more detail in the respective Sections of this Study.

Study Area

- 1.6 The Study Area is the geographical extent of Cork City Council’s administrative area, which includes the recent extension, of May 2019, and the new areas of Douglas, Rochestown, Ballincollig, Blarney, Glanmire and etc. Figure 1.1 below identifies the extent of the Study Area.

Figure 1.1: Map of the Study Area



City Profile

- 1.7 Cork City, being Ireland’s second largest city, is a unique and vibrant place that has been designated as a World Health Organisation Healthy City since January 2012.
- 1.8 In terms of its overarching role, Cork City performs well as a major urban centre in Ireland and the City has positioned itself as an emerging medium-sized European centre of growth and innovation.
- 1.9 Cork City is expected to grow by approx. 105,000 people between 2016 (210,000 people) and 2040 (to approx. 315,000 people). Noting this, it is important that CCC seeks to plan for, and deliver, a healthy, green and connected City with appropriate levels of ARI along with inter-connected parks, open spaces, greenways and public transport to ensure a high quality of life for the City and its surrounding hinterlands.

Objectives of the Study

- 1.10 This Study is a valuable piece of strategic work that seeks to provide a clear evidence based approach with respect to identifying and enhancing Cork City’s Active Recreational Infrastructure needs and assets.
- 1.11 The Study comprises a total of four stages, as outlined below:
- Stage 1: Project Inception

- Stage 2: Desktop Investigation, Surveys, Consultation and Mapping
 - Stage 3: Draft Report
 - Stage 4: Final Report
- 1.12 The specific requirements for each stage of the Study, as required by the Study Brief, are outlined in **Appendix 1**.

Importance of ARI

- 1.13 The provision of appropriate levels of ARI is an important contributor to, and underpins, the ‘quality of life’ offering of a successful city and can help to make a city more attractive for residents, businesses and visitors.
- 1.14 This Study demonstrates that there are clear and significant economic, social and environmental benefits associated with protecting, maintaining, promoting, improving and investing in existing and new ARI to meet the current and growing needs of Cork City and its hinterland areas (see Section 3 for further details).
- 1.15 Indeed, a successful network of ARI will help to ensure that Cork City is a healthy and happy city by contributing to good physical and mental health as well as sporting achievement and excellence.

Structure of the Study

- 1.16 The remainder of this Study is structured as follows:
- Section 2 – Methodology
 - Section 3 – Active Recreation Infrastructure
 - Section 4 – Study Context
 - Section 5 – Active Recreation Infrastructure – Audit
 - Section 6 – Active Recreation Infrastructure - Spatial Analysis
 - Section 7 – Stakeholder Engagement
 - Section 8 – Comparative Analysis
 - Section 9 – Active Recreation Infrastructure – Requirements
 - Section 10 – Major Development Areas
 - Section 11 – How Can Cork City Council Deliver?
 - Section 12 – Active Recreation Infrastructure - Planning Policy Objectives
 - Section 13 – Conclusions and Recommendations

1.17 The Study is also supported by the following Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Study Brief
- Appendix 2 - Planning Policy Review
- Appendix 3 - Online Survey Audit Questions
- Appendix 4 - Copy of Detailed Comments to Questions 19 and 35 of the OSA
- Appendix 5 - Minutes of the One-to-One Stakeholder Engagement Meetings
- Appendix 6 - Pitch Based ARI Requirements – Study Area
- Appendix 7 - Non-Pitch Based ARI Requirements – Study Area

2. Methodology

2.1 We outline below the agreed methodology and steps undertaken to prepare the Study.

Inception Meeting

2.2 An inception meeting was held with Cork City Council's (CCC) Project Team and the Study Team on 5 November 2020 to:

- agree the scope of the Study;
- agree project methodology;
- agree comparative cities for benchmarking;
- agree the Study programme in accordance with the Tender Brief; and
- identify information/inputs required from CCC to help progress the Study.

Preliminary Data Collection and Analysis

2.3 The Study Team undertook initial desktop research and analysis to help inform the Study and obtain a comprehensive understanding of the relevant international, national, regional and local planning and recreation/sport/health policy context and relevant requirements.

Comparative Analysis

2.4 A detailed desktop comparative analysis exercise was also undertaken by the Study Team to help benchmark the ARI provision in Cork City with Bristol City and South Dublin. Further details and findings can be found under Section 8 of the Study.

Stakeholder Audit

2.5 CCC provided the Study Team with a list of over 400 recreation and sporting organisations located within the Study Area and provided contacts for a number of these organisations.

2.6 On review of the list, it was noted that a number of contact details were obsolete. In light of this, the Study Team undertook a holistic audit of the stakeholder list, which represented a significant body of work, and gathered updated and new contact details, where available.

2.7 In addition, the Study Team arranged the various organisations within the stakeholder audit by sport type. The updated stakeholder audit has been provided to CCC and is an important database resource that will act as a baseline for future studies.

Active Recreation Infrastructure (ARI) Audit

- 2.8 The audit of ARI represents a core component of the Study Brief. The Study Team intended to undertake in-person surveys of the ARI located within the Study Area to complete this Study requirement.
- 2.9 However, due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, and noting the requirement for CCC to progress its Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, the Study Team proposed to adapt the previously agreed methodology by using online/digital data gathering, engagement and recruitment tools.
- 2.10 The Study Team prepared an amended Consultation Plan outlining the new strategy and issued this to CCC on 29 January 2021 for review and agreement.
- 2.11 Following CCC approval of the amended consultation and audit methodology/strategy, the stakeholder engagement components of the Study (i.e. the online survey and one-to-one meetings) were expanded to enable the Study Team to progress the ARI Audit and deliver the scope of work outlined in the Study Brief.

Online Survey Audit

- 2.12 The Online Survey Audit (OSA) was published on freeonlinesurveys.com and it was live for two weeks from 8 February 2021 to 21 February 2021. A total of 156 responses were received from a diverse range of active recreation and sporting organisations across the Study Area.

Survey Content

- 2.13 The OSA was expanded to incorporate a total of 38 qualitative and quantitative questions and designed in a manner to enable the Study Team to:
- Audit the quality and quantity of existing ARI in the City;
 - Understand the needs of Cork City's active recreation organisations; and to
 - Advise on the level of ARI required for the future.
- 2.14 The OSA also provided an opportunity to obtain important information on existing sporting organisations (such as their: size; requirements; contact details; etc), the location where they carry out active recreation (i.e. to identify ARI) and their opinions on the quantity and quality of ARI in the Study Area.

Survey Recruitment

- 2.15 Noting that in-person/physical surveys of the ARI within the Study Area were precluded due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Study Team applied a pro-active approach with respect to recruiting survey activity/responses.
- 2.16 This pro-active approach included the following:
- Emailing the survey details and link directly to all active recreation/sporting organisations listed in the Stakeholder Audit with an email contact; and
 - Developing and agreeing a social media strategy with CCC.

- 2.17 The social media strategy was designed to target specific respondents including representatives/members of active recreation and/or sporting organisations to drive traffic to the portal and participation in the survey.
- 2.18 A series of Facebook and LinkedIn advertisements ran to further promote the OSA to key stakeholders and members of relevant organisations in the Study Area and these ads reached a total of 63,278 people.
- 2.19 During the consultation period, the OSA experienced 1,471 page views overall. The top traffic sources to the survey website were Facebook (79%), Direct Traffic (20%) and Organic Searches (0.1%).

Survey Findings

- 2.20 The Study Team prepared a report which reviewed and highlighted the key quantitative findings from the OSA responses. This report was provided to CCC for review and agreement under Stage 2 of the Study.
- 2.21 Section 5 of this Study provides an overview of the quantitative findings from the OSA. The qualitative findings from the OSA have informed:
- our spatial analysis of ARI within Section 6 of the Study;
 - our understanding of ARI requirements as set out in Section 9 of the Study; and
 - our conclusions and recommendations outlined in Sections 11, 12 and 13 of the Study.

Stakeholder Engagement

- 2.22 Stakeholder consultations represent another key component of, and input to, the Study. The Study Team agreed the following list of key stakeholders with CCC in terms of undertaking focused consultations to help inform the Study:

Key Sport/Active Recreation Stakeholders in Cork City	
Munster and Cricket Ireland	Cork Sports Partnership
Munster Cricket	Former Cork City FC
Hockey Ireland	University College Cork
Athletics Ireland	Ireland Rowing
Munster Rugby	Cork GAA
Munster Technology University	Ladies Gaelic Football Association

- 2.23 In tandem with the online survey, the Study Team issued a letter to the above-mentioned key stakeholders to arrange one-to-one meetings.
- 2.24 Again, noting the on-going Covid-19 restrictions, in-person meetings were precluded. Thus, the Study Team adapted and utilised video conferencing and telephone tools to enable the meetings to be undertaken.

- 2.25 The focused consultations with key stakeholders allowed the Study Team to obtain important insights and information with respect to a number of strategic areas with respect to ARI in Cork City, as detailed further in Section 6 of the Study.
- 2.26 The one-to-one meetings also enabled the Study Team to validate initial findings from our desktop analysis, the comparative analysis exercise and initial feedback from the online survey responses.

Workshops with CCC

- 2.27 Following completion of the preceding tasks, the Study Team held a workshop with CCC to review and discuss the findings from the online survey and one-to-one meetings with key stakeholders.
- 2.28 CCC reviewed and agreed the relevant outputs and the Study progressed to the Draft Report writing stage.

Focus of the Study

- 2.29 The Study focuses predominantly on the requirements of the following active recreation types:

Pitch Based	
GAA	Rugby Union
Soccer	Cricket
Hockey	
Non-Pitch Based	
Sports Halls	Indoor Tennis Courts
25m Pool Equivalents	Outdoor Tennis Courts
Athletic Tracks	Golf Course - 9 hole equivalents
Indoor Bowls	Fitness Clubs
Squash Courts	Studios

- 2.30 The Study also includes water-based ARI requirements, such as boating, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, rowing, sailing, surfing, swimming and stand-up paddle boarding.

Margin of Error

- 2.31 Given the data challenges outlined above, a defined margin of error rate has not been applied to the results of the calculations used to determine the current and future supply of ARI. Investigations were limited to the data that was made available for analysis, including Council data, active recreation organisation survey responses and national participation rates. In cases where assumptions have been made for local participation, these are not expected to have a material impact on the future provisioning recommended in the Study.

3. Active Recreation Infrastructure

What is Active Recreation Infrastructure (ARI)?

- 3.1 ARI, as a term, is not explicitly referred to, or defined, in the relevant national, regional or local planning policy context (see Section 4 of this Study).
- 3.2 However, we note that ARI, in its simplest sense, is an all-encompassing umbrella term which relates to a range of outdoor and indoor physical infrastructure (including pitches, courts, halls, grounds, facilities, buildings, etc) that provides opportunities for, and enables, people to undertake active recreation.
- 3.3 To help understand what ARI is, one needs to understand what active recreation is. From our policy review, it is clear that there is no single/fixed definition for active recreation. Indeed, from our policy review, we note that multiple, and sometimes conflicting, definitions are cited in various plans, assessments and strategies.
- 3.4 In light of this, and for the purposes of this Study, we consider active recreation to be an individual and/or team activity that is either structured or organised and which utilises specific/formal infrastructure such as pitches, courts, halls, grounds, facilities, buildings, equipment and etc.
- 3.5 Hence, for the purposes of this Study, we consider all other types of recreation to be passive recreation which falls outside the remit of this Study:
- 3.6 Noting the above, infrastructure such as public roads/highways/footpaths used by walkers, joggers, runners and cyclists and informal open space/play areas are excluded from the scope of this Study.

Why is Active Recreation Infrastructure Important?

- 3.7 The international, national, regional and local recreation/sport/health/planning policy documents cited in this Study (see Section 4) collectively recognise the importance of ARI and note that it is an essential component of successful place making.
- 3.8 There are a number of economic, social and environmental benefits of investing in ARI and we identify some of these below to help outline why ARI is important:
 - Investment in ARI aligns with national, regional and local planning policies, priorities and objectives, identified in Section 4 of this Study, particularly:
 - Strategic Investment Priorities in the NPF and NDP which relate to ‘Culture, Heritage and Sport’;
 - NPF objective for Ireland’s Cities, i.e. ‘*Focusing investment to improve the collective ‘offer’ within each of the four cities, i.e. infrastructure, quality of life... and amenities*’;

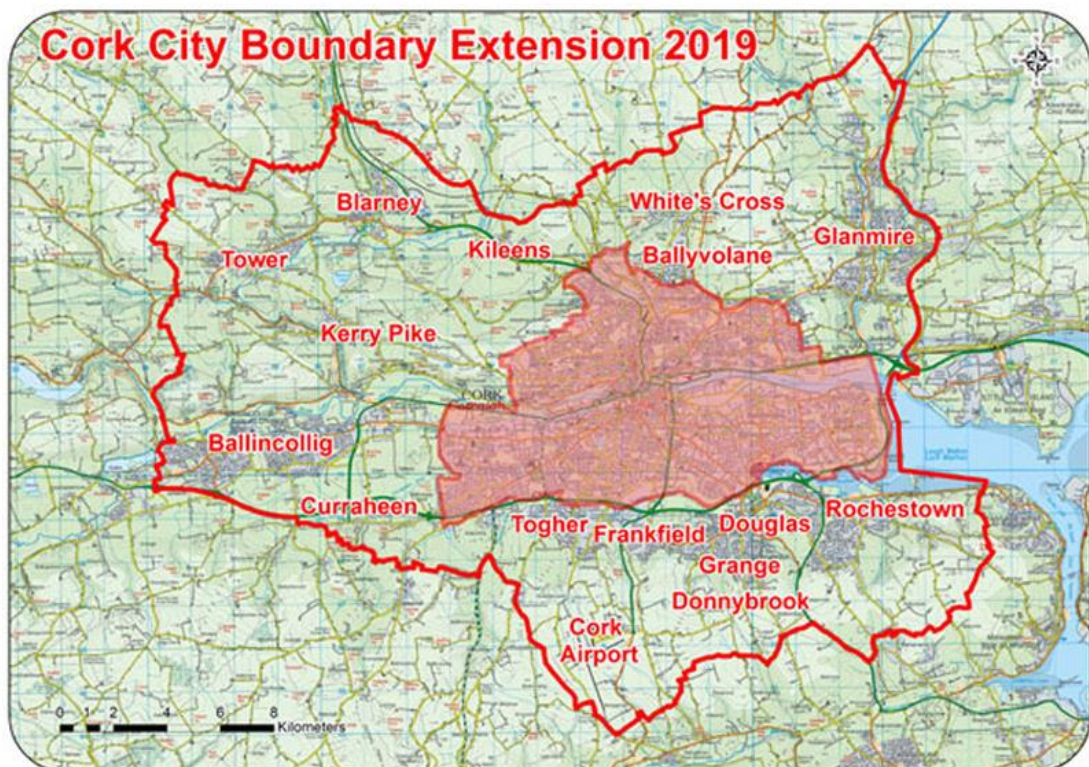
- Regional Policy Objectives 198 and 199 of the Southern Regional Assembly’s Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy;
 - Policy Objective 21b of the Cork Metropolitan Strategic Plan by supporting the role of Cork as a WHO Healthy City and by supporting the delivery of a “healthy heart” for the Cork Metropolitan Area;
 - Policy Objective 21d of the Cork Metropolitan Strategic Plan by supporting ‘Healthy Ireland’ objectives;
- Investment in ARI aligns with the policies, priorities, objectives, targets, actions and goals established in the international, national, regional and local sport, recreation and health documents, also identified in Section 4 of this Study;
 - Investment in ARI will ensure that the residents of Cork City and its surrounding hinterlands will have access to high quality recreational and sporting facilities;
 - Investment in ARI will improve community infrastructure and the ‘quality of life’ credentials of Cork City and its surrounding hinterlands as well as making these places more attractive for residents, businesses and visitors;
 - Investment in ARI will contribute to good physical and mental health, sporting achievement and excellence and to wider social, cultural and economic benefits for our communities;
 - Investment in universally accessible ARI will support physical activity and provide improved/additional physical activity opportunities which will help to encourage residents to make healthy choices and live healthier lives which can also help to reduce rates of obesity in children, teenagers, adults and the elderly;
 - Investment in ARI and healthy communities/places can create economic value by appealing to a skilled workforce and attracting innovative companies;
 - Investment in ARI can help to complement and reinforce the impact of investment in sustainable public transport networks and previous ARI and other amenity investments;
 - Investment in ARI, particularly outdoor grassed facilities/pitches, can provide additional rationale and purpose for the designation of Green Belts and green spaces in our urban areas which can help to support biodiversity, delineate settlements and contribute to additional resilience with respect to drainage/flooding and climate change strategies/initiatives;
 - Investment in ARI can augment Cork City’s appeal with respect to tourism and international capital;
 - Investment in ARI can play an important role in supporting and enhancing the primacy, vitality and viability of a successful City Centre; and
 - Investment in ARI can play a role in regeneration of areas by making them more liveable and providing new uses for vacant/derelict buildings/sites.

4. Study Context

Study Area

- 4.1 The Study Area is based on the geographical extent of Cork City Council's administrative area, which includes the recent extension, of May 2019.
- 4.2 The newly extended Cork City Council boundary is illustrated in Figure 4.1 below and now includes the following new areas: White Cross; Ballyvolane; Glanmire, Rochestown; Douglas; Grange; Donnybrook, Frankfield; Cork Airport; Togher; Curraheen; Ballincollig; Kerry Pike; Tower; Blarney and Kileens.

Figure 4.1: Map showing the Overall Extent of the Study Area



Cork City Profile

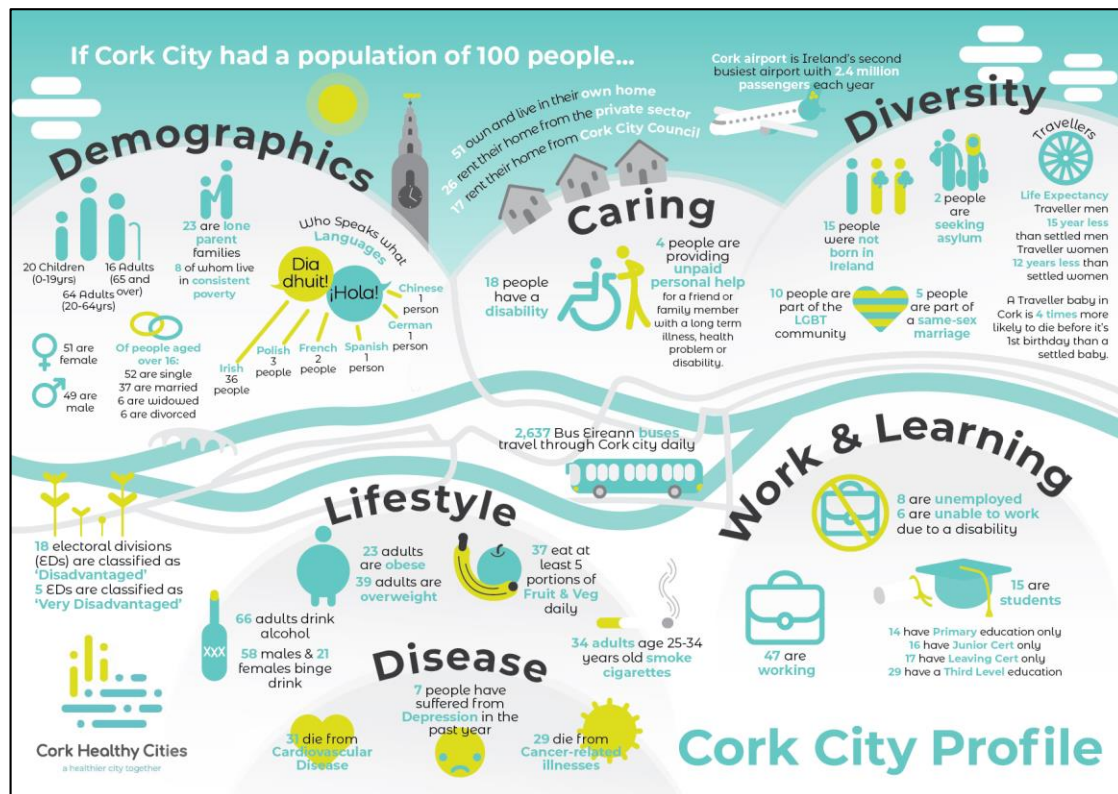
Introduction

- 4.3 Cork City, being Ireland's second largest city, is a unique and vibrant place fuelled by the creativity, diversity and energy of its communities.
- 4.4 Cork has been a designated WHO Healthy City since January 2012. This designation places an obligation on the local authority to commit to good health outcomes and implement a process and structure to achieve this.

Cork City Profile

4.5 The info graphic below, which has been extracted from the Cork Healthy Cities website, provides a useful overview of Cork City's profile

Figure 4.2: Info graphic of Cork City in 2018



Source: Cork Healthy Cities - Action Plan - Phase VII 2020 - 2030²

Function/Role

- 4.6 In terms of its overarching role, Cork City performs well as a major urban centre in Ireland and the City has positioned itself as an emerging medium-sized European centre of growth and innovation.
- 4.7 The national and regional plans³ identify Cork as an emerging international centre of scale and outline that it is well placed to complement Dublin. However, to more fully achieve these roles, the City requires significantly accelerated and urban-focused growth.

² Available at: <https://corkhealthycities.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/CHC-Action-Plan-Report-FINAL.pdf>

³ These being:

- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework;
- Project Ireland 2040 - National Development Plan;
- Southern Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2031; and
- Southern Regional Assembly's Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan Cork 2020-2031

Strategic Challenge

- 4.8 In terms of challenges, the NPF cites the long term decline of the Cork City's urban population as being as one of the City's greatest challenges in achieving significant growth to move the City and its metropolitan region to the next level.
- 4.9 Consequently, Cork City is to undergo targeted interventions over the next 20 years at a national level as part of Project Ireland 2040 with significant funding and growth being directed to the City and its hinterlands to develop increased scale and critical mass as well as an enhanced urban environment and capacity.

Planned Growth

- 4.10 Cork City has been attributed a planned rate of growth of between two to three times the national average (50% to 60%) over the next 20 years in the NFP. As a result, Cork City's population is expected to grow by approx. 105,000 people between 2016 (210,000 people) and 2040 (to approx. 315,000 people).

Existing ARI

- 4.11 It is not surprising that Cork City is steeped in sporting history and glory noting that it is home to nationally and regionally important ARI, including, but not exclusive to:
- Páirc Uí Chaoimh (GAA);
 - Turners Cross Stadium (Soccer);
 - Bishopstown Training Ground (Soccer);
 - Musgrave Park (Rugby);
 - University College Cork Sports Grounds (Mixed); and
 - Munster Technological University (formerly CIT) Sports Grounds (Mixed);
 - Cork County Cricket Club (Cricket);
 - LeisureWorld (indoor health, fitness and recreation facilities) at Bishopstown, Churchfield and Douglas; and
 - Glen Resource and Sports Centre (outdoor adventure centre).
- 4.12 Additionally, Cork City has a great range of city/local level ARI with a range of playing surfaces (including green field and all-weather) with respect to sport pitches, courts, courses, tracks, etc.
- 4.13 These national, regional and city/local scale ARI assets have multiple uses throughout the year ranging from sport, recreation and leisure and provide significant benefits to the local and wider population in terms of physical and mental health.

Planned/Committed Investment in/Development of ARI

- 4.14 It is further noted that Cork City's existing network of ARI is to be supplemented in the coming years with planned/committed investments and developments, such as:

- FAI Centre of Excellence in Glanmire;
- Munster Technology University and Athletic Ireland's elite level/multi-purpose indoor arena and high-performance athletics centre;
- Marina Park – Cork City Docklands;
- Cork City Docklands Regeneration Area; and
- Tivoli Docks Regeneration Area.

Need for Additional/Improved ARI

- 4.15 Noting the significant quantum of growth that is planned for Cork City over the next 20 years, it is important that CCC plans for/seeks to improve the existing ARI network and deliver new ARI to ensure a healthy, green and connected City with appropriate levels of ARI along with inter-connected parks, open spaces, greenways and public transport.

Legislative Context

- 4.16 Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires Development Plans to include objectives for the following:
- *'the zoning of land for the use solely or primarily of particular areas for particular purposes whether... recreational, as open space or otherwise';*
 - *'the integration of the planning and sustainable development of the area with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population';* and
 - *'the preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities'.*
- 4.17 The Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (June, 2007), refer to the above objectives as 'mandatory objectives' and the Guidelines advise the following:
- *'The requirements of the planning authority for public open space and recreation space provision in connection with development proposals, particularly residential development, should be set out in the development plan; and*
 - *The planning authority's own specific objectives in this regard should also be indicated'.*

Planning Policy Context

- 4.18 As part of this Study, we have undertaken a critical review of the following national, regional and local planning policy documents, as they relate to ARI and Cork City:
- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework;
 - Project Ireland 2040 - National Development Plan;

- Southern Regional Assembly
 - Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2031
 - Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan Cork 2020-2031
- Cork City Development Plan 2015 – 2021
- Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028
 - Issues Paper
 - Chief Executive Report on Public Consultation

4.19 A detailed review of these planning policy documents can be found at **Appendix 2** of this Study, and we outline some of the headline findings below:

National Planning Policy

4.20 The relevant national planning policy context of the Study is established by the ‘Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework’ (NPF) and the ‘Project Ireland 2040 - National Development Plan’ (NDP).

Cork

4.21 Cork is identified by the NPF as a major urban centre in Ireland that is performing well and it is stated that the City has positioned itself as an emerging medium-sized European centre of growth and innovation.

4.22 The importance of Cork City is highlighted by the NPF as it confirms that *‘Building on this potential is critical to further enhancing Ireland’s metropolitan profile’*. In terms of challenges, the NPF states that *‘One of the greatest challenges in achieving significant growth that will move the Cork metropolitan region to the next level is addressing the long term decline of the City’s urban population’*.

4.23 The NPF confirms that the population of Cork City and Suburbs stood at 208,669 people at the time of the 2016 Census and it identifies a population growth target for Cork City and Suburbs of 105,000 - 125,000 people by 2040 which would bring the overall population to at least 315,000 people.

4.24 The NPF identifies a number of key future growth enablers for Cork including the need to support infrastructure and urban amenity projects. The NPF then tasks the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy process with preparing a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) for the Cork Metropolitan Area, including Cork Harbour.

Active Recreation Infrastructure (ARI)

4.25 As stated previously, the ‘term’ ARI is not specifically referred to, or defined, within the NPF or the NDP. However, both documents make references to ‘recreation infrastructure’, ‘sport’, and ‘amenities’ under a number of outcomes, objectives and priorities.

4.26 Indeed, National Strategic Outcome (NSO) 7 of the NPF, entitled ‘Enhanced Amenity and Heritage’, is of particular note with respect to ARI as it seeks to ensure *‘...that our*

cities, towns and villages are attractive and can offer a good quality of life'... which requires investment in '...recreational infrastructure...' (our emphasis).

- 4.27 The NDP states that 'Investment in culture, heritage **and sports**, appropriately aligned with other NSOs included in the NPF, can play a very important role in improving amenities and the attractiveness and liveability of different areas, whether in cities, other urban areas, small towns and rural areas' (our emphasis).
- 4.28 The NPF and NDP outline a number of benefits of investing in ARI (outlined in the preceding Section of this Study). Thus, National Policy Objective (NPO) 27 seeks to 'Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments, and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages' (our emphasis).
- 4.29 In recognition of the vital role of culture, heritage and sport in our national life, the NDP allocates in excess of €1 billion to strategic investment priorities in this area.
- 4.30 So far as sport is concerned, the Plan advises that 'Over €100 million in capital funding has been allocated for the Sport Capital Programme (SCP) for the coming four years' and that 'This programme will be further expanded over the period 2022 to 2027 which will allow for the continued development of new and improved sports facilities'.
- 4.31 The NDP describes the SCP as '*...the primary mechanism for providing funding to sport and community organisations at local, regional and national level*' and it recognises that '*Enhanced sports facilities represents a significant improvement to the community infrastructure in these areas making them more attractive places to live, work and visit*'.
- 4.32 The NDP outlines that '*...a new Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund of €100 million is being established for larger sports projects where the proposed Government contribution exceeds amounts available under the SCP*'.
- 4.33 The outcomes, objectives and priorities of the NPF and NDP are also supported by Urban and Rural Regeneration and Development Funds which are aimed at supporting '*...transformational public realm initiatives to give city and town centre areas back to citizens, encouraging greater city and town centre living, enhanced recreational spaces and attractiveness from a cultural, tourism and promotional perspective*' (our emphasis).

Regional Planning Policy

- 4.34 The relevant regional planning policy context of this Study is established by Southern Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032 which includes the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) for Cork.

Active Recreation Infrastructure - RSES

- 4.35 Similar to the NPF, the RSES does not make specific reference to 'Active Recreation Infrastructure', however, it embraces the many factors which determine a 'quality of life' including infrastructure investment in sporting facilities.

- 4.36 The importance of recreation and sporting facilities is highlighted with the inclusion of a dedicated section in the RSES (i.e. Section 7.2.5) entitled 'Regional Recreational and Sporting Facilities'.
- 4.37 Within this section, the RSES states that '*Our parks, **sporting arenas and facilities** are **essential to the quality of life** of all our communities. The quality of recreational and sporting facilities contributes to good physical and mental health, sporting achievement and excellence and to wider social, cultural and economic benefits for our communities*'.
- 4.38 The RSES then confirms that it '*...supports the development of new regional scale recreational and sporting facilities including new stadiums and provision of public parks and green areas. In addition, the RSES supports the **development of new and upgraded local sporting and recreational facilities***'.
- 4.39 The following Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) are of note with respect to ARI:
- **RPO 198 - Sport and Community Organisations:** *It is an objective to support investment in sport and community organisations in the Region through the Sports Capital Programme including development of shared local and regional sports and community facilities by local authorities. Local authorities shall support the vision and objectives of the National Sports Policy, including working with local sports partnerships, clubs, communities and partnerships within and beyond sport, to increase sport and physical activity participation levels locally.*
 - **RPO 199 - Larger Sports Projects:** *It is an objective to support investment in the sustainable development of larger sports projects in the Region under the Large-Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund. Local authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to the development of recreational and sporting infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment.*
- 4.40 **RPO 176** entitled '**10-minute City and Town Concepts**' is another notable objective which promotes sustainable compact settlements whereby a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycle timeframes from homes or are accessible by high quality public transport services by connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services.
- 4.41 Other RPOs of the RSES that are of note with respect to ARI include RPO 9, 54, 174, 200 and 201.

Active Recreation Infrastructure – MASP for Cork

- 4.42 The Cork MASP acknowledges that '*The NPF explicitly states that significant accelerated and urban focused growth is needed to fulfil [Cork City's] potential, along with accelerated investment, **physical and social infrastructure**, and protection and enhancement of the natural environment*' (**our emphasis**).
- 4.43 The MASP's vision for Cork City places an emphasis on a healthy City with a high standard of physical and community infrastructure offering a high quality of life for all.

- 4.44 So far as 'Active Recreation Infrastructure' is concerned, we note that the Cork MASP does not specifically use this terminology. Nevertheless, Policy Objective 17 of the Cork MASP is important to note as it seeks a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area with green infrastructure, inter-connected parks, sports and recreation facilities and greenways.
- 4.45 Policy Objective 17 also makes reference to the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy which may include the sustainable development of key recreation, sports and community facilities across Metropolitan Cork (among other things).

Local Planning Policy

Cork City Development Plan (CCDP) 2015-2021

- 4.46 The current local planning policy context for this Study is established in the CCDP 2015-2021, which came into effect on 20th April 2015.
- 4.47 It is noted that on 31 May 2019, the administrative area of Cork City Council was expanded, growing to nearly five times its current size and taking in areas including Douglas, Rochestown, Ballincollig, Blarney and Glanmire. As part of this planned expansion, the population of the city grew by 85,000 people to an overall population of 210,000 people.
- 4.48 As the extant CCDP 2015-2021 was adopted prior to the City boundary expansion, it does not contain specific objectives, policies or land use zonings for the new areas of the City. Thus, the emerging Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 will be required to include relevant objectives, policies and land zonings for these new areas.
- 4.49 So far as ARI is concerned, Chapter 11 of the CCDP entitled 'Recreational Infrastructure' is of particular note. Chapter 11 acknowledges that recreational assets are not only important to the City and its constituent neighbourhoods but to the wider metropolitan area, as well as the City's appeal for tourism and international capital.
- 4.50 Furthermore, the CCDP highlights that recreational assets are also of wider significance in relation to drainage / flooding and climate change.
- 4.51 The CCDP advises that Cork has made significant improvements to its recreational infrastructure over the last 10 years including active sports facilities such as sports pitches at Mahon, all-weather pitches at The Glen and changing pavilions at Pophams Park and Fair Field. However, the CCDP recognises that a number of challenges remain in terms of protecting and improving the level of ARI in the City.
- 4.52 In light of this, the CCDP outlines the following strategic approach to help achieve a green, connected and fit-for-purpose Cork with sustainable neighbourhoods in line with the Core Strategy:
- Introduce an open space strategy;
 - Create sustainable connectivity between green areas;

- Provide for the recreational infrastructure needs of the city, its neighbourhoods and catchment, and related biodiversity needs of the city; and
 - Provide the resources to deliver and manage the recreational infrastructure required by the city.
- 4.53 Objective 11.1 sets out a number of Strategic Objectives with respect to Recreational Infrastructure which have informed the recommendations of this Study (see Sections 11 and 12), such as the need to ensure that playing pitches and active sports infrastructure meets the needs of Cork's population.
- 4.54 Objective 11.3 - Active Recreational Needs Study of the CCDP is also of note as it contains a commitment to '*...progress a review of the Recreational Needs Study 2003 to inform the Open Space Strategy for Cork City and project development*'. The CCDP advises that the study will seek to determine the gaps in active recreational provision (including playing pitches and organised sport) taking into account current and future needs based on an assessment of population growth.
- 4.55 This Study has also had regard to the following objectives contained in Chapter 11:
- Sports Facilities and Grounds - Objectives 11.8, 11.9 and 11.10
 - Water Sports – Objective 11.2
 - City Centre Recreational Infrastructure – Objective 11.8

Draft Cork City Development Plan (DCCDP) 2022-2028

- 4.56 CCC is currently reviewing the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 and preparing a new City Development Plan (DCCDP) which will cover the period from 2022-2028.
- 4.57 The DCCDP, when adopted, will replace the CCDP 2015-2021, the Cork County Development Plan 2014 and the Municipal District Local Area Plans 2017 (solely for the former County Council areas now within the Cork City boundary including Ballincollig, Blarney, Glanmire and Tower).
- 4.58 We note that CCC recently undertook a Pre-Draft Consultation stage which concluded on 21 August 2020.
- 4.59 The Issues Paper (IP) that accompanied the Pre-Draft Consultation Stage advises that Cork City is to grow by an additional 125,000 people by 2040 and that this growth can only be achieved if Cork continues to be a great place to live which requires an appropriate mix of cultural, sports and recreational amenities (among other things).
- 4.60 The IP acknowledges the importance of both outdoor and indoor recreational facilities particularly their contribution towards good physical and mental health, for all age groups and abilities.
- 4.61 The Chief Executive's Recommendations (CER) report, which was prepared following the completion of the Pre-Draft Consultation Stage, notes that CCC commissioned an Active Recreation Infrastructure Needs Study which it identifies as being a key input

into the DCCDP as it will help to identify active sports requirements for the City and its constituent communities.

4.62 Volume 1 of the CER report contains the following recommendations with respect to recreation:

- Protect and enhance our waterways and their corridors and to promote the integration of the City and the waterways through the development of the public realm, amenity spaces and use of waterways for sport and recreation;
- Support the sports and recreation facilities, institutes, clubs and amenities across the City; and
- Ensure that green and blue infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation and biodiversity are considered in all developments, commensurate to scale and context, at the earliest stages of design.

Recreation, Sport and Health Policy Context

4.63 The objectives, policies and goals contained within the preceding planning policy documents are aligned with and reinforced by the relevant body of international, national/regional and local policy with respect to recreation, sport and health.

4.64 Indeed, the following documents provide a clear basis for the promotion/improvement of, and investment in, existing and new ARI to meet the current and growing needs of Cork City and its hinterland areas:

International

- United Nations - The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020.
- World Health Organisation (Europe) - Health 2020: A European Policy Framework and Strategy for the 21st Century.
- European Union - BOSS: Benefits of Outdoor Sports for Society.
- Copenhagen Consensus of Mayors - Healthier and Happier Cities for All: A transformative approach for safe, inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies.

National/Regional

- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage - the National Marine Planning Framework.
- Sport Ireland - Policy on Sport and Physical Activity in the Outdoors 2020.
- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport - National Sports Policy 2018 - 2027.
- Coillte - Outdoors Recreation Plan for Public Lands and Water in Ireland 2017-2021.

- Department of Health - National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland 2016 - Get Ireland Active.
- Department of Health - Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 - 2025.
- Department of Social Protection, Community & Rural Development and the Islands - National Countryside Recreation Strategy.
- Teenspace National Recreation Policy for Young People - 2007.
- Ready, Steady, Play! A National Play Policy - 2004.
- A Parks' Policy for Local Authorities - 1987.

Local

- Cork Healthy Cities - Action Plan Phase VII - 2020 - 2030.
- Cork City Council - Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) 2016 - 2021 - "Pure Cork - An Action Plan for the City".
- Cork City Council - Cork Recreational Facilities Needs Study - 2003.
- Cork City Parks Strategy - 2000.

5. Active Recreation Infrastructure - Audit

Introduction

- 5.1 The audit of Active Recreation Infrastructure (ARI) represents a core component of the Study Brief. As outlined above, the Study Team intended to undertake in-person surveys of the ARI located within the Study Area to complete this Study requirement.
- 5.2 However, due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, and noting the requirement for CCC to progress its Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, the Study Team was required to adapt the previously agreed methodology by using online/digital data gathering, engagement and recruitment tools.
- 5.3 The Study Team prepared an amended Consultation Plan outlining the new strategy and issued this to CCC for review and agreement. The updated Consultation Plan package comprised the following documents:
- Detailed Consultation Plan;
 - Updated Stakeholder Audit List;
 - Online Survey Audit;
 - Letter for Key Stakeholders (setting up one-to-one virtual meetings);
 - Set of Questions for Key Stakeholder Meetings; and
 - Comparative Analysis Strategy.
- 5.4 Following CCC approval of the amended Consultation Plan, the stakeholder engagement components of the Study (i.e. the Online Survey Audit and one-to-one meetings) were expanded to enable the Study Team to progress the ARI Audit and deliver the scope of work outlined in the Study Brief.

Online Survey Audit Methodology

- 5.5 The Online Survey Audit (OSA) was published on freeonlinesurveys.com and it was live for two weeks from 8 February 2021 to 21 February 2021. An extract copy of the survey questions can be found at **Appendix 3** of this Study.

Survey Content

- 5.6 The OSA was expanded to incorporate a total of 38 qualitative and quantitative questions and designed in a manner to enable the Study Team to:
- Audit the quality and quantity of existing ARI in the City;
 - Understand the needs of Cork City's active recreation organisations; and to
 - Advise on the level of ARI required for the future.

- 5.7 The OSA also provided an opportunity to obtain important information on existing sporting organisations (such as their size, requirements, contact details, and etc), the location where they carry out active recreation (i.e. to identify ARI) and their opinions on the quantity and quality of ARI in the Study Area.

Survey Recruitment

- 5.8 Noting that in-person/physical surveys of the ARI within the Study Area were precluded due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Study Team applied a pro-active approach with respect to recruiting survey activity/responses.
- 5.9 This pro-active approach included the following:
- Emailing the survey details and link directly to all active recreation/sporting organisations listed in the Stakeholder Audit with an email contact; and
 - Developing and agreeing a social media strategy with CCC.
- 5.10 The social media strategy was designed to target specific respondents including representatives/members of active recreation and/or sporting organisations to drive traffic to the portal and participation in the survey.
- 5.11 A series of Facebook and LinkedIn advertisements ran to further promote the OSA to key stakeholders and members of relevant organisations in the Study Area and these ads reached a total of 63,278 people.
- 5.12 During the consultation period, the OSA experienced 1,471 page views overall. The top traffic sources to the survey website were Facebook (79%), Direct Traffic (20%) and Organic Searches (0.1%).

Online Survey Audit Findings

- 5.13 A total of 156 responses were received from a diverse range of active recreation and sporting organisations across the Study Area.
- 5.14 It is noted that some organisations did not provide a response to every question in the survey. It is further noted that the analysis contained within this Section of the Study is based on the responses to the OSA by various organisations throughout the Study Area. However, it may not represent every organisation due to the challenges posed by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, such as the need to recruit participation of the OSA through digital means.
- 5.15 The following sub-sections provide an analysis of the key findings from the two distinct components of the OSA, these being:
- OSA findings with respect to the ARI organisations within the Study Area; and
 - OSA findings with respect to the ARI that these ARI organisations use.

Online Survey Audit Findings – ARI Organisations

5.16 We set out below a textual and visual analysis (using bar, column and pie charts) of the OSA findings with respect to the ARI organisations within the Study Area taken from the responses to Questions 1 – 9 of the OSA.

Variety of Recreation Organisations

5.17 Q1 of the OSA was designed to enable the Study Team to obtain an understanding of the type of organisations active in the Study Area. Figure 5.1 illustrates the diverse range of organisation types identified by respondents.

5.18 Noting the nature of the Study, and the implemented OSA recruitment strategy, it is not surprising that the majority of respondents selected ‘Sports’ to describe their organisation type and that the next highest category selected was ‘Leisure/Active Recreation’. It is noted that all respondents answered this question.

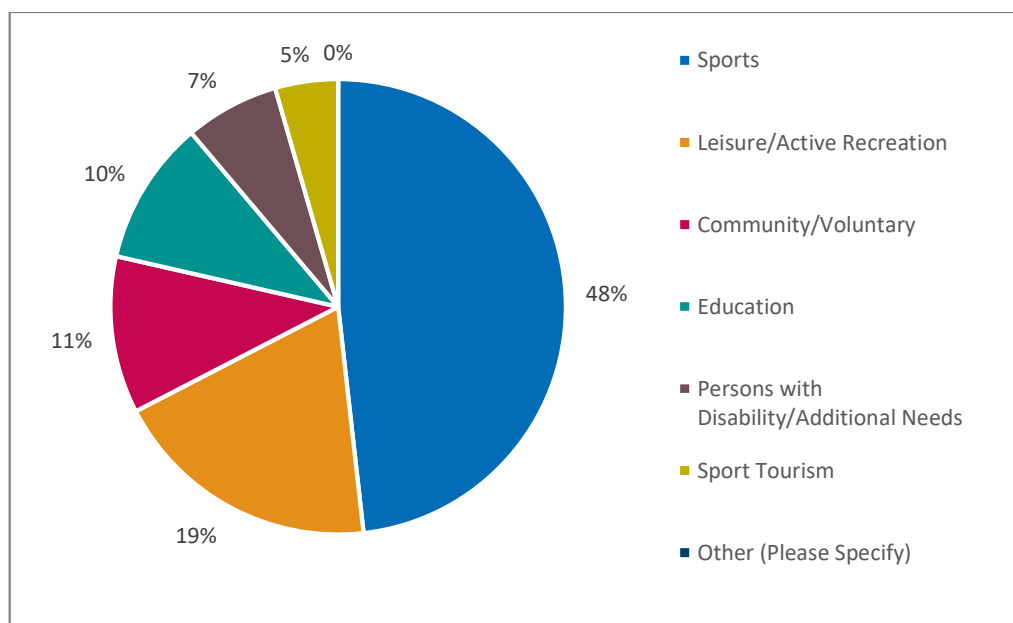


Figure 5.1: Responses to ‘Please select from the below the option(s) that best describes your organisation’.

Sports/Activities Promoted

5.19 Question 2 of the OSA then asked respondents to indicate the activity/sport promoted by their organisation. Again, all respondents answered this question of the OSA.

5.20 GAA (football/hurling/camogie) was selected the most making it the clear overall winner in terms of activities/sports promoted by the respondent organisations. ‘Indoor Health & Fitness Provision’ and ‘Soccer’ were the next most common sports/activities promoted.

5.21 Table 5.1 provides CCC with an overview of the ‘Top 10’ sports/activities promoted by respondents to the OSA with respect to: all activities/sports cited; pitch based activities/sports cited; and non-pitch based activities/sports cited.

Table 5.1: 'Top 10' Activities/Sports Promoted by Respondent Organisations

Rank	All	Pitch Based	Non-Pitch Based
1	GAA	GAA	Indoor Health & Fitness
2	Indoor Health & Fitness	Soccer	Walking
3	Soccer	Athletics	Athletics
4	Walking	Hockey	Rowing
5	Athletics	Golf	Swimming
6	Rowing	Cricket	Informal Activity/Play
7	Swimming	Rugby	Basketball
8	Informal Activity/Play	Tennis	Yoga
9	Basketball	American Football	Canoeing/Kayaking
10	Hockey	Bowling (outdoor)	Dance

Membership Levels

- 5.22 To obtain an understanding of the size of the recreation/sporting organisations active within the Study Area, Question 3 asked respondents to indicate their membership level. A total of 125 responses were received for this question.
- 5.23 As illustrated in Figure 5.2 below, the majority (66%) of respondents identified a membership level of more than 100 people which demonstrates that the City is home to a range of large scale recreation/sporting organisations.

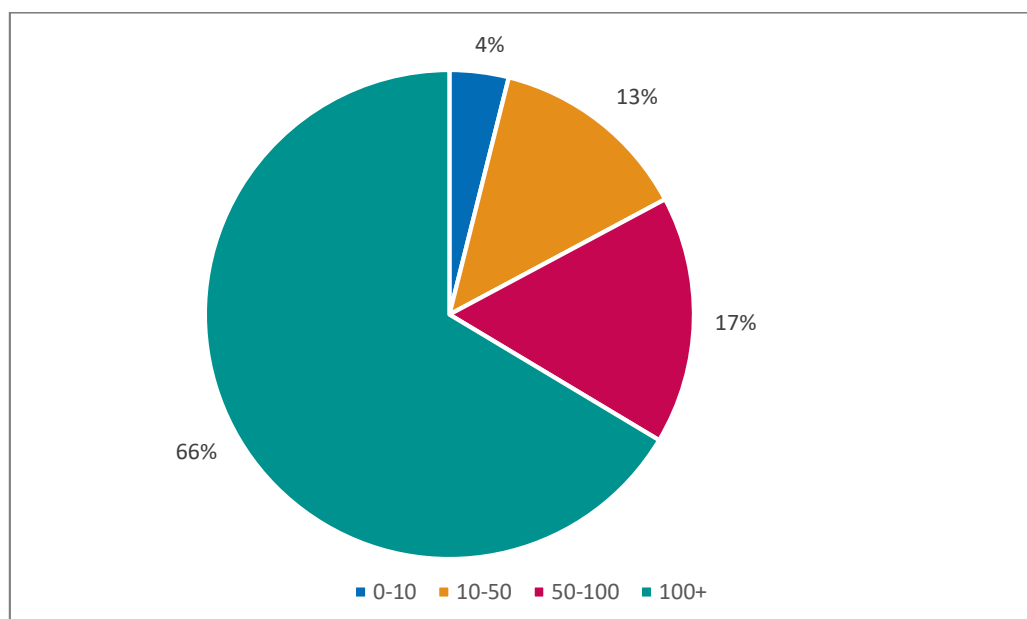


Figure 5.2: Responses to 'Please indicate the level of membership of your organisation'.

Age Profile

- 5.24 Delving deeper into the composition of the recreation/sporting organisations, Q4 asked respondents to provide a breakdown of their members in terms of the quantum of members in each age category.
- 5.25 Not all respondents answered this question and for those that did answer the question a number of anomalies arose, such as some organisations providing percentages (rather than membership numbers) without providing the overall number of members, some organisations had multiple responses but with vary membership numbers and others provided total figures but not a breakdown of membership ages.
- 5.26 Nevertheless, having reviewed the raw data responses, we can confirm that out of the organisations that identified overall membership numbers that the following represent the top five in terms of largest membership base (in order of the highest) and together account for a total of 65,000 plus members:
- Munster Technological University;
 - LesiureWorld;
 - Cork Ladies GAA;
 - Munster Football Association; and
 - Ballincollig Parkrun.
- 5.27 Furthermore, Figure 5.3 provides a breakdown of the overall age profiles of the organisations' members as identified by the OSA respondents. The 18-24 years old (30%) and 24-65 (30%) years old cohorts represent an equal proportion of the membership bases. It is also noted that the 5-12 years old (16%) and 12-18 years old (18%) cohorts make a positive contribution to the overall membership bases but the 65+ cohort (5%) represents a low overall proportion.

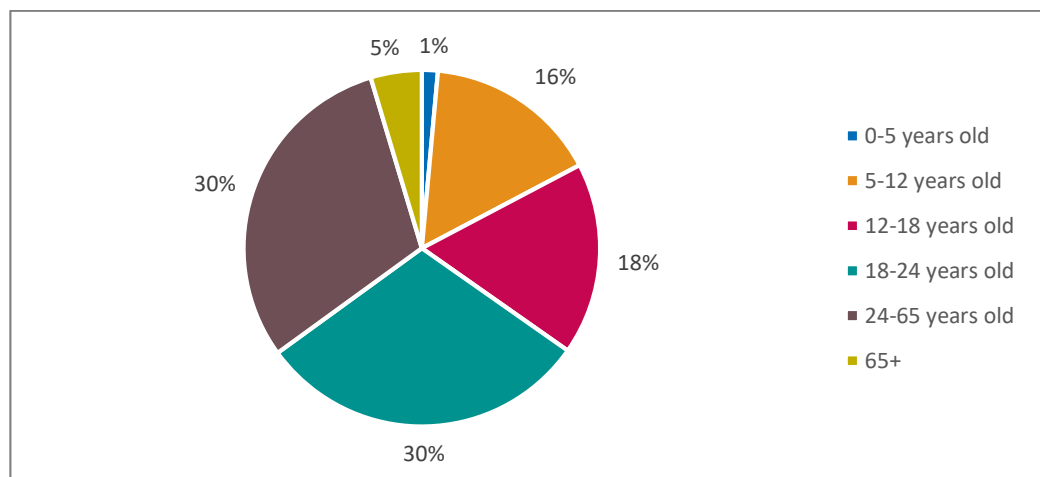


Figure 5.3: Responses to 'Please indicate the age profile of your organisations members'.

Organisation Growth

- 5.28 The next question of the OSA (i.e. Question 5) sought to explore and understand the growth expectations of the recreation/sporting organisations to help inform the need for additional/improved ARI within the Study Area.
- 5.29 Noting the ever increasing importance and popularity of recreation and sporting activities, as well as the growing population of the Study Area, it is not surprising that the majority (88%) of respondents expect their organisation to also grow in membership numbers over the next six years. A total of 127 responses were recorded for this question.
- 5.30 Figure 5.4 provides evidence that there is a need to provide additional and/or improved ARI within the Study Area to accommodate this expected increase in membership levels.

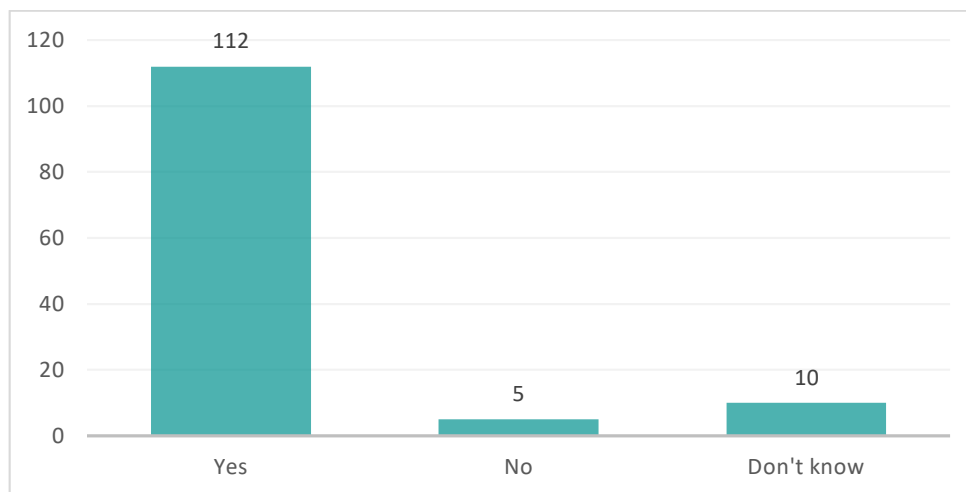


Figure 5.4: Responses to 'Is it expected that your organisation will grow in membership over the next 6 years?'

- 5.31 Question 6 of the OSA seeks to understand the level of growth expected by the ARI organisations. Similar to Question 4 of the OSA, not all respondents answered this question and for those that did answer the question a number of anomalies arose, such as some organisations providing percentages (rather than membership numbers) without providing the overall number of members and some organisations had multiple responses but with varying growth predictions indicated.
- 5.32 Out of the 101 organisations that provided a responses to this question, all indicated growth in their membership bases. Indeed, a total growth of 26,338 new members was identified by respondents.
- 5.33 In terms of the organisations that indicated the largest predicted membership growth of the next six years, the top five are set out below:
- Cork Ladies Gaelic Football Association – 3,000 new members;
 - LeisureWorld – 3,000 new members;

- Hockey Ireland – 2,760 new members;
- Parkrun – 2,000 new members; and
- Munster Football Association – up to 1,800 new members.

5.34 In terms of overall organisation growth, Cork City SUP expect to grow its membership by 100% over the next six years with Brian Dillons GAA Club and Douglas Community Centre expecting a 50% growth in membership numbers over the same period.

5.35 In addition to this, a number of organisations identified that their growth would require, or could be accelerated by, additional facilities, including:

- Hockey Ireland;
- Innishvilla Soccer Club;
- Highfield RFS;
- Belvedere Hockey Club.

Adequacy of ARI in the Study Area

5.36 Having identified and exploring the future need for additional ARI, the OSA then focused on the quantum of existing ARI within the Survey Area by asking respondents to confirm if there is adequate ARI to support their organisations.

5.37 Despite the significant quantum of ARI distributed throughout the Study Area (as identified in Map 1), more than three quarters (76%) of respondents do not feel that there is adequate ARI within Cork City to support their organisation. A total of 123 responses were recorded for this question.

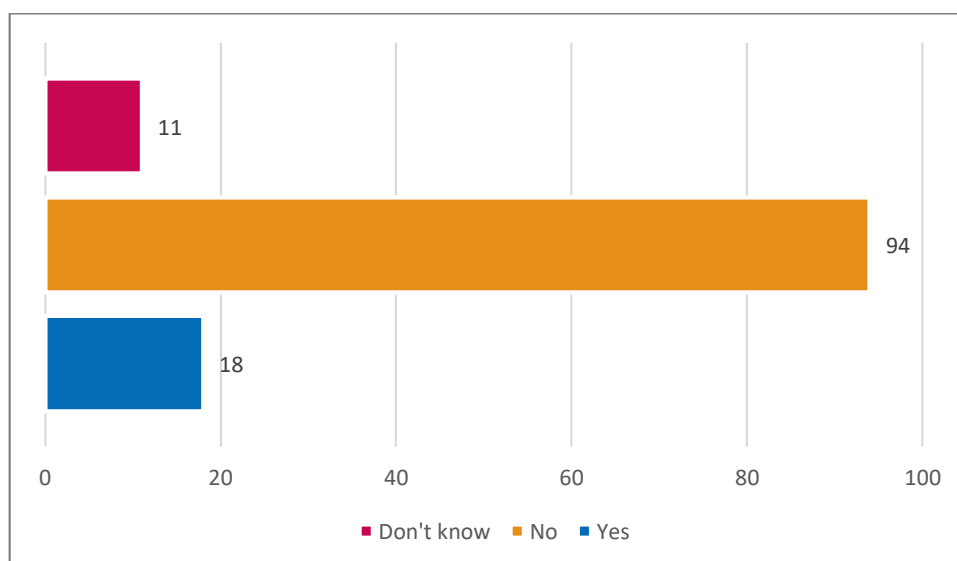


Figure 5.5: Responses to 'Do you feel there is adequate active recreation infrastructure within Cork City to support your organisation'?

Spatial Needs/Issues of ARI Organisations

5.38 Questions 8 and 9 of the Online Survey Audit were included to help identify the spatial needs, and the current issues, of recreation/sporting organisations within the Study Area and to help identify any gaps in ARI provision to inform the Study recommendations relating to planning policy and investment priorities.

5.39 To avoid duplication within this Study, we provide further discussion and analysis of Questions 8 and 9 of the Online Survey Audit within the next Section of the Study, entitled 'Active Recreation Infrastructure - Spatial Analysis' (i.e. Section 6).

5.40 However, the following is of note with respect to Questions 8 and 9:

- Q8 – 122 (i.e. 78%) of the 156 OSA respondents identified a spatial need; and
- Q9 – 118 (i.e. 75.6%) of the 156 OSA respondents identified a specific ARI issue.

Online Survey Audit Findings – ARI Used by Respondent Organisations

5.41 We set out below a textual and visual analysis (using bar, column and pie charts) of the OSA findings with respect to ARI that the respondent ARI organisations use within the Study Area, as extracted from the responses to Questions 10 – 38 of the OSA.

ARI Types

5.42 Responses to Questions 10 and 25 of the OSA help the Study Team to understand the types of ARI located within the Study Area. Figure 5.6 illustrates the responses to this question and it is clear that 'Outdoor' ARI is the most prevalent within the Study Area followed by 'Indoor' and 'Aquatic' type ARI. A total of 168 responses were recorded for this question as some respondents selected more than one answer.

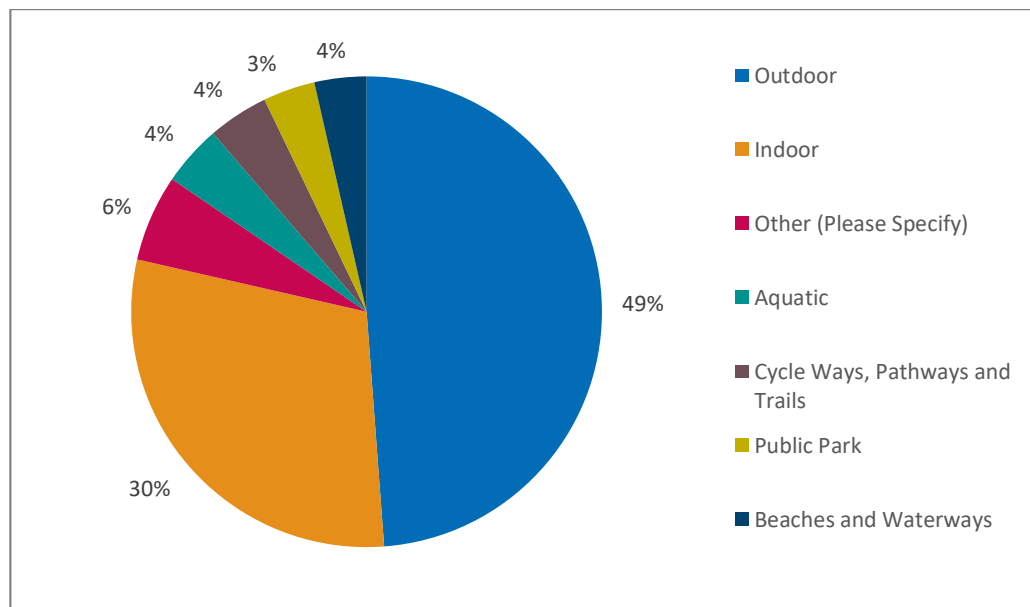


Figure 5.6: Responses to 'Please select from the below the option that best describes the facility type'.

ARI Ownership

5.43 Respondents were then asked to indicate ownership details of the ARI that they use to enable the Study Team to compile an overall ownership profile.

5.44 It is clear from Figure 5.7 below that the majority of ARI is owned directly by the 'Club / Organisation' (i.e. 43 responses/36%) and that a quarter of respondents indicated that the ARI is 'Public property/Local Authority' owned (i.e. 30 responses/25%). It is also clear that a significant amount of respondents utilise ARI owned by educational organisations. A total of 121 responses were recorded for this question.

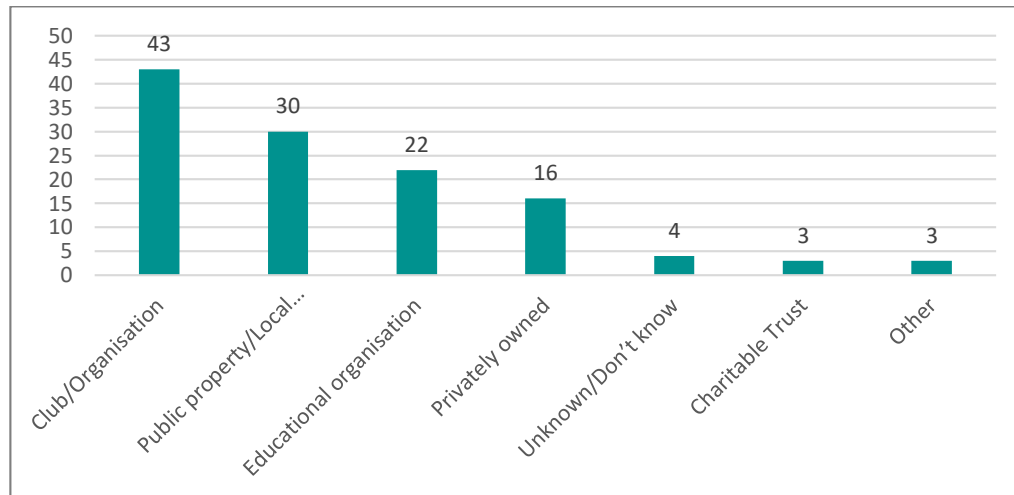


Figure 5.7: Responses to 'Who owns the facility'?

ARI Management, Maintenance and Refurbishment

5.45 Questions 12 and 27 of the OSA asked respondents to identify who is responsible for maintaining/managing the ARI with the majority of ARI being maintained/managed by an 'In-house Team' followed by 'Local Authority'. A total of 115 responses were recorded for this question.

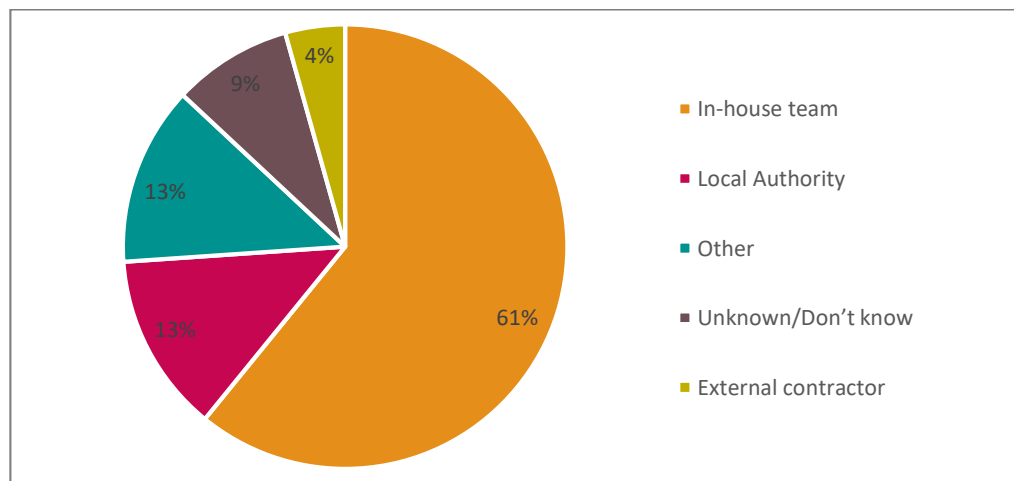


Figure 5.8: Responses to 'Who is responsible for maintaining/managing the facility'?

- 5.46 Questions 15 and 31 seek to formulate an understanding of the level of satisfaction that respondents have with respect to the quality of ARI maintenance. Positively, over half of respondents indicated a 'Very Well Maintained' and 'Well Maintained' response with a further 29% indicating an 'Adequately Maintained' response.

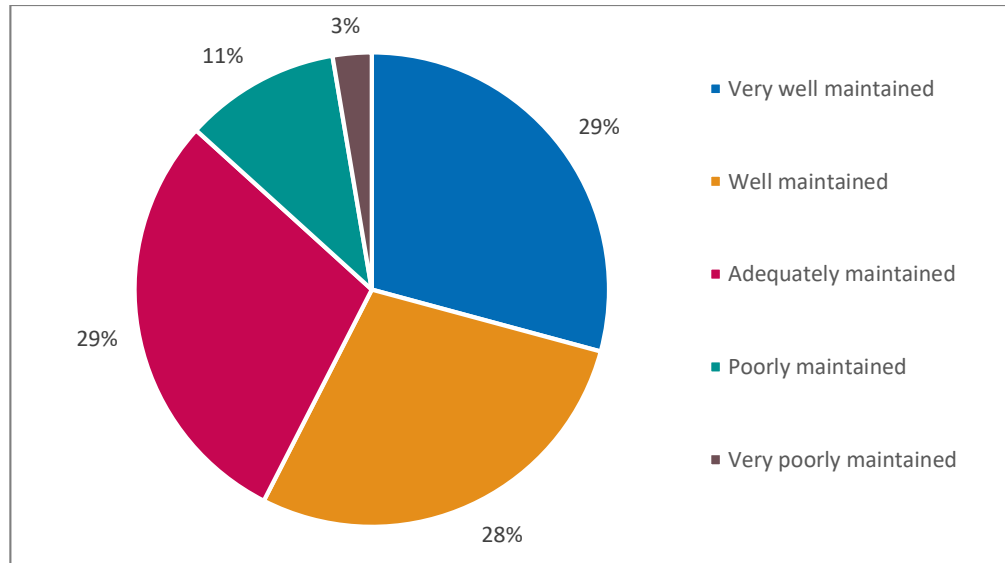


Figure 5.9: Responses to 'How well do you feel the facility is maintained'?

- 5.47 In addition to the foregoing, Questions 17 and 32 of the OSA asked respondents to confirm if the ARI that they use requires refurbishment and/or improvement.
- 5.48 Interestingly, and despite the majority of respondents indicating a positive maintenance satisfaction rating, 80 (67%) respondents, out of the 119 that provided a response to these questions, consider their facility needs to be refurbished/improved.
- 5.49 This is an important finding of the OSA and provides additional rationale for policy and funding to support the continued improvement of existing ARI within the Study Area.

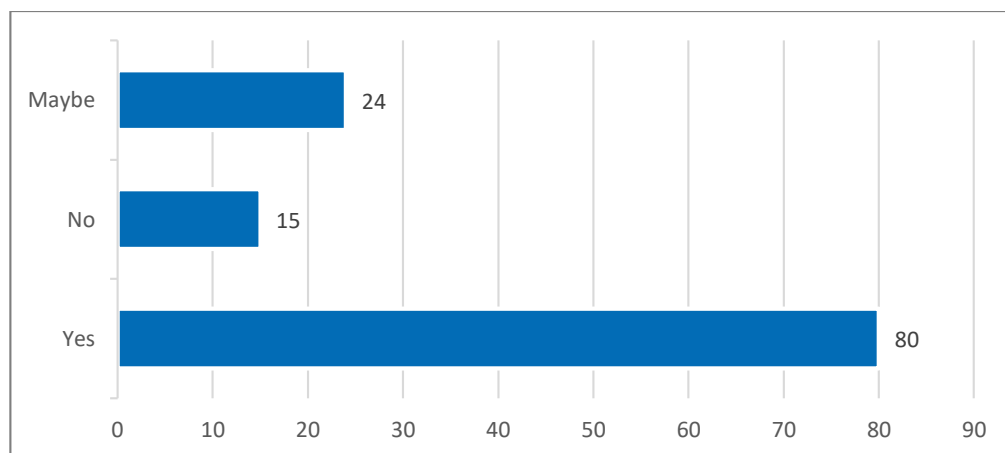


Figure 5.10: Responses to 'Do you feel the facility needs to be refurbished/improved'?

- 5.50 In terms of the specific works required to refurbish/improve the existing ARI used by the respondent organisations, the most selected upgrades selected include 'Improve Ancillary Facilities (changing areas, car parking, etc)' followed by 'Improve Active Infrastructure (pitch, play area, nets, etc)' and 'Additional Sports/Play Areas (additional pitches, activity areas, etc).

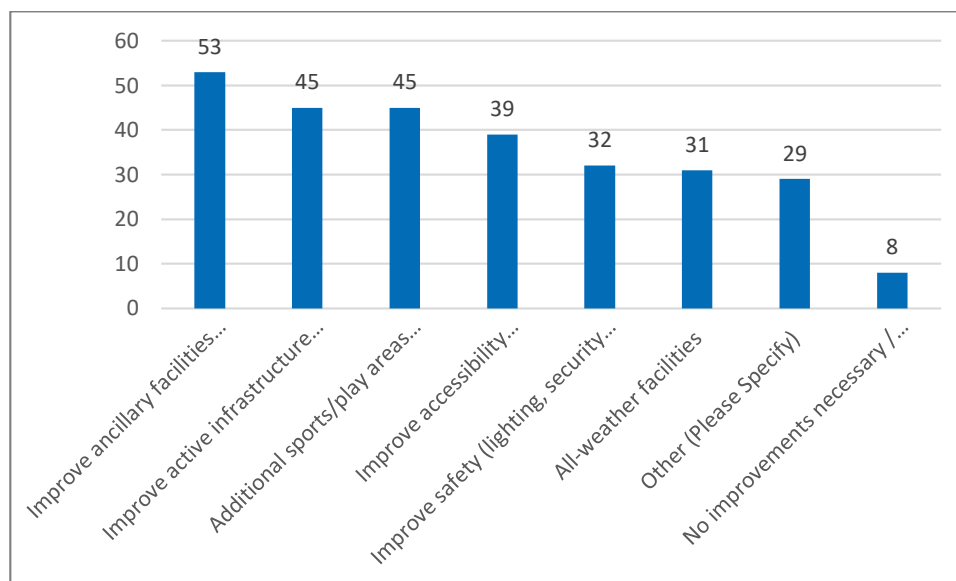


Figure 5.11: Responses to 'Please specify what works are required'.

Ancillary ARI Provision

- 5.51 Questions 13, 16, 29 and 30 of the OSA seek to enable the Study Team to develop an understanding of the types of ancillary facilities that either form part of the existing ARI offer within the Study Area, or that respondents would like to see developed as part of the ARI that they use.
- 5.52 A number of ancillary/support facilities typically associated with ARI were identified under Questions 13, 16, 29 and 30 and respondents were asked to tick the ancillary/support facilities relevant to the ARI that they use.
- 5.53 Responses to Questions 16 and 29 identify 'Car Parking', 'Toilets' and 'Changing Rooms' as the top ancillary uses provided as part of the ARI offer within the Study Area.
- 5.54 Interestingly, and as identified in Figure 5.12, these ancillary facilities are also ranked highest among the additional ancillary facilities that respondents would like to see developed as part of the ARI that they use (identified by the responses to Questions 13 and 30).
- 5.55 These findings highlight that while a significant proportion of the ARI within the Study Area provide these types of ancillary facilities, respondents consider that they can be improved/increased.

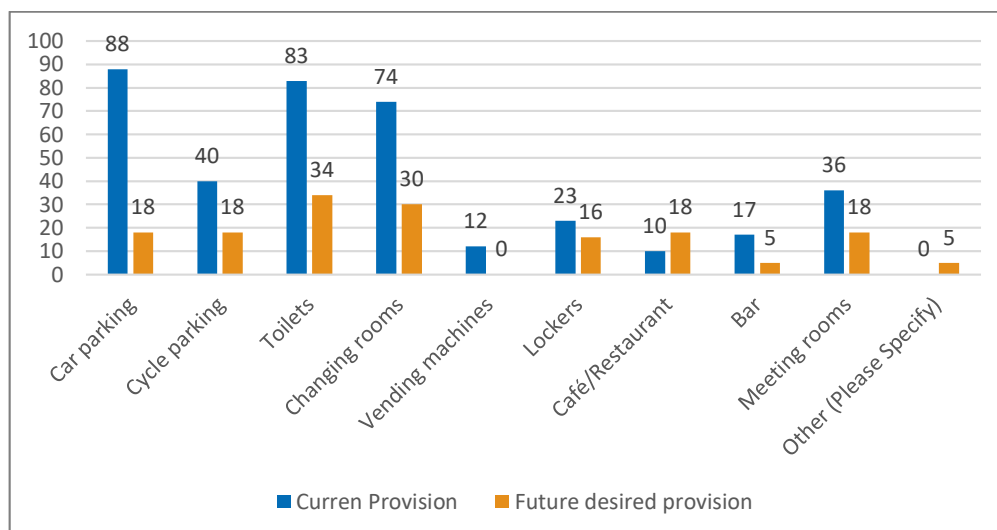


Figure 5.12: Responses to ‘What ancillary provision does the facility currently provide?’ compared with responses to ‘What other/additional ancillary uses would you like to see developed at the facility?’

ARI User Accessibility

- 5.56 Respondents were then asked to identify ARI user accessibility. The responses to Questions 13 and 28 of the OSA indicate that the ARI is most commonly accessible to ‘Members Only’ and a less proportion accessible to the wider ‘Public’.
- 5.57 Positively, a large proportion of the ARI used has been identified as a ‘Shared-Use’ facility. However, it is not clear if the organisations who use the shared facilities, such as school grounds, allow all of the community or members only to access the facilities.
- 5.58 Nevertheless, Figure 5.13 shows that there is still some work to do in terms of ensuring equal access by all to the ARI within the Study Area.

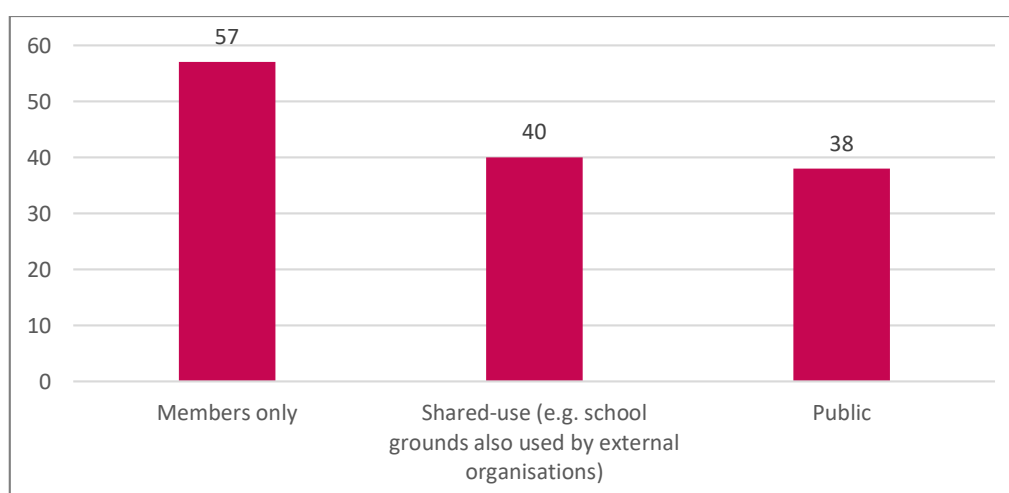


Figure 5.13: Responses to ‘Who is the facility accessible to?’

ARI Accessibility

- 5.59 Questions 19 and 35 asked respondents to confirm if they consider there to be adequate footpaths, cycleways and/or roads serving their ARI to allow for safe access. Positively, 80% of the 91 respondents that selected a quantitative response, i.e. either 'Yes', 'No', 'Maybe' or 'Don't Know', feel there is adequate footpaths, cycleways or roads serving the facility to allow for safe access.
- 5.60 It is noted that a further 24 respondents provided detailed comments with respect to accessibility of the ARI that they utilise and these comments are reproduced at **Appendix 4** for reference.

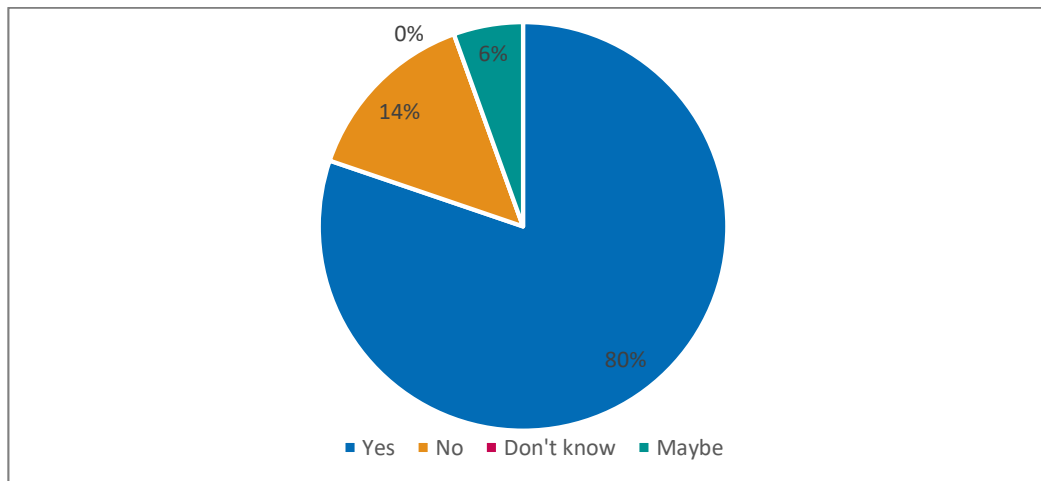


Figure 5.14: Responses to 'Do you feel there is adequate footpaths, cycleways or roads serving the facility to allow for safe access'?

- 5.61 In terms of mode of transport, an overwhelming majority (76%) of the 115 respondents to Questions 20 and 34 of the OSA indicated that they use the private car to travel to the ARI with active travel modes scoring the next highest (i.e. walking and cycling with a combined 20%). Public transport (i.e. the bus) received a worryingly low score (3.5%).

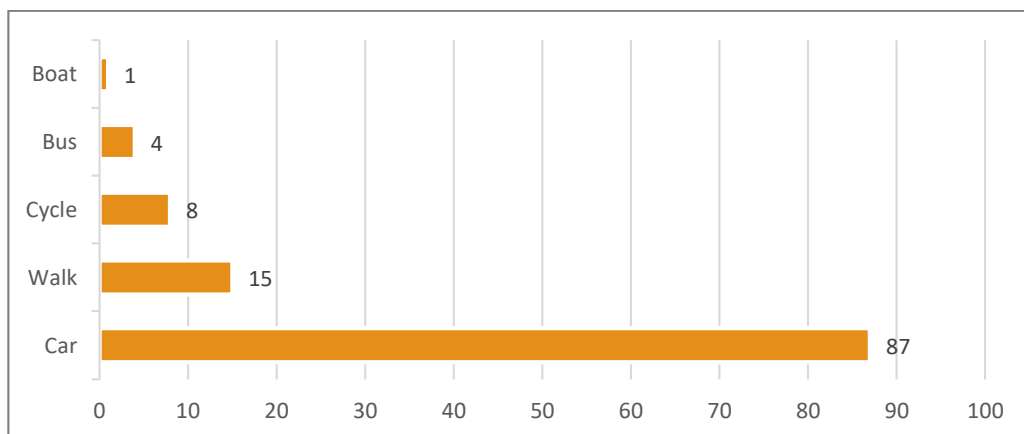


Figure 5.15: Responses to 'How do you normally travel to the facility'?

ARI Utilisation

- 5.62 The remaining questions of the OSA, i.e. Questions 21/36, 22/37 and 23/38, sought responses from the respondents to help the Study Team understand usage and capacity trends with respect to the ARI identified.
- 5.63 Questions 21 and 36 of the OSA asked respondents to describe the number of users of the ARI that they use. The responses to these questions indicate that the majority of ARI cited has either a 'Very high number of users (Too many users/waiting list)' (22%) or a 'High number of users' (43%). This is further evidence of the need to deliver new and/or improved ARI within the Study Area. A total of 126 responses were received for this question.

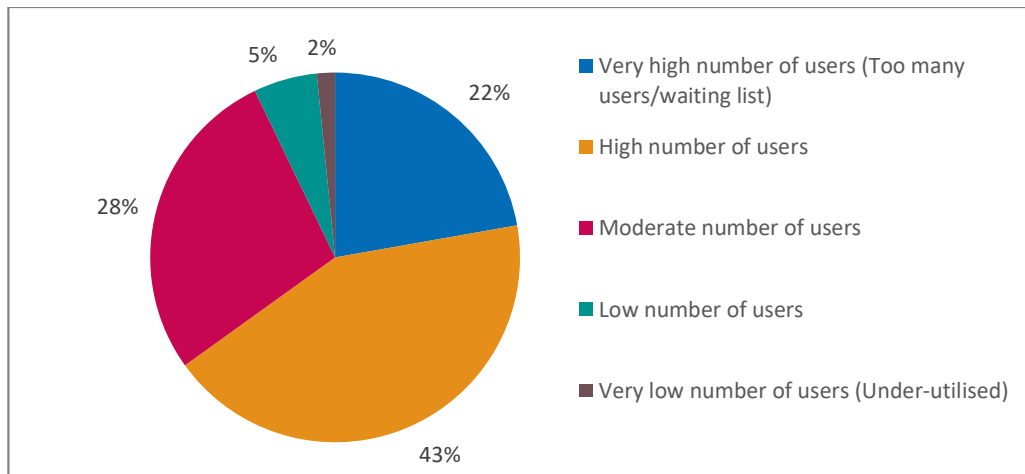


Figure 5.16: Responses to 'Please select from the below, the option(s) that best describes the number of users of the facility'.

- 5.64 In terms of ARI usage, weekends were selected as the most popular day for organisations but there is also a strong usage demand during weekdays.

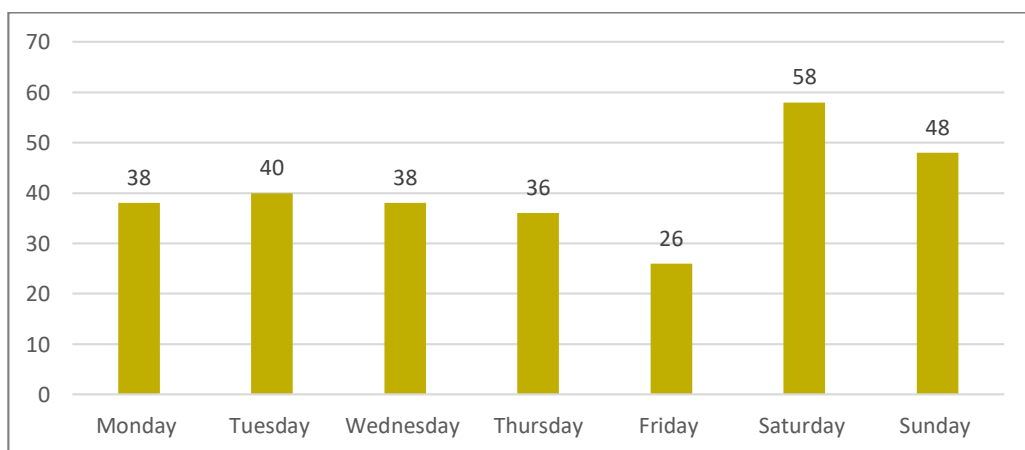


Figure 5.17: Responses to 'What days of the week does your organisation normally use the facility? Please select all that apply'?

5.65 In terms of usage peaks, the responses to Questions 23 and 38 indicate that there is an almost even spread of usage demand throughout the different times of day that organisations typically use their facility.

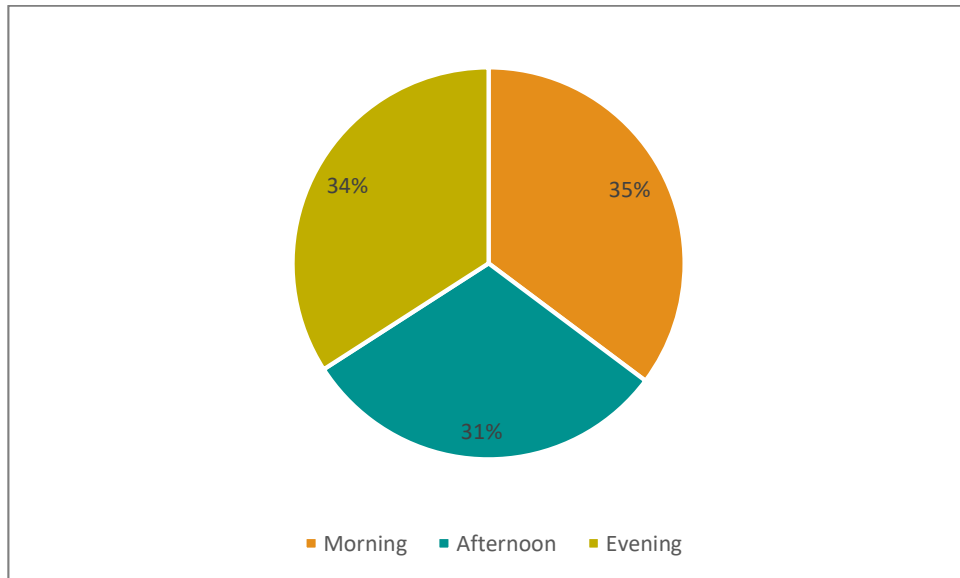


Figure 5.18: Responses to 'What time of day does your organisation normally use the facility? Please select all that apply.'

6. Active Recreation Infrastructure - Spatial Analysis

- 6.1 The Study Team has prepared a series of mapping to enable a spatial analysis of Active Recreation Infrastructure (ARI), at a Study Area level⁴, within the administrative area of Cork City Council (CCC) and to help inform strategic ARI requirements.

Map 1 – Location of ARI within the Study Area

- 6.2 This map plots the location of ARI within the Study Area as identified by respondents to the Online Survey Audit (grey dots) and as identified by the Study Team's review of aerial mapping with respect to outdoor playing pitches and golf courses (orange dots) within the Study Area, which comprises a total of 442 dots.
- 6.3 Map 1 assists in identifying the spatial distribution of ARI within the Study Area. Indeed, it illustrates that there is a significant quantum of ARI located within the Study Area and that the ARI is concentrated within and nearby the urban footprint of Cork City, with the remainder of ARI spread throughout the City's wider/hinterland areas.

Map 2 – Study Area Locations within a Reasonable Cycling Distance from Existing ARI

- 6.4 Map 2 is similar to Map 1 but with a 2.7km/10 minute⁵ cycle distance buffer plotted around the existing ARI to identify parts of the Study Area that are not located within a reasonable cycling distance from the existing ARI.
- 6.5 Interestingly, the majority of the Study Area is located within a reasonable cycling distance to some form of existing ARI, apart from the following areas:
- agricultural lands at the north eastern fringe of the Study Area to the north/north east of Sarsfield Court Industrial Estate; and
 - a semi-rural area with one-off housing at the north western fringe of the Study Area and which includes part of the Waterloo area and the River Martin Park Area.

Map 3 – Study Area Locations within a Reasonable Walking Distance from Existing ARI

- 6.6 Map 3 is similar to Map 1 but with an 800m/10 minute⁶ walking distance buffer plotted around the existing ARI to help identify parts of the Study Area that are not located within a reasonable cycling distance from the existing ARI.

⁴ Section 10 of the Study provides a Strategic Analysis at the Major Development Area level.

⁵ Widely accepted to represent a reasonable cycling distance.

⁶ Widely accepted to represent a reasonable walking distance.

- 6.7 It is noted that all of the City Centre is located within a reasonable walking distance to some form of existing ARI. However, a number of suburban/hinterland areas are not located within reasonable walking distance to existing ARI.
- 6.8 To obtain a more holistic understanding of the walkability of existing ARI, we must first overlay Map 3 with public transport data such as bus routes and bus stops. Please see commentary under Map 4 below.

Map 4 - Study Area Locations with Public Transport Accessibility to Existing ARI

- 6.9 Map 4 is similar to Map 3 but with an overlay of bus routes and bus stops and an additional buffer plotting an 800m/10 minute⁷ walking distance from the bus stops.
- 6.10 It is noted that Map 4 illustrates a reduction in terms of those locations within the Study Area that are not within a reasonable walking distance to existing ARI either by foot or by public transport.
- 6.11 Interestingly, the majority of the urban and suburban areas appear to be within a reasonable walking distance to ARI. The areas that are not located within a reasonable walking distance, either by foot or public transport, appear to be less populated rural areas with predominately open countryside/agricultural lands. These areas appear to form a natural green belt around the settlements/built up areas.

Map 5 - Location of ARI within the Study Area and Green & Blue Infrastructure Mapping

- 6.12 Map 5 is similar to Map 1 but with additional Green and Blue Infrastructure layers, which have been prepared as part of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Study that is being undertaken by CCC in tandem with this Study.
- 6.13 Map 5 illustrates the current interrelationship of Green and Blue Infrastructure and ARI within the Study Area. Please refer to Section 11 for further commentary and findings with respect to this interrelationship.

Map 6 - Location of ARI within the Study Area and Slipways/Water Access Points

- 6.14 Map 6 is similar to Map 1 but with the location of slipways/water access points included. This map uses a colour coded symbol to identify the following:
- Locations requiring new slipway/water access infrastructure;
 - Locations of existing slipway/water access infrastructure requiring improvements; and
 - Locations of existing slipway/water access infrastructure not open to the public.

⁷ Widely accepted to represent a reasonable walking distance.

- 6.15 It is noted that new slipway/water access infrastructure have been identified as being required in a number of locations along the River Lee, in addition to improvements to existing slipway/water access infrastructure.
- 6.16 If delivered, the new and/or improved infrastructure will help to improve accessibility to the River Lee. However, CCC should first investigate the potential to secure public access via those areas that are not currently open to the public, as these have the potential to address current needs in the short to medium term.

Online Survey Audit – Additional Spatial Findings

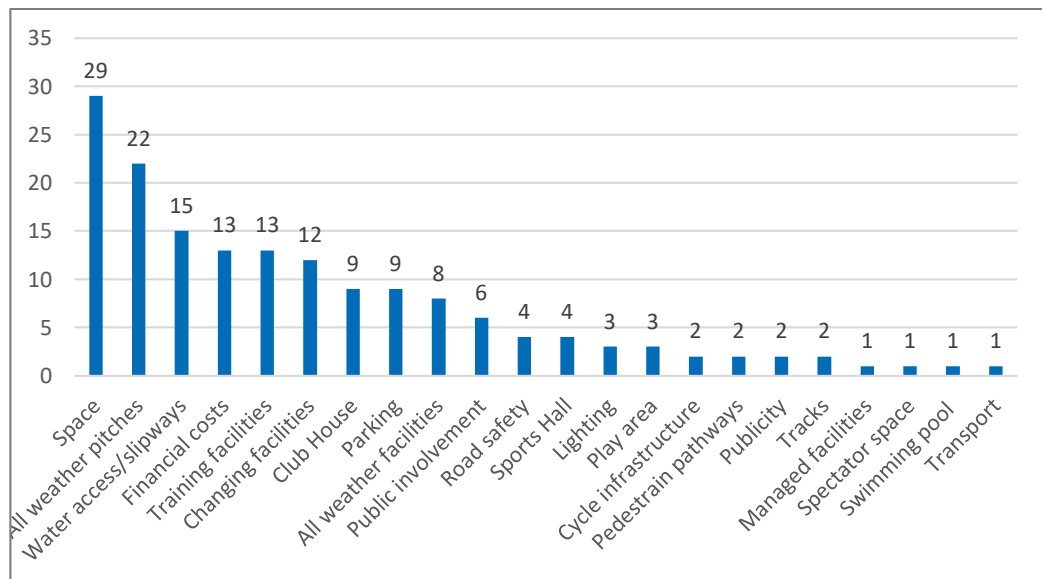
- 6.17 In terms of the Online Survey Audit (OSA), the following additional spatial/strategic findings are noted:
- 76% of the respondents indicated that the ARI within Cork City is not adequate to support their organisations;
 - 88% of the respondents expect their organisation to grow its membership over the next six years; and
 - 65% of respondents advised that their facilities have either a 'Very High Number of Users (Too Many Users/Waiting List)' (22%) or a 'High Number of Users' (43%).
- 6.18 The above responses demonstrate a clear strategic and spatial need for continued investment to improve/upkeep existing ARI and to deliver new ARI which will help to:
- support the existing recreation/sporting organisations;
 - alleviate the existing demand for recreation/sporting facilities; and
 - accommodate the growing recreation/sporting membership base.
- 6.19 In addition to the above, the Study Team has prepared mapping to enable CCC to identify the ARI that the OSA respondents consider to have:
- a spatial need;
 - a need for refurbishment/improvement; and
 - a need for accessibility improvements.
- 6.20 **Map 7**, entitled 'Location of ARI with a Spatial Need as identified by Survey Respondents', which is based on Question 8 of the OSA, plots the location of ARI which respondents identified as having a spatial need.
- 6.21 It is noted that 84 of the 100 facilities cited during the OSA have been identified as having a spatial need. Demand for a number of additional facilities was also reflected in

the qualitative responses to Question 8 of the OSA, with the following requirements of note⁸:

- Municipal Athletic Facility;
- Outdoor Climbing Facility;
- Facilities for roller hockey (min halls area of 50m x 40m cited)
- Land/Space;
- Pitches;
- All weather facilities;
- Improved playing surfaces;
- Training facilities;
- Parking areas
- Storage and changing facilities;
- Club houses; and
- Greenways/Pedestrian/Cycle Paths.

6.22 Question 9 of the OSA asked respondents to identify the key issues facing clubs and organisations in terms of ARI. Out of the 118 responses to this question, 29 respondents indicated a need for more space and 22 respondents require access to all weather pitches.

The demand for water access/slipways was also relatively high with 15 respondents highlighting it as key issue. This was followed by issues relating to financial costs (13 respondents) and lack of changing facilities (12 respondents). A number of other issues were also raised which are highlighted in Figure 3.22.



⁸ Does not include water-based ARI requirements, please refer to Water-Based ARI Requirements section below for these details.

Figure 6.1: Responses to ‘What are the key issues for your club/organisation in terms of active recreation infrastructure’?

- 6.23 **Map 8**, entitled ‘Location of ARI Requiring ‘Refurbishment/Improvement’ as identified by Survey Respondents’, which is based on Questions 17 and 32 of the OSA, plots the location of ARI which respondents identified as requiring ‘Refurbishment/Improvement’ and those facilities with an ‘Unsure’ response provided. It is noted that 64 of the 100 facilities cited during the Online Survey Audit have been identified as requiring refurbishment/improvement with an additional 21 selecting ‘Unsure’.
- 6.24 In terms of the work that might be required to refurbish or improve facilities, half of the qualitative responses to this question highlighted the need for the modernisation of facilities.
- 6.25 **Map 9**, entitled ‘Location of ARI with a Potential Accessibility/Access Safety Issue as identified by Survey Respondents’, which is based on Questions 19 and 35 of the OSA, plots the location of ARI which respondents identified as having an accessibility/access safety issue as well as those facilities which received an ‘Unsure’ and ‘Other’ response.
- 6.26 It is noted that out of the 101 responses to this question, only 9 of the 96 facilities cited during the Online Survey Audit have been identified as requiring accessibility/access safety improvements. It is further noted that 5 ‘Unsure’ responses were received and 22 respondents selected ‘Other’. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents (i.e. 65) consider there to be adequate footpaths, cycleways and/or roads serving their ARI to allow for safe access.

7. Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

7.1 The Study Team has undertaken one-to-one meetings⁹ with key sporting/recreation stakeholders active in the City to help our understanding of the:

- Quantity and quality of existing Active Recreation Infrastructure in Cork City;
- Future recreational needs of the City up to 2031 and beyond; and
- Views of active recreation users and their support networks.

Methodology

7.2 We identify below the key elements of the agreed methodology with respect to the one-to-one stakeholder meetings:

- The following list of key active recreation/sporting stakeholders was identified by the Study Team following the completion of the Stakeholder Audit exercise.

List of Key Stakeholders Agreed with Cork City Council (CCC)	
Hockey Ireland	Cork GAA
Athletics Ireland	Rowing Ireland
Munster and Cricket Ireland	Munster Technology University (MTU)
Munster Rugby	University College Cork (UCC)
FAI and Soccer	Cork Sports Partnership (CSP)
Ladies Gaelic Football Association	

- A set of questions was prepared by the Study Team in accordance with the Tender Brief requirements and to obtain additional and strategic information to support the Online Survey Audit and address other elements of the Study.
- The list of key stakeholders and set of questions were issued to CCC for review and approval.
- CCC's Project Team approved the list of key stakeholders and the set of questions.
- Following approval from CCC, the stakeholders were contacted via email to arrange one-to-one meetings via an internet conferencing network such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

⁹ Due to the ongoing pandemic these consultations were undertaken via remote video conferencing.

- The key stakeholder consultations were undertaken in tandem with the Online Survey Audit, which was distributed to clubs, groups, and organisations throughout the City, as detailed previously in Section 5.
- Following completion of the key stakeholder consultations, the Study Team provided CCC with a copy of the minutes to help identify initial findings and discussion points and commenced a detailed review of the feedback/comments provided.

7.3 Importantly, these consultations have enabled the Study Team to make key conclusions and recommendations with respect to the following strategic themes:

- Sporting Organisation Growth
- Funding Opportunities
- Role of NGBs and Educational Establishments
- Active Recreation Infrastructure Provision
- Active Recreation Infrastructure Demand/Need
- Cork City Activity Levels
- Active Recreation Trends
- Active Recreation Hubs
- Role of Cork City Development Plan
- Sport and Leisure Tourism

Key Stakeholder Consultations

7.4 We set out below a detailed list of the organisations and the relevant personnel (name and role) who attended the one-to-one meetings and provided valuable insights/feedback/commentary to help inform the Study and our recommendations:

Sport or Group	Stakeholder	Contact Name	Role
Cricket	Munster and Cricket Ireland	Joseph Moynihan	General Manager of Munster Cricket / Regional Development Officer Cricket Ireland
Cricket	Munster Cricket	David Griffin	Chairman of Munster Cricket

Sport or Group	Stakeholder	Contact Name	Role
Hockey	Hockey Ireland	Phil Oakley	Coach Education Manager / Munster RDM
Athletics	Athletics Ireland	Hamish Adams	Chief Executive Officer
Rugby	Munster Rugby	Philip Quinn and Ian Dunne	Chief Operating Officer / Facilities Manager
Higher Education	Munster Technology University	Cian O'Neil	Head of Dept – Sport, Leisure and Childhood Studies
Higher Education	Munster Technology University	Paul Gallagher	Senior Management Team
Higher Education	Munster Technology University	Andrea Bickerdike	Asst Lecturer – Health and Wellbeing Initiative
Sports Partnership	Cork Sports Partnership	Kristine Meenaghan	Coordinator
Sports Partnership	Cork Sports Partnership	Kate Feeney	Sports Inclusion Disability Officer
Sports Partnership	Cork Sports Partnership	James Kirby	Sports Development Officer
Sports Partnership	Cork Sports Partnership	Craig Harrington	Athletics Development Officer
Soccer	Former Cork City FC	Paul Wycherley	Former CEO of Cork City FC
Higher Education	University College Cork	Morgan Buckley	Head of Sport & Physical Activity
Higher Education	University College Cork	Christine O'Donnell	Senior Management Team
Higher Education	University College Cork	Emma Martin	Senior Management Team
Rowing	Ireland Rowing	Derek Bowen	Development Manager Lead
GAA	Cork GAA	Kevin O'Donovan	Secretary/CEO

Sport or Group	Stakeholder	Contact Name	Role
LGFA	Ladies Gaelic Football Association	John Henchion	Member of Field Sub Committee

Overview of One-to-One Stakeholder Consultations

- 7.5 The table below provides an overview of the one-to-one stakeholder consultations carried out by the consultancy team. A detailed copy of the minutes can be found at **Appendix 5** of the Study

Stakeholder	Consultation Summary
Hockey Ireland	<p>This consultation was undertaken with Phil Oakley who is the National Coach Education manager for Hockey Ireland and the developmental manager for hockey within Munster. Hockey Ireland are currently in the development of a new strategic plan with a playing membership of around 4,000 within the Munster province alone (up from 2,000 12 years ago). This plan at a national and regional level will focus on the growth of the junior game with particular emphasis on the male pathway.</p> <p>Within Cork there are a total of 7 active clubs playing at 6 local facilities, as well as using additional school facilities on an ad-hoc basis when required. With this lack of playing facilities their current clubs are currently at capacity for new members, especially in the female side of the game. These restrictions have led to waiting lists for clubs, especially within the south portion of the town where the majority of hockey is played. The overall quality of the facilities is good with two sites needing to be resurfaced within the next couple of years, potentially through capital funding grants.</p> <p>Due to their lack of playing facilities for hockey there is an obvious need to increase the stock of AGP pitches that are available in order to cater for this current growth and predicated future growth. It is anticipated playing numbers will grow by an additional 10% over the next 5 years and possibly more if the senior teams have a positive outcome in the Olympics. In total, 2 additional pitches should be created, one more for club use and one to act as a regional training centre and home for Hockey within Munster, which also allows schools and clubs to use when possible as well as senior training and match sessions.</p> <p>Hockey is also a supporter of this multi-use hub site approach, used in many European countries, by building on relationships with other sports and explore shared resources. This obvious synergy between sports will foster increased growth and allow for a stronger business case for capital funding. This sporting hub can also be in collaboration with higher educational entities such as UCC or MTU that also require increased provision.</p>

Stakeholder	Consultation Summary
Athletics Ireland	<p>This consultation was undertaken with Hamish Adams who is the CEO of Athletics Ireland. Athletics has a strong base within Cork City with a great deal of community use throughout the City at various locations that are hired by clubs. Similar to other sports, there is a lack of accessible facilities to cater for the current and predicted future demand of athletics within the City. Currently a number of clubs have waiting lists to access club provision which inhibits the growth of certain key target areas through the national strategy. The National Governing Body wish to communicate the continued need of facility improvements throughout the city even with the construction of a new athletic centre at MTU which will be used for the community and student body. The 1st phase of this project will be completed this year with a dual use indoor and outdoor track and associated ancillary facilities.</p> <p>In regard to future trends, it is expected that athletic will continue to grow and develop post Covid-19 due to the highlighted growth of walking and running activities throughout the various lockdowns. The NGB is looking to capitalise on this latent demand by turning these informal activities into formal clubs and groups to increase the various membership base.</p>
Munster and Cricket Ireland	<p>This consultation was undertaken with David Griffan, Chairman at Munster Cricket and Joseph Moynihan who is the regional manager at Munster Cricket and developmental officer for Cricket Ireland. There are currently 3 cricket clubs within the Cork City study area with all clubs at capacity due to a lack of available pitches within the study area. These clubs equate to 16 total teams throughout the senior and junior sections which equates to roughly 450 members depending on the season. There is ongoing work done in schools by working with 6 primary schools with around 10/12 children per school with a 30-40% retention rate for these children wanting to join clubs, this is to increase following a new development officer joining. This latent demand also follows the same strategy's which are being created by Cricket Ireland.</p> <p>With this high amount of demand within the study area, the major area for improvement is the supply of cricket pitches within the city, both grass and artificial. Currently new members are being put on waiting lists for the 3 clubs partly due to the lack of pitches and also due to safeguarding issues with lack of availability of support staff. There is also strong development trend to increase the women and girls' game as well as particular BAME groups.</p> <p>There would be a need for at least one more grass pitch and one artificial pitch to cope with this future demand for the clubs to lease on an ad-hoc basis when needed. This is in conjunction with plans to develop a regional Munster Cricket site to act as a training and match day site for the Munster teams, club training, schools use, youth blitz and summer camps. Munster cricket are supportive in working with other NGB's to explore the option of combining this regional cricket site with other sports to create a multi-sport hub site to provide a more robust business case going forward, obvious synergies for this would-be hockey, rugby and soccer due to the space needed and season split.</p>

Stakeholder	Consultation Summary
	<p>Cricket also has the ability to provide and attract the sport and leisure tourist by allowing touring cricket sides and tourism into the City, but an additional facility is needed for these teams to play.</p>
Munster Rugby	<p>This consultation was undertaken with Philip Quinn, COO of Munster Rugby and Ian Dunne who is the facilities manager at Munster Rugby. There are currently 8 clubs within the Cork City region and 4 Secondary schools who are in formal cup competitions. This equates to an estimate membership base of over 3,000 players, but only 200 of these being involved in the female game. Munster rugby also run extensive school development programs through their regional officers which include 14 national schools, 6 girls' secondary schools and 11 boy's secondary schools with an estimated 1700 pupils, based on 2019 figures. Within these supply figures it demonstrates an extensive supply of rugby members within the City, but these clubs are struggling to meet these required demands for playing pitches. This is especially important in the female sections looking to develop as they also face a lack of changing facilities and additional pitch space. This is in line with the National Women's Development plan and age grade participation programmes in Girls Secondary Schools are a key part of rugby development strategy in Cork City.</p> <p>For future development aims and aspirations there is currently only one WR22 artificial grass pitches currently available in Cork city, located at Musgrave park. This pitch is available for community use and not limited to just rugby union but is used extensively by soccer and some GAA clubs. This is one area that is in need of urgent additional development to cater for increase participation numbers. These new AGP pitches will be required to be floodlit to cater for winter training demand and evening match play. A potential community rugby hub site can be developed in collaboration between Munster, clubs, and educational establishments (MTU and UCC) as all of these organisations are looking for pitch improvements. This hub can be created in collaboration with other sports as this could prove to be a potential better business case for shared ancillary facilities and to enhance any grant aid funding applications. This collaboration will also increase Cork City as a sport and leisure destination as it will be able to host touring sides and international games.</p>
FAI and Soccer	<p>This consultation was held with Paul Wycherly who was the CEO of Cork City FC and has excellent knowledge of the local soccer context in the area and development trends. Soccer is potentially the largest sport within the City in terms of clubs and playing numbers, with roughly circa 10,000 playing members in a variety of age groups. Similar to other sports there is a lack of accessible and quality playing facilities within the City, especially in regard to winter training provision on artificial grass pitches. Due to winter weather and the poor quality at some site this leads to a number of matches being cancelled due to drainage problems and flooding issues. To counter these</p>

Stakeholder	Consultation Summary
	<p>issues a number of artificial grass pitches or AGP's should be installed to allow for more training demand to be allocated to these surfaces. If more training was allocated on AGP pitches this would allow grass pitches to recover better and more maintenance being performed.</p> <p>There should be a unity of sports and infrastructure within the town in terms of quality pitch provision and ancillary facilities to cater for a host of sports and group. The FAI is still in discussion and plans to construct a centre of excellence within the area.</p>
Ladies Gaelic Football Association	<p>Ladies Gaelic football is a rapidly growing and developing sport within the area and wider region. In 2019, Ladies Gaelic Football was the fastest growing sport in Ireland and is likely to continue to be so for the next number of years. In 2019, Cork County Board had 77 clubs affiliated with a total membership of 12,986 being an increase of over 23% over the previous 4 years. New clubs continue to affiliate, and the number is now over 80. Almost 10,000 of those members are under the age of 18 years where numbers continue to grow which will see increases in adult playing population on a large proportion over the next 10 years. Such growth, while extremely welcome, gives Cork County Board a serious challenge to provide games and support to ensure that all girls get to continue to participate in this sport.</p> <p>Cork has the second largest membership, being second only to Dublin and having more members than all other Munster Counties combined. Cork field teams at all competition grades to include Senior, Under 21, Minor (Under18), Under 17, Under 16 and Under 14, as well as having development squads at Under 15 and Under 13 ages. Development Squads are also arranged on a regional basis for Under 13s and Under 15s to promote the skills of all girls while Summer Camps take place throughout the County using the experience of the Inter County players. Cork teams train at a myriad of grounds relying on the hospitality of local clubs as well as incurring significant costs in excess of €20,000 in hiring facilities such as from UCC at The Farm, CIT, Mallow and Cloughduv.</p> <p>In terms of future development trends and facility needs, the anticipated growth is expected to be planned for an excess of 15,000 members by 2023. One of the obvious ways to account for this growth would be to develop a bespoke training ground / hub site for the development of the sport and capable of holding events across all age groups and standards. This multi pitch hub site will be used for training and match play and would potentially have 3G and Sand based AGP pitches, grass pitches and associated ancillary facilities. Other sports have not been approached to present an aligned bid, but the association is open to this discussion. There is capital potential from the selling of other land outside of the study area to accommodate rezoning of current land within the Cork City boundary.</p>

Stakeholder	Consultation Summary
Cork GAA	<p>This consultation was undertaken with Kevin O'Donovan who is the acting secretary and CEO of Cork GAA. GAA is a key and one of the highest participated sports within the study area. GAA has a traditional base and requires local players to play for their local teams so as a result wherever larger housing developments are being located could dramatically affect the capacity of certain clubs. Many clubs within the study area are currently at capacity in terms of playing numbers. There should be an increase in artificial pitches for training demand to alleviate this demand on grass pitches. There has also been a strong connection with local education establishments which will continue with additional revenue being targeted towards more development coaches in schools. Younger and juvenile teams are more flexible in their ability to play and train on altered pitches and artificial pitches compared to senior teams.</p>
Rowing Ireland	<p>This consultation was undertaken with Derek Bowen who is the Get Rowing Program manager and Roisin Merz the local development officer and club member within Cork. Rowing within this area is strong within the club and educational circuit due to the location of UCC on the River Lee and the docklands region. Growth and development are particularly strong with the junior section which runs to U18. Female participation is lower than males past U15 due to a number of social factors. The biggest barrier for rowing within the study area is the lack of equipment and coaches available creating waiting lists for clubs. Rowing Ireland is working on this with hosting coaching courses and online platforms but many of these coaches are volunteers. A physical barrier for the region is accessibility issues ancillary use to get to the marina location with a large cohort of members and equipment.</p> <p>In regard to development there should be a collaborative approach of linking up the clubs with the local marina and docklands area to create an active green infrastructure hub site. This site can be used for a host of rowing regattas, walking, running and outdoor activities all whilst being linked with local business and organisations.</p>
Munster Technology University (MTU)	<p>Munster Technology University was established in January 2021 following the merger between the two institutes of technology, Cork Institute of Technology and IT Tralee, with over 18,000 students and 2,000 members of staff. This consultation was conducted with Dr Cian O'Neil and Paul Gallagher who make up part of the Senior Management team. The university is anticipating significant growth over the next 10 – 15 years and will need the sports and leisure facilities to accommodate this. A number of the current pitches and facilities are used by the community and national bodies. This creates strong connections with the community and allows for capital funding grants to be explored by this collaboration partnership.</p>

Stakeholder	Consultation Summary
	<p>As highlighted prior the university is currently in phase 1 of constructing a bespoke athletic facility for community use and in close collaboration with Athletics Ireland. This will be available to hire by schools, clubs, or other community groups and also by the university. The university follows similar trends to increase AGP pitch provision in order to cater for winter training and also allow certain grass pitches to be used specifically for matches. New land close to the university is available and would have to be rezoned in order to create a connected sport and leisure hub. This new zoned land can be linked with a science park of the university and allow for the creation of a shared workspace and campus to align different departments. MTU are looking to support active travel ways between their campus and the city as well as student accommodation from satellite towns. This will create a more active and healthier student campus and provide a synergy between the City and University.</p>
<p>University College Cork (UCC)</p>	<p>UCC is located close to the centre of cork with a student population of just over 21,000, this consultation was conducted with the Sport & Physical Activity group including Morgan Buckley, Christine O'Donnell and Emma Martin. UCC has a large sport club membership base with over 50 clubs which equates to roughly 5,000 members in a range of outdoor and indoor sports. Much like many other higher educational establishments UCC is expecting a growth in students over the next 10 years and will need additional active infrastructure and sporting provision to cater for this. Student clubs have to utilise many community pitches and sites throughout the City to accommodate for training and matches due to very limited resources on campus.</p> <p>Much like many other community groups and organisations UCC expresses the need for more artificial grass pitches across all sports, which are floodlit, to meet the current provision and latent demand. Being a higher educational institution, the University cannot directly apply for capital grant funding, but the university is looking to develop relationships with clubs and NGB groups to apply for funding on a range of projects. These developments can be accommodated on various parcels that the university owns and will be planned out extensively in conjunction with their master plan scheme which is ongoing.</p>
<p>Cork Sports Partnership (CSP)</p>	<p>The CSP is one of twelve LSP's within Ireland and focuses on local sports development and the delivery of projects and programs particularly for target groups. Through consultation with various members of the team the CSP delivers many important schemes throughout the City and County to establish improvements to sport and leisure. One of the highlighted areas is to develop sport in disadvantaged areas and hit target market areas of certain sports. There is also a predominant focus on primary and secondary schools with school development officers to help these locations with courses and</p>

Stakeholder	Consultation Summary
	<p>equipment. This is their education pillar and also involves a number of safeguarding and other courses.</p> <p>For direct barriers within Cork are also focused on indoor facilities across the study area as a number of clubs are already at capacity. This barrier restricts the growth of many clubs and sports associations within the City and investment should be made into these facilities. There is also a lack of AGP pitches and other outdoor venues across the City. Supply and demand modelling is needed throughout the City to understand what multipurpose and multi-use hub site should be created and what project partners can come together to develop these strands.</p> <p>Development trends focus on many similar trends outlined by the national governing bodies such as the female gaps, youth at risk, disability sport and women in sport. CSP work closely with the target market groups to increase participation in these groups.</p>

Key Strategic Themes

7.6 We set out below our findings, overall conclusions and recommendations with respect to the following key themes that emerged from our one-to-one key stakeholder meetings :

- Sporting Organisation Growth
- Funding Opportunities
- Role of NGBs and Educational Establishments
- Active Recreation Infrastructure Provision
- Active Recreation Infrastructure Demand/Need
- Cork City Activity Levels
- Active Recreation Trends
- Active Recreation Hubs
- Role of Cork City Development Plan
- Sport and Leisure Tourism

Sporting Organisation Growth

7.7 When identifying the short-, medium- and long-term growth targets for each sport or group there is a large amount of latent demand due to a combination of factors such as reduced accessibility of facilities and an increasing population.

- 7.8 A number of the non-traditional sports such as Hockey, Athletics and Cricket have long term growth targets due to recent international success of the senior sides and also the overall development trends from the national governing bodies. These non-traditional sports have issues in accessing facilities with many of the clubs and facilities currently at capacity which can restrict longer term growth targets. This appears to be a key barrier in the development of these sports as waiting lists for many clubs within the study area are increasing.
- 7.9 The population within the Study Area is expected to grow by 47,238 (22%) up to 2028. To account for this growth, a certain level of sport and strategic facilities should be created to cater for the growth of sport and leisure provision, especially within the core pitch and indoor based sports.
- 7.10 Through detailed stakeholder consultations with clubs, national governing bodies and county sport partnerships, we have identified a need for additional strategic developments. These developments should allow for the continued growth of sport and ARI within Cork City and provide for the needs of future population increases up to 2028.
- 7.11 As highlighted in the individual sections and summaries of the relevant stakeholders, significant growth across all sports and groups is expected. This rise in participation levels is due to a number of factors, such as:
- International success within the relevant sport such as Rowing and Hockey;
 - Increasing population which translates to growing playing base;
 - Focused effort by the national government bodies of sport and Sport Ireland to target and develop the previously underdeveloped female market; and
 - National strategies to increase in grassroots participation.
 - Increased investment in sport through elite pathways and external grants (EU Funds)
- 7.12 Through consultation with the 'core' pitch based sports (Soccer, GAA, Cricket, Hockey, Rugby Union and Athletics), a common problem has been identified, this being that a great number of matches and training sessions have been cancelled due to pitch quality and maintenance issues.
- 7.13 With an increase in the development of more AGP type pitches this will reduce the amount of matches and training sessions that will be cancelled which will help to cater for an increased demand by future populations (up to 2028 and 2040). This was confirmed by a number of the NGBs, such as Munster RFU and the GAA, who have identified areas in the western and central parts of the City for development in collaboration with certain clubs. This is still at the feasibility stage and could be included as part of future strategies.
- 7.14 The main advantages of artificial pitches are outlined below:

- Greater durability;
- More efficient use of space;
- Increase usage;
- Flexibility;
- Better overall value for money;
- Defined performance characteristics; and
- A further advantage is that less maintenance is required for a given level of use when compared to natural grass.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.15 AGP pitches are becoming increasingly common throughout the sporting and recreation landscape as they can cater for a greater number of matches and training sessions via the local community. These facilities are a cost-effective investment for local clubs or local authorities as a robust business case can be generated from the year round usage.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.16 As a result of increased participation and expected increase in members throughout the different clubs and governing bodies, additional pitches and facilities should be improved and provided to help sustain this growth and accommodate the growing active recreation/sporting needs.
- 7.17 Targeted ancillary facilities should also be made available and/or adapted to allow for the growth of the female demographic throughout the Study Area. This is based on consultation with the major NGB's such as Rugby Union and Soccer who identified these target markets. Older ancillary facilities are not catered for many female teams with the correct changing and showering facilities. These can be retrofitted and adjusted to allow for a separation of teams, especially when taking into account younger teams.

Funding Opportunities

- 7.18 The Sports Capital Programme (SCP) is the primary funding vehicle by Government with respect to supporting the development of ARI and the purchase of non-personal sports equipment throughout the country. Its objectives are to:
- Assist voluntary and community organisations, national governing bodies (NGBs) of sport;
 - Local authorities and Education and Training Boards and schools to develop high quality, accessible, safe, well-designed, sustainable facilities in appropriate locations and to provide appropriate equipment to help maximise participation in sport and physical recreation; and
 - Prioritise the needs of disadvantaged areas and groups (such as people with disabilities) in the provision of sports facilities encourage the sharing of sports

facilities by clubs, community organisations and national governing bodies of sport.

- 7.19 An example of a multi-use stakeholder approach is evident with Munster Technology University and Athletic Ireland co-ordinating resources to develop an indoor arena and high-performance athletics centre for community and elite level training.
- 7.20 The complex is being delivered in two phases to deliver a robust and unique facility of multiple uses. This complex has been part funded through the capital project which is in relation to the Ireland 2040 project.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.21 The key funding channel of the capital funding can be allocated to clubs and organisations who want to deliver sustainable and robust facilities to future proof any growth within the Study Area.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.22 Clubs and organisations should be encouraged to work in combination with education sites such as MTU and UCC to develop multi use models to unlock further funding potential.
- 7.23 Further multi-use hubs and development models should be focused on to allow for greater community and club use.
- 7.24 Develop a robust Feasibility Study to ascertain which capital grant funding opportunities/avenues should be targeted and what strategic relationships should be prioritised (between clubs, schools and national governing bodies) to address ARI gaps/deficiencies within the Study Area.

Role of NGBs and Educational Establishments

- 7.25 There is a clear opportunity to further develop greater links between NGB's and local educational establishments to enhance community links between clubs and organisations.
- 7.26 Certain clubs and organisations, such as Athletic Ireland, do have close relationships with local education providers by using the resources on site and to also develop new facilities.
- 7.27 However, this can be further increased throughout different sports and organisations by developing strategic partnerships, which can potentially benefit all parties in terms of capital funding grants. Example partnerships could include:
- Hockey Ireland and Cricket Ireland working in combination to develop a community and regional high-performance hub; and
 - UCC and MTU working with national governing bodies of sport to develop school – club links and allow preparation and submissions of joint capital grant aid funding submissions.

- 7.28 There appears to be very few formal community user agreements in place to allow for secured tenure between clubs, schools or universities. An example of these user agreements can be seen between MTU and Athletics Ireland, which have a joint venture approach to develop new indoor and outdoor facilities that are open to the university population and the local community.
- 7.29 This is an obvious synergy between the organisations as it provides daytime and evening usage and utilises all facilities on site.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.30 There are significant benefits associated with improving relationships between the major sport and educational establishments. These partnerships can unlock additional funding opportunities and help to ensure maximum utilisation of existing ARI throughout both the day and evening usage periods.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.31 A Sports Development Officer should be appointed to identify, promote, establish and maintain important relationships between educational establishments and national government bodies.
- 7.32 A Feasibility Study should be undertaken to gather information on potential school-club links and also develop an options appraisal to highlight key partnerships.

Active Recreation Infrastructure Provision

- 7.33 The overall satisfaction between the key stakeholders and the ARI provision within the study area is relatively low due to the lack of accessible provision for a number of growing clubs and clubs that are also at capacity (in particular cricket and hockey).
- 7.34 They consider that not enough has been done at a strategic level to accommodate this growth within the community and account for the increase in demand. There is a disjointed approach between clubs, governing bodies and regional planning teams that should be developed to accommodate focused development in certain areas.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.35 The majority of clubs and organisations within the City are currently at capacity, especially within the sports of Hockey and Cricket with these clubs having waiting lists for players.
- 7.36 The key stakeholders consider that there is not currently a cohesive and joint up approach to strategic facility planning across the various organisations and sports.
- 7.37 The overall quality of pitch and non-pitch based sports are standard but this will reduce in quality up to 2028 due to the increase in use which will occur with the population increase, especially in the major MDA areas.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.38 Coordinate and develop workshops and other forms of communication with external key stakeholders to account for this current and future growth

Active Recreation Infrastructure Demand/Need

- 7.39 There is a currently a high demand/need with respect to new/improved ARI throughout the Study Area where a lot of clubs are currently over capacity, particularly the 'smaller' sports of hockey and cricket due to a lack of facilities.
- 7.40 Over the next 6 to 10 years, and noting the previously identified planned growth within the Study Area, a substantial need for new ARI will arise, such as playing pitches, particularly within the major growth/housing areas/developments.
- 7.41 The table below identifies the predicted growth in pitch-based sports within the Study Area based on 2016 population figures and predicted population increases for 2028 and 2040.

Pitch Sports Predicated Growth Calculator					
Pitch Based Sport	Potential Pitch Generation Ratio's (per capita)	Total Current Predicted Pitch Need (2016)	Total Future Predicted Pitch Need	Predicted Additional Pitches Needed (2028)	Predicted Additional Pitches Needed (2040)
GAA	1,200	176	215	39	87
Rugby Union	3,400	62	76	14	31
Soccer	2,727	77	95	17	38
Cricket	10,542	20	24	4	10
Hockey	5,020	42	51	9	21

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.42 There will be significant growth across the core pitches sports within the study area with increases in pitch needs for both 2028 and 2040.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.43 A sports pitch specific strategy should be developed to identify the quantity and quality of accessible pitch-based sports across the City, as quality of pitches is also an important factor into the development of a facility. This can allow for more targeted developments and funding thorough pitch maintenance and improvements.

Cork City Activity Levels

- 7.44 When discussing activity levels with the stakeholders within the study area region there was strong alignment in support that Cork currently has a high level of activity, in part due to a strong younger membership base and also supply of clubs within the area.
- 7.45 However, as stated above, many clubs are currently at capacity with waiting lists indicating latent demand of activity.
- 7.46 Cork Sports Partnership provided the greatest insight into activity levels due to their close work with many community groups and user profile and noting their significant

presence within schools. We outline headline activity figures below, which help to provide an overview of activity levels within the Study Area:

- Over 43% of people are active in Cork on a weekly basis.
- 47,735 participants took part in NGB sport programmes supported by the CSP.
 - 26,176 of these participants were new to the sport.
- 7,105 participants with disabilities took part in a Cork Sport Ability programme.
- Over 20,000 participants have taken part in a community sport & physical activity programmes and initiatives since 2014.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.47 Many clubs and local organisations are reporting a waiting list to access clubs and facilities as a result of increasing population, especially within junior sections.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.48 CCC and Cork Sports Partnership should liaise closely to obtain a better understanding of latent active recreation demand and the capacity levels of the various clubs so as to identify additional ARI requirements as well as potential clubs with a symbiotic relationships to strengthen funding bids and develop a multi-use/sport hub.

Active Recreation Trends

- 7.49 A significant barrier for organisations, such as Soccer, GAA and Rugby Union, is the lack of available space for winter training demand on artificial pitches. Throughout the winter months a number of matches are cancelled or postponed due to the quality of playing surfaces and due to over use/play from training and matches.
- 7.50 This leads to a number of games being called off throughout the year which is a detriment to many local clubs and the continued development of the organisation.
- 7.51 This barrier is not only reserved for playing pitches but also linked to ancillary and changing room space, especially for the growth of the female's activities.
- 7.52 For many NGBs, the female game is rapidly growing due to key strategic aims of Sport Ireland and national strategies. Due to this barrier certain growth targets are not being met.
- 7.53 A number of additional barriers have been identified by the key stakeholders with respect to certain demographic and player groups based upon access and availability of facilities.
- 7.54 Older/aged/dated ancillary ARI facilities, such as changing rooms and other amenities, reduces the opportunities for female members to access clubs and participate. Many NGB's and clubs are targeting this market segment to increase participation.
- 7.55 Stakeholders also advised that barriers exist with respect to certain minority groups who wish to participate in sports but follow non-traditional hours of play as a result of work and shift patterns.

- 7.56 In regard to positive data trends there has been an increase in participation across the sports and key stakeholders due to a number of factors such as international and Olympic success (Hockey and Rowing) or sustained development (GAA, Rugby Union).
- 7.57 ARI has also diversified recently with a number of new outlets being available for the local community such as indoor and outdoor provision and the regeneration of development areas such as the docks.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.58 There are two main barriers that have been identified with respect to reducing opportunities for certain demographic groups/target markets to access ARI and resulting in lower levels of participation.
- 7.59 The first is the lack of good quality sites/the accessibility of sites and the second is older/dated/aged ancillary ARI facilities such as changing rooms. The second barrier has been identified as a significant barrier in terms of reducing opportunities for females to access and utilise existing ARI.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.60 Improve the quantity and quality of artificial pitches to allow for greater training in the winter months and access for clubs.
- 7.61 Support investment in older ancillary ARI facilities, such as changing rooms, to accommodate female members and other minority groups. This is based upon key consultations and also national strategies through Sport Ireland and within the Ireland Sport 2040 plan.
- 7.62 As a result, bespoke changing room and ancillary spaces should be developed to cater for this need, currently this is not available due to many facilities being outdated.

Active Recreation Hubs

- 7.63 In combination with the City-Wide approach to AGPs, there is a need to develop a multi-use hub model that can greatly increase the ARI in Cork City at a City, County and Regional level.
- 7.64 During our stakeholder consultations, a number of different NGBs and sporting/recreation organisations expressed a clear willingness to co-operate and work together with different NGB's and organisations in order to identify opportunities for multi-use hubs and to co-ordinate/seek funding to deliver these opportunities.
- 7.65 This is especially relevant for the more non-traditional sports due to a smaller membership/player base as they would benefit from a joint venture approach which would enable them to support each other.
- 7.66 There is an opportunity to develop a multi-use hub / sport model between different organisations, which is a similar model to many organisations within Europe and the UK, such as:
- Sports & Wellness Hub at the University of Warwick.

- Manadon Sports Hub – Plymouth.
 - Parklife Football and Sports Hub – London.
- 7.67 These multi-use/sport hubs should not be restricted to only one club or organisation but should be open to any community member or club who wishes to use the facility. In addition, they should be designed in a manner and scale that allows them to host regional / national competitions.
- 7.68 The multi-use/sport hub approach also benefits members due to future proofing certain sites and creating a more robust business plan and sustainable model to achieve more grant funding from the Government. Stakeholders consider that the wider region is currently lacking in regional hub sites for many organisations which restricts growth/opportunity for development of higher level competition.
- 7.69 Multi-use/sport hubs can be used at a regional level to support the growth of higher-level sport and leisure provision by allowing certain sports such as hockey, cricket and rugby to base their representative teams here for training and matches.
- 7.70 Regional/strategic multi-use/sport hubs have the potential to act as a significant focal point for sport/active recreation infrastructure and as a destination venue. Noting this, and that they tend to serve a wider/regional catchment, a suitably accessible site located further away from the City Centre may be considered if there are significant physical constraints/obstacles and/or limited land available within the City Centre.
- 7.71 The size and mix of these facilities can vary depending on scope and stakeholders the larger facilities with multiple pitches and associated changing rooms, parking etc can be between 7 – 10 hectares. Within these facilities can be professional and community based clubs with the corresponding pitches and surface types, changing rooms, club houses, meeting rooms, gyms, café, parking space, offices and external user programs.
- 7.72 Further analysis, assessments and consultation would be required to identify potential sports and locations for a multi-use/sport hub.
- 7.73 As mentioned previously, a number of stakeholders made specific comments with respect to the potential of, and opportunity to create/deliver, strategic/regional multi-use/sport hubs.
- 7.74 During our consultations, stakeholders expressed a clear willingness to join/co-operate with other NGB's and organisations to unlock funding avenues and explore new opportunities. The multi-use/sport hub is especially important for the more non-traditional sports due to their smaller membership/player bases which prevents them from accessing significant funding.
- 7.75 Together, these clubs can combine their membership/player bases to access enhanced funding opportunities which provides an incentive to adopt a more proactive and joint venture approach.
- 7.76 Preferred locations for these multi-use hub sites would be in areas with proposed population growth such as close to Glanmire and Ballincollig. A robust feasibility study

should be conducted to advise on the optimal location based upon relevant factors to be agreed with CCC and the relevant sporting bodies, but could include:

- Facility mix;
- Ancillary options;
- Transport and access;
- Population growth;
- Associated users and organisations; and
- New housing developments.

7.77 These strategic facilities can serve a wide range of the community and various clubs and organisations. There is evidence of synergy between sports and NGB's which has been demonstrated within European and UK examples.

7.78 For example, one facility complex can serve multiple sports such as Hockey, Cricket and Ladies Gaelic Football due to multiple pitch markings and a robust program of use. With a shared ancillary facility this will allow for multiple users at the same time to access different pitches and surfaces. There is also significant crossover with traditional winter and summer-based sports, which is a positive for business planning potential as these sites will be able to get used all year round.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

7.79 There is an opportunity to develop a multi-use hub / sport model between different organisations, which is a similar model to many organisations within Europe and the UK.

7.80 These hubs will not be restricted to only one club or organisations but will be open to any community member or club who wish to use the ability as well as be of high enough level to host regional / national competitions.

7.81 This multi-use approach also benefits members due to future proofing certain sites and creating a more robust business plan and sustainable model to achieve more grant funding from national government.

7.82 There is currently a lack of a regional hub sites for many organisations within the Munster / Cork study area which restricts growth for higher level competition. These hub sites can be developed away from town centres and restrictive areas due to being a bespoke facility and members will be more willing to travel to these destination type venues. Similar models and business plans justify a drive time area of up to 30 minutes from a hub site which creates a large catchment area within Cork. An example multi use venture can be between hockey, cricket and LGFA as each of these organisations are looking for a regional site as well as greater offerings for community clubs.

7.83 This multi-use sport hub model also relates to the sport and leisure tourist which is a development trend by creating Cork as a destination venue for sports and leisure

tourism across all organisations and groups. The main barrier to this aim is the lack of high-class facilities to host a number of the required teams and also spectators.

- 7.84 Sporadically teams and organisations have been hosted within Cork for first class competition, but this can be further enhanced if the correct facilities are within the study area. This is especially important for the more non-traditional sports of hockey and cricket who currently play throughout the country on a rotation basis, which Munster currently

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.85 A Feasibility Study should be undertaken to gather information on potential sports that could form part of a regional/strategic multi-use/sport hub and to identify potentially suitable locations, these most likely areas would be within the MDA's.

Role of Cork City Development Plan

- 7.86 Through the consultation process there was uniform agreement between the key stakeholder listed above that the City Development Plan should ensure that all communities are supported by a range of ARI, including sporting facilities and high-quality open spaces, parks (which includes playing pitches and ARI developments) and playing fields that are fit for purpose, accessible to all and adaptable to meet future needs.
- 7.87 There should be substantial work in partnership with local communities, recreation/sports groups and private parties to deliver new and/or improved ARI in the City.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.88 To support local communities, recreation/sports clubs and private parties in developing ARI for minority/alternative sports in the City by providing indoor and outdoor spaces for the pursuance of these activities.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.89 Closely align any key strategic recommendations to the growth within CCC and other direct development plans associated with the overall vision, this includes aligning strategic developments of future initiatives within Sport Ireland developments plans.

Sport and Leisure Tourism

- 7.90 As stated above the sport and leisure tourist and tourism industry can prove to be an important part of the local economy in Cork due to its regional location and close ties with many regional and national based organisations.
- 7.91 Cork is either directly or indirectly linked with many provincial teams and groups who are looking to the City to host international and national tournaments or games at an elite level. This filters down to the club groups and organisations too by appealing to international competitions and being training venues for international clubs and teams.
- 7.92 There is currently elite level competition and professional teams touring within Cork, either directly due to games in the area such as opponents of Munster Rugby (Musgrave Park) or touring international sides looking for a training and preparation venue.

Strategic Theme Conclusion

- 7.93 There is currently a lack of first class and elite level facilities in the region in certain sports such as hockey and cricket which restrict the development aims of the regional authorities. As a result of this there are fewer opportunities to host international and national competitions.

Strategic Theme Recommendation

- 7.94 Align strategic feasibility studies such as the multi-use/sport hub to incorporate elite level facilities to host international and national level competition.

Overarching Stakeholder Engagement Recommendations

- 7.95 We set out below our key recommendations from the stakeholder engagement exercise:
- Increase the quantity of AGP pitches throughout the city to allow for more teams to access these facilities for training and matches. This will reduce the demand on grass pitches and improve the overall quality of the pitches, this is especially important for the dominant sports of GAA, Soccer and Rugby Union.
 - Align future health and wellbeing strategies with the strategic plans for the individual national governing bodies of sport and community sport groups.
 - Support clubs and organisations to access capital grant funding opportunities
 - Develop a feasibility study to determine the scope and facility mix for 3 multi-use sport hubs that are strategically located throughout the City, predominantly in areas of significant growth.
 - A Sports Development Officer should be appointed to identify, promote, establish and maintain important relationships between educational establishments and national government bodies.
 - Coordinate and develop workshops and other forms of communication with external key stakeholders to account for this current and future growth.
 - Closely align any key strategic recommendations to the growth within CCC and other direct development plans associated with the overall vision, this includes aligning strategic developments of future initiatives within Sport Ireland developments plans.

8. Comparative Analysis

Introduction

- 8.1 A detailed comparative analysis exercise has been undertaken by the Study Team to help benchmark the ARI provision in Cork City with Bristol City and South Dublin.
- 8.2 The purpose of the benchmarking is to:
- Identify how active the population of Cork is in recreation and benchmark against other comparative cities with similar populations and facilities;
 - Identify opportunities and deficiencies in the current levels of provision in terms of ARI at a citywide level, district level, neighbourhood level and local level benchmarked against international good practice;
 - Identify the active recreational needs of the City including the major new development areas e.g. Docklands which will include the recreational amenity of the river, the Maglin area in Ballincollig, North Environs and South Environs and consider requirements for zoning of land for such purposes in the City Development Plan; and
 - Identify any comparisons with respect to the key strategic themes that emerged from our stakeholder consultations.
- 8.3 This benchmarking exercise will allow for comparisons between similar Study Area's and enable the Study Team to relate these comparisons back to the overall activity levels within each region and to then compare this with Cork City and the direct population.
- 8.4 These comparisons allow for recommendations to be created based on learnings from best practice examples. A number of elements will be identified such as the management and operation of ARI, related policies, opportunities to align planning policy with health and wellbeing strategies, accessibility of ARI, integration of health and wellbeing in strategic growth zones and key challenges in relation to proposed major development areas.

Methodology

- Within this section the study areas used for comparison were the City of Bristol and South Dublin with key indicators that were agreed upon to draw conclusions. These key indicators are highlighted below and were used to ascertain key information from the local authorities to provide best practice examples to CCC: Is Active Recreation promoted by the settlement and/or its organisations? Who are the key players?
- How active the population of Cork is in recreation benchmarked against comparative cities?

- Does Policy provide for provision of active recreation infrastructure in the city/local authority?
 - Does the policy align with any wider health and wellbeing strategies?
 - Is active recreation infrastructure/facilities more accessible?
 - Is active recreation infrastructure/facilities of better quality (Site level and overall quality)?
 - Is active recreation infrastructure/facilities better integrated as part of developments? – Within new developments or urban extensions / what facilities have been incorporated?
 - What are the key challenges that the other comparative settlements have witnessed over recent years?
 - What key trends are identifiable in the comparative settlements?
 - What are the key learnings? How can Cork improve in its provision of Active Recreation Infrastructure?
- 8.5 Within these comparative study areas their strategies and benchmarking are different to CCC given the locality and local issues but the fundamental aims of improving facilities and increasing participation are consistent between the three.
- 8.6 As part of the drive to create an active environment these strategies wrap together the planning and consideration that should be made when designing the places and spaces that are developed and lived in.
- 8.7 To assist Cork City Council in understanding the likely ARI requirements for non-pitch-based sports in the future, the study team has completed comparative analysis of the 'Core Cities' in the UK, these being Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Nottingham and Newcastle

South Dublin – Comparative Analysis/Benchmarking

- 8.8 South Dublin County Council (SDCC) is a relevant benchmarking example for Cork City due to the development of health, wellbeing and sport strategies, as well as strategic development zones targeted with ARI.
- 8.9 Another key comparative indicator is that SDCC as well as CCC are only two of seven cities or counties within Ireland that are a part of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network. This network of WHO Healthy Cities has to fulfil a set of 10 requirements of engagement such as Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms.
- 8.10 SDCC has also recently (January 2020) completed their Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS) which is a key strategic policy aim to look at current and future trends of predominantly sports pitches and artificial grass pitch provision within the Study Area.

- 8.11 The work undertaken as part of the SPS allows for consultation between groups and teams as well as identifying targeted areas of development align with the development plan, much like the outcomes of the Active Recreation Infrastructure Needs Study within Cork City. This allows for similar/like-for-like comparisons between the local authorities in terms of growth of teams, additional ARI developments needed and key infrastructure recommendations.
- 8.12 Figure 8.1 below highlights many of the key trends and statistics within SDCC from various Council documents and procedures.
- 8.13 Much like Cork City, South Dublin has a growing population and is expecting at least another 5% growth over the lifespan of their strategic planning documents, this is similar to Cork who are also experiencing a population increase, especially amongst the younger demographic. Cork City's population rose by 5% between 2011 and 2016, higher than the southern regional area (3% increase). Cork City's population is expected to surpass this growth rate to a total of 105,000 people up to 2040, which will be higher than the South Dublin region. The current demographic and population trends for SDCC only go up to 2031.
- 8.14 Cork City and South Dublin also have comparative areas of deprivation compared to the local population with Cork City CCC having five areas classified as being very disadvantaged.
- 8.15 Both these factors of population increase and deprivation play a role in the development of an ARI strategy and also local development plans as it highlights the need for accessible facilities for the community. For facilities to be accessible to these at-risk groups they should be within a short walk or cycle time (up to 10 minutes) and this reduces the reliance on a private car or spend on public transport. Much of Corks ARI is currently accessible with a large portion of facilities and pitches being within a 10 minute cycle and walk time from one another and the major population areas.
- 8.16 Due to the population of both areas increasing, at a higher rate than national average, there needs to be a proportionate infrastructure offering to cater for this growth in terms of pitches, indoor facilities and active travel. walkways and green/blue infrastructure
- 8.17 Specific areas of deprivation within South Dublin and Cork City can be compared and contrasted to identify best practices between both to inform future ARI developments. For example, Tallaght within SDCC and East of Knocknabeeny of CCC are comparable within the Pobal HP deprivation index.
- 8.18 Within these areas of deprivation (as identified above), specific aims and programs can be allocated to these areas to allow for increased participation and to reduce the barriers of access for facilities. South Dublin are increasing the sport and leisure offer within the Tallaght area with lit green walkways and artificial grass pitches to reduce inactivity in this area. Targeting these areas of higher deprivation should be a collaborative approach between the local authority and County Sports Partnerships who generally have coaches and educators in local communities.

Table 8.1: SDCC Analysis and Key Trends

Element	Key Indicator
1	With 50% of the population under 34, and over a third under 24 years of age, there is also a clear need to ensure services and supports for this age group
2	One of 7 Irish cities or counties awarded WHO Healthy City Network (Cork being another)
3	SDCC has the fifth highest by population density at 1,250 per km2 and the 4th largest in terms of population (278,749)
4	Access to amenities and services – not all areas have equal access to amenities such as parks and services
5	South Dublin County scored itself a healthier than the national average on the reported health question in census 2016
6	The 2016 census indicated a high population growth rate within SDCC at 5.1%
7	The actual population rise of 13,562 people in its population which is the joint fifth fastest growing local authority.
8	In 2016 a total of 54,085 individuals lived in Small Areas of Population classified as being 'disadvantaged
9	Tallaght: 21 areas that were categorised as very disadvantaged
10	Clondalkin: 1 area of extreme disadvantage and 23 areas that were categorised as very disadvantaged

SDCC Healthy City

Access to amenities and services – not all areas have equal access to amenities such as parks and services

SDCC has the fifth highest by population density at 1,250 per km² and the 4th largest in terms of population (278,749)

One of 7 Irish cities or counties awarded WHO Healthy City Network (Cork being another)

In 2016 a total of 54,085 individuals lived in Small Areas of Population classified as being 'disadvantaged'

South Dublin County scored itself a healthier than the national average on the reported health question in census 2016

The 2016 census indicated a high population growth rate within SDCC at 5.1%

Clondalkin: 1 area of extreme disadvantage and 23 areas that were categorised as very disadvantaged

The actual population rise of 13,562 people in its population which is the joint fifth fastest growing local authority.

Tallaght: 21 areas that were categorised as very disadvantaged

Map playgrounds, parks and walking trails across the region to inform development plans

Increase appropriate physical activity and exercise opportunities locally

With 50% of the population under 34, and over a third under 24 years of age, there is also a clear need to ensure services and supports for this age group

Source: <https://www.sdcc.ie/en/services/sport-and-recreation/playing-pitches/adopted-sports-pitch-strategy.pdf>

Policy Alignment to Provide for Active Recreation Infrastructure.

- 8.19 The South Dublin Development Plan (SDDP) 2016-2022, entitled 'A Vision for South Dublin's Future' contains an objective to develop community infrastructure and community facilities for the enhancement of the local population.
- 8.20 The SDDP also contains recommendations and aims to cater for the growing population with an emphasis on the role of Strategic Development Zones in delivering community infrastructure.
- 8.21 Community facilities have been highlighted as being an essential component for the local population which includes community centres, sports centres, playgrounds, active and passive recreation facilities. The strategy highlights community facilities as being an important focal point for the community that can be used as a springboard for community engagement.
- 8.22 A number of key recommendations and objectives from this strategy relate directly to Cork City due to similar facility and club trends in the area, these are highlighted below.

- Provide multifunctional community and indoor centres to provide a focal point for community activities.
- Produce policy that ensures all communities are supported by a range of sporting facilities that are fit for purpose, accessible and adaptable.
- Work in close relationship with supporting stakeholders for future grant funding and capital projects to expand the infrastructure offer.
- To promote and support communities and clubs in developing minority sports in the County by providing indoor and outdoor spaces for the pursuance of these activities.
- To encourage the co-location of community and sporting facilities.
- To support and provide a framework for the improvement, maintenance, upgrade and refurbishment of existing community-based facilities, within the County, to meet current and future needs.

8.23 South Dublin recently completed a Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS) in January 2020 that is comparable to the current ARI Needs Study that Cork City is producing as the strategy is not only focused on formal playing pitch sports, but it also takes a more holistic view of current and future participation/activity/health trends within the local authority area. The SPS directly looked at sports pitches, but it is comparable with Cork City due to the inclusion of increasing participation and activity levels as a result of the overall aims

8.24 The main strategic aims of the Strategy seek to provide a set of comprehensive recommendations and policies in line with the Development Plan and targeted areas of growth. Thus, the SPS is a useful resource which enables the Study Team to undertake a comparison of major ARI and can help to inform our recommendations based on current and future trends in Cork City.

8.25 We note that the SPS represents a strategic assessment that provides an up-to-date analysis of supply and demand for playing pitches (grass and artificial) in the South Dublin Council area. The strategy and the evidence base upon which it is based is delivered using local guidance and insight from national governing bodies as well as national guidance and facility insight from specific Governing Bodies of Sport. The assessment focused on facilities used by the following sports:

- Soccer;
- GAA;
- Rugby Union;
- Hockey;
- Cricket; and
- Athletics.

- 8.26 Figure 8.2 below highlights the key indicators and findings from the SPS that was used to create recommendations for the local authority. This relates to the study being concluded by Cork City to illustrate a comparative local authority in terms of pitch-based sports with similar provision in terms of quantity, it also highlights best practice examples that can be used for future recommendations.

Figure 8.2: SPS Key Findings



Key Challenges and Trends Identified

- 8.27 Within South Dublin and also Cork City, similar challenges have been identified within the relevant strategies and development plans for each local authority and by key stakeholders and clubs during consultations.
- 8.28 The main challenge to be accounted for in both Study Areas is the increasing population, especially the growing younger cohorts. Typically, younger people (under 45) are more active and require increased facilities and infrastructure to cater for this growth. This is not only seen in facilities and community assets but also within the growth of teams throughout the regions.
- 8.29 With a significant population increase expected over the lifespans of the comparative strategies this will lead to more facilities and infrastructure being needed. The more traditional sports such as GAA, Soccer and Rugby Union are all expecting an annual growth in members due to the continued development of clubs. This will lead to an additional strain on playing and training resources, which is why South Dublin are implementing a community artificial pitch remit to reduce pressure on traditional grass pitches. This remit is incorporating in the recommendations from the SPS and further

feasibility work to allocate matches and training away from grass pitches to improve quality.

- 8.30 Table 8.2 below highlights some key challenges identified in both study areas by the Study Team and examples of recommendations that can be applied to Cork City.

Table 8.2: Challenges and Recommendations from the Comparative Study

Challenge Identified	Recommendation examples
Increase in overall population throughout the study area and in specific younger cohort.	Specific study and options appraisal to research which areas of active recreation will be increased because of this population growth. Identify changing trends in population and how best to adapt the offers within the community. This will be in terms of specific feasibility studies within major development areas for a more detailed analysis.
Overuse of grass pitches for core sports which leads to a reduction in overall quality.	Undertake an Artificial Grass Pitch Feasibility Study to allocate best placement and management of pitches to allow for maximum community use. User agreements should also be implemented with larger clubs and organisations to allow for continued use.
Review the maintenance procedures to ensure optimal use across facilities.	Cork City Council and other partners should work closely with the open space and leisure team for a joint approach to the targeted maintenance of specific sites and facilities, this can also be in conjunction with advisement from regional organisations.
Implement a community ancillary pavilion program and indoor facility options appraisal.	Approach capital funding investment from the community aspect and ancillary provision as this can provide additional indoor space for non-traditional sports or community groups.

Active Recreation Infrastructure Integrated in Development Zones/Urban Extensions

- 8.31 SDCC is developing Strategic Development Zones (SDZs), similar to major development area identified to accommodate the future growth of Cork City.
- 8.32 First approved in 2019, the SDZ at Clonburris is a sustainable and complex development including over 9,000 new homes and a host of new recreation infrastructure. Within this development there will also be 90+ hectares of parks and open spaces as well as over 3km of designed canal frontage. The SDZ Planning Scheme

lands span 280 hectares and are located between the established communities of Lucan, Clondalkin and Liffey Valley.

- 8.33 The Adamstown SDZ is located to the west. These lands are bisected from east to west by the Kildare railway line and the Grand Canal to the south, and north to south by two strategic roads – the Outer Ring Road and the Fonthill Road. The R120 Lock Road forms part of the western boundary of the lands. The lands are strategically located, highly connected and have also been designated as a Major Urban Housing Development Site with the opportunity for delivering housing within the Dublin Region and over the next decade and beyond. Through the implementation of the Planning Scheme, Clonburris will fulfil its potential as a new sustainable community.
- 8.34 The SDZs listed above can be used as a benchmarking example for future improvements within Cork City in terms of what recreation, amenities and overall infrastructure should be included for future use. This is particularly important for the newly proposed Major Development Areas (MDAs) within the Study Area where a change of use will occur, such as South Glanmire and the Tivoli Docks MDAs.

City of Bristol Benchmarking Comparative Analysis

- 8.35 Like South Dublin, the City of Bristol is also a positive comparison for Cork City, as it offers many commonalities and comparable demographics.
- 8.36 The population of Bristol is estimated to be 463,400 people in 2021 and is expected to rise to 544,799 in 2039. Bristol is the largest city in the south west of England and one of the ten 'Core Cities'¹⁰ in Great Britain. Following a period of population decline in the post war years, the population stabilised in the 1990s and increased substantially during the 2000s. If recent trends continue, Bristol's population will increase to over half a million usual residents by mid-2031.
- 8.37 29.2% of the Bristol population is within the National Statistic Socio-Economic Classification (NS SEC) classification 6-8 (lower socio-economic groups), which compares similar to Cork City in terms of overall population.
- 8.38 Bristol's ethnic composition is primarily White (84%) and this is comparable to the national average (85.4%).
- 8.39 The proportion of Bristol's population represented by the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic BAME community is 16%. This is in line with the national average (14.6%)
- 8.40 Most recent figures from the Deprivation in Bristol report (2015) state that the City has 42 Lower Super Output Areas LSOAs in the most deprived 10% in England for Index of Multiple Deprivation IMD. Of these 42 LSOAs, there are 26 in the most deprived 5% in England and six in the most deprived 1% of the Country. The greatest levels of deprivation are in the Whitchurch Park, Hartcliffe, Filwood and Lawrence Hill areas.

¹⁰ A core city within the UK is an economic and social hub which drives trade with key aims to reduce deprivation and increase activity amongst the community

- 8.41 The City of Bristol shares many common goals with Cork City in the development of people's health and wellbeing alongside growth of the ARI of the City. In 2020, Bristol completed a new Sports Strategy in response to lower than average physical activity levels. The Sports Strategy has a vision as follows:
- 8.42 *"To ensure that all Bristol Citizens have the encouragement, opportunity and environment they need to lead active, healthy and fulfilling lives. By working collaboratively and cooperatively, as a whole system, we will seek to transform attitudes and behaviours and make it easier for residents to enjoy sport and physical activity and embed it into their everyday lives."*
- 8.43 This vision is aligned to the plan for Bristol 2050, which also contains a strong emphasis on improving health and wellbeing.
- 8.44 The City of Bristol Sports Strategy highlights (within theme 3) the need to develop 'Active Environments' and it also sets out the following 5 specific objectives:
- To design and implement a sustainable travel plan for all schools;
 - To increase physical activity in all parks and open spaces;
 - To positively influence planning developments to support increased physical activity;
 - To provide safe places to engage in physical activity e.g. riding bikes for pleasure; and
 - To improve the quality and safety of streets and neighbourhood 'grey spaces' for healthy physical activity and play.
- 8.45 These objectives are linked to further objectives for Active Places, Active Partnerships and Active People. The strategy also contains four long term outcomes, as per the table below.

Strategy Outcomes:	
Outcome 1	Through physical activity, reduce health inequalities and the health life expectancy gap by 10% between the most affluent wards by 2025
Outcome 2	50% more people living in wards where there are the greatest levels of socioeconomic deprivation, are doing more than 30 minutes physical activity per week by 2025
Outcome 3	Halt the rise in levels of childhood and adult obesity by 2025
Outcome 4	Bristol will be the most active core city in the country, with at least 65% of people in all parts of the city achieving the recommended amount of physical activity by 2025.

- 8.46 The City of Bristol has a young population. The median age of people living in the city is 33.4 years old which is 5.5 years below the national average. The single largest age range in the City according to the last census data in 2011 was 20-29 year olds, closely

followed by 30-39 year olds. People in these age brackets are deemed to have high propensity to take part in sport and physical activity.

- 8.47 As a 'Core City', Bristol has high levels of economic activity and this is reflective of the high levels of affluence across the population. As affluence is a significant factor, which is linked to physical activity levels, this is an important comparison for Cork.
- 8.48 The sports and facilities listed below highlights the current provision of ARI facilities within the City of Bristol according to their latest playing pitch and infrastructure strategies (2016).

Football

- The City of Bristol has a total of 569 teams, which is comparable to local areas of a similar size.
- Over the last 10-years there has been a significant national increase in the number of large multi-team football clubs. In Bristol, 12 clubs have more than 10 registered teams.
- 13 fine turf pitches FTP's with a demand requirement of 2 more.
- The Bristol Playing Pitch Strategy PPS identifies 270 grass football pitches of varying format sizes, of which just 3% are rated as good quality and 75% as standard quality. The total proportion of pitches in Bristol rated as poor quality represents 22%

Sports Hall

- 34 Sports Halls of at least 27m x 17m with full community access

Swimming Pools

- 15 indoor swimming pools of at least 20m x 8m with community access.

Athletic Tracks

- There is only one 8 lane athletics track in the City boundary.

Indoor Tennis

- There are 3 indoor tennis centres and 183 outdoor courts.

Water Sports Centres

- There are 6 water sport centres covering rowing, canoeing and sailing.

Bowls

- There are 25 outdoor bowls facilities and one indoor facility.

- 8.49 It is also helpful to compare Bristol's once a week participation in sport with that of the other seven Core Cities. Manchester is home to the largest proportion of adults who participate in sport once a week (40.3%), followed by Newcastle at 37.8%. Bristol ranks third with the lowest performing Core City against this measure being Birmingham at 34.5%.

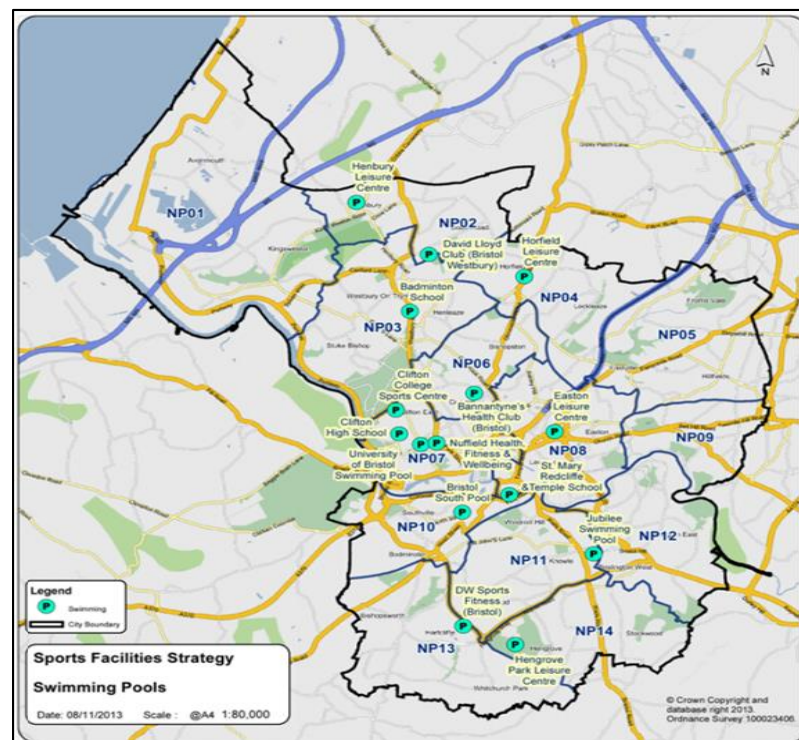
- 8.50 As Bristol has a relatively young and active adult population it is not surprising that two of the five largest market segments in Bristol are from the 18-25 age group (Jamie and Leanne) and three of the five largest segments are particularly active for their age group (Jamie, Tim and Philip). The top 5 market segments which account for the largest proportion of Bristol's population are, together with the sports and activities most likely to appeal to them are:

Market Segment	Description	Activity Most Likely to appeal
Jamie (9.3%)	Young blokes enjoying football, pints and pool	Basketball, Football, Weight Training, Badminton, Boxing, Martial Arts
Elsie and Arnold (7.9%)	Retired singles or widowers, predominantly female, living in sheltered accommodation	Walking, Dancing, Bowls, Low-impact exercise
Tim (7.9%)	Sporty male professionals, buying a house and settling down with partner	Canoeing, Cricket, Cycling, Squash, Skiing, Golf, Football
Philip (7.4%)	Mid-life professional, sporty males with older children and more time for themselves	Sailing, Football, Badminton, Cycling, Gym, Jogging, Golf, Cricket
Leanne (6.6%)	Young busy mums and their supportive	Swimming, Gym, Aerobics, Ice Skating, Dance Exercise, Body Pump, Utility Walking

- 8.51 The table above highlight the key market segmentation groups with Cork City representations similar age bands and demographics based upon the latest population figures and also the younger population increase from the major education providers.
- 8.52 The consultation for Bristol in regard to barriers to participation: Sport4Life and Sport England's Market Segmentation research identified the main barriers which prevent or are likely to prevent people in Bristol from participating in sport and active recreation as: -
- Lack of free time
 - Cost of participating.
 - Work commitments and pressures
 - Lack of motivation & confidence
 - Ill health or disability
 - Lack of transport
- 8.53 In relation to Cork City, the study area reflects many similar barriers to participation as highlighted above as the lack of accessibility of facilities can deter members to participate and reduce the overall activity level.

- 8.54 Within the City of Bristol, as with similar other core cities, there is adequate of water-based ARI provision.
- 8.55 Overall Bristol has an adequate level of pool supply (assuming the new pool proceeds as planned at Bristol Brunel Academy) to meet the demands of the Bristol resident population. With the additional pool, there is very little unmet demand (5.3%) due to lack of capacity. This unmet demand is comparatively small and due in the main to residents who do not have access to a car being outside the walking catchment of a pool.
- 8.56 The FPM calculates that Bristol's stock of pools has capacity in terms of supply to meet the significantly increased population growth projected. However, pools 37 will become increasingly busy at peak times leading to lower visitor satisfaction levels unless steps are taken to keep facilities modernized, and to maximise community access at peak times. It will be important to take account of the proposed changes to supply within adjoining authority areas, notably South Gloucestershire, and Bath and North East Somerset's Keynsham where a replacement pool is proposed which will be larger and higher quality than the existing pool.
- 8.57 The impact of a potential future closure of Jubilee Pool in the city would be mitigated by the opening of the proposed new pool in Keynsham with most of the demand being met by this newer and larger pool within the catchment of existing users of the Jubilee Pool. Figure 8.3 below identifies the location of swimming pools within Bristol.

Figure 8.3: Location of Swimming Pools in Bristol



- 8.58 This is also an area of improvement for Cork City with new developments occurring within the docklands region. A feasibility study should be conducted to ascertain the

usage patterns and demand for a new swimming complex that is open to community use. This is due to the significant capital cost for a new facility a robust evidence based should be created.

Findings

8.59 We set out below our key findings and recommendations from the comparative analysis exercise:

- The three cities highlighted within the comparative study are similar in terms of pitches per total population and also population trends with a specific focus on increasing participation levels.
- CCC need to conduct a robust Pitch Based Sports Strategy which reviews in detail the carrying capacity and investigation of individual sites, such as GAA, soccer and rugby pitches to accurately determine the current and future need, much like the strategy completed by South Dublin.
- Following the completion of a pitch-based sport specific strategy further work then can be completed on designated options appraisals and studies.
- Liaise with schools and other community groups to explore the opportunity to utilise their facilities after official hours for wider community and club use which will also help to establish greater links between the schools, the community and local clubs. This will also allow CCC to reduce capital expenditure on new pitches and sites if current facilities are used.
- The City of Bristol work closely with national governing bodies and regional sports partnerships to develop similar strategies and participation goals. CCC should increase communication and develop closer relationships with these entities to align similar targets. This can include a council member within the Cork Sport 2040 group to align similar strategy's and overall recommendations
- CCC should further explore detailed feasibility studies for large capital builds such as swimming pools and leisure centres within the MDA areas to determine the correct size and facility mix.

9. Active Recreation Infrastructure - Requirements

Pitch Based ARI Requirements

- 9.1 Using our comparative analysis study of similar local authorities such as the City of Bristol and South Dublin, and our knowledge of best practice examples, we can predict the future requirements for pitch-based sports within Cork, up to the year of 2028 and 2040.
- 9.2 It should be noted that these are only indicative calculations based upon similar study areas. A more detailed and robust data gathering exercise should be completed in order to ascertain the current trends and levels of participation and growth for particular sports and leisure activities.
- 9.3 The table below highlights the predicted current and future need for the 5-core pitch-based sports within the study area based upon the latest population figures available and calculated team numbers. It is important to note that these are indicative values to give a broad sense of growth within the Study Area up to 2028 and 2040. See attached **Appendix 8** for full breakdown of pitch ratio scores and relevant sub areas.
- 9.4 The pitch ratio score has been adjusted from estimated teams within the area and the local population figures provided by CCC (up to 2028 and 2040).

Pitch Sports Predicated Growth Calculator					
Pitch Based Sport	Potential Pitch Generation Ratio's (per capita)	Total Current Predicted Pitch Need (2016)	Total Future Predicted Pitch Need	Predicted Additional Pitches Needed (2028)	Predicted Additional Pitches Needed (2040)
GAA	1,200	176	215	39	87
Rugby Union	3,400	62	76	14	31
Soccer	2,727	77	95	17	38
Cricket	10,542	20	24	4	10
Hockey	5,020	42	51	9	21

- 9.5 The assumptions applied/utilised in calculating the ratio scores and predicted values are outlined below:
- Using best practice examples from comparative studies such as South Dublin and the City of Bristol, the ratios were created in combination with similar examples in terms of population, teams and members (Hockey).
 - Using the latest team numbers if allocated through the national governing bodies.

- The current and future predicted pitch need is for all locations and not just restricted to local authority managed and maintained locations (i.e. it includes private clubs and schools, etc).
- The predicted future use is for grass only pitches.
- The pitches have not been split between different size requirements such as for senior, junior or mini teams.

9.6 The table below highlights the potential area need (Ha) for the estimated pitches based upon the 2016, 2028 and 2040 data.

Pitch Sports Predicted Area (Ha)				
Sport	Ha per pitch (estimated)	2016 Predicted Area Need	2028 Predicted Area Need	2040 Predicted Area Need
GAA	2	351.4	429.8	525.0
Rugby Union	1.4	86.8	106.2	129.7
Soccer	1.2	92.8	113.5	138.6
Cricket	1.6	32.0	39.1	47.8
Hockey	1.2	50.4	61.6	75.3

- 9.7 GAA sports are expected to require an additional 40 pitches to cater for the demand in population growth due to being the most popular sport within Cork. It is noted that specific areas might need a greater proportion of these pitches due to GAA rules of playing for your local side.
- 9.8 Noting this, it is recommended that new larger housing developments located within areas with pitch based sport needs be required to provide these facilities or designate space that can be developed by clubs, private bodies or the Council.
- 9.9 These new pitches should incorporate a mix of senior and juvenile sizes with an emphasis on juvenile pitches for larger housing developments. Rugby Union and Soccer are similar in terms of additional provision being required, i.e. a need of 13 and 17 pitches, respectively.
- 9.10 Building new pitches within new designated areas is only one way to account for this demand, the points below highlight other elements that could help with future provision:
- Enhance the current quality of pitches within current sites to increase the carrying capacity of pitches.
 - Improve the maintenance of current pitches.
 - Establish more community user agreements with local schools and clubs.

- Strategically locate artificial grass pitches for community use as they can greatly increase usage within an area due to their increased carrying capacity.
- 9.11 In terms of recommendations for pitch-based ARI, the following have been cited by key stakeholders during our detailed consultations:
- Conduct a robust Pitch Based Sports Strategy which reviews in detail the carrying capacity and quality of individual sites, such as GAA, soccer and rugby pitches to accurately determine the current and future need.
 - Liaise with schools and other community groups to explore the opportunity to utilise their facilities after official hours for wider community and club use which will also help to establish greater links between the schools, the community and local clubs. This will also allow CCC to reduce capital expenditure on new pitches and sites if current facilities are used.
 - Work closely with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and align strategic priorities in the City with those of the NGBs in terms of sports growth, particularly in the female sections.
 - Support the provision of centrally and strategically located artificial grass pitches (AGP) in populated areas to improve usage levels and allow greater access to key strategic sites for the community.

Non-Pitch Based ARI Requirements

- 9.12 To assist Cork City Council in understanding the likely ARI requirements for non-pitch-based sports in the future, the study team has completed comparative analysis of the 'Core Cities' in the UK, these being Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Nottingham and Newcastle.
- 9.13 The data used to inform this section has been sourced from the Bristol Playing Pitch Strategy, Active Power Places website, Sport England and relates to 2017 figures.
- 9.14 With this data, we have prepared a number of tables (see below) which identify the existing non-pitch based ARI provision across the eight 'Core Cities' and which utilise the average position from the 'Core Cities' to project the indicative (potential) comparative requirements for Cork City.
- 9.15 These tables demonstrate how the various non-pitch based ARI requirements may change for Cork City from the baseline year in 2016 (based on the 2016 Census population data) to the modelled years of 2028 and 2040 (based on the forecasted population growth data provided by CCC).
- 9.16 Averages from the above-mentioned data have been taken and then used to calculate the likely requirements for Cork City. The analysis seeks to provide a projection of the likely requirements for Cork based on the following non-pitch based sport and leisure facilities:
- Sports Hall – based on a community, 4 badminton court size.

- Swimming Pool – based on a 25m sized community pool with 6 lanes.
- Athletic Track – based on an 8 lane full sized track.
- Indoor Bowls – based on 4 rinks.
- Indoor Tennis Centre – based on 4 indoor courts.
- Outdoor Tennis Courts – based on single courts.
- Golf Course – based on a 9-hole equivalent.
- Fitness Club – based on a medium sized club circa 60 stations.
- Studio – based on a single studio for 30 people.

9.17 Table 9.1 below identifies the level of non-pitch based ARI provision (based on those facilities identified in the data) that Cork City would be required to have to serve its population in 2016, if the Council was to seek to achieve the averages obtained from the Core Cities analysis (and in absence of having an accurate picture of the quantity of facilities currently in Cork).

Table 9.1: Estimated Provision in 2016 (i.e. the Baseline Position)

Sports Halls	16
25m Pool Equivalents	7
Athletic Tracks	2
Indoor Bowls	1
Squash Courts	16
Indoor Tennis Courts	6
Outdoor Tennis Courts	30
Golf Course - 9 hole equivalents	6
Fitness Clubs	25
Studios	22

9.18 **Appendix 9** contains the following tables which provide additional detail on the non-pitch based requirements for the Study Area:

- **Table 9.2:** covers the indicative changes / increased requirements in non-pitch based ARI provision between 2016, 2028 and 2040 if average provision ratios

from the eight Core Cities are used. It is noted that the ratios/figures provided within Table 9.2 are for guidance only using assumptions made from the 'Core City' ratios.

- **Table 9.3:** provides comparative Data for UK Core Cities versus potential requirements for Cork using 2016 population statistics (i.e. 210,853 people).
- **Table 9.4:** provides comparative data for UK Core Cities versus potential requirements for Cork using 2028 population statistics (i.e. 257,832 people).
- **Table 9.5:** provides comparative Data for UK Core Cities versus potential requirements for Cork using 2040 population statistics (i.e. 315,000 people).

Water-Based ARI Requirements

9.19 The Online Survey Audit was completed by a total of 37 organisations which promote water-based activities/sports/recreation, such as boating, canoeing/kayaking, fishing/angling, rowing, sailing, surfing, swimming and stand-up paddle boarding.

9.20 These 37 organisations are identified in the table below:

Organisations in Cork City Promoting Water Based Recreation/Sports/Activities		
Bádóireacht Youth Programme, Meitheal Mara	Inniscarra tourism and development ltd	Rowing Ireland
Blackrock Rowing Club	Lee Rowing Club	Scoil Mhuire agus Eoin
Blackrock Sailing Club (Cork City Sailing Club)	Leisure World	Shandon Boat Club
Cork Boat Club	Meitheal Mara	St Aloysius School
Cork City SUP	MTU (Cork)	St Finbarre's NS
Cork Dragons	Munster Provincial Council, Irish Federation of Sea Anglers	St. Aloysius School
Cork Harbour Festival	Munster Technological University	Subowti
Cork Sports Partnership	Naomhóga Chorcaí	Sundays Well Swimming Club
Cork Sub Aqua Club	North Cork Tri Club	The Health Club At The Kingsley
Corkumavigation	North Presentation Primary School	UCC Rowing Club
Dolphin SC	Paddle the Owenabue	
Gaelscoil Mhachan	Phoenix Kayak Club	

9.21 The majority of clubs identified either a need for additional ARI and/or additional ancillary facilities, including:

- Public slipway;
- Additional launch area;
- Rescue boat launch facilities;
- Pontoon and marina storage;
- Additional space/land for storage (boats, equipment, personal belongings, etc), repairs, changing areas, car parking (for users), etc;
- Additional car parking by the Marina for events such as regattas;
- Additional club house and boathouse facilities/space; and
- Meeting and training rooms.

9.22 In terms of key issues facing water-based sport clubs/organisations, the following were also cited:

- Need for public slipways to enable safe access to the water for all, including those with disabilities, mobility challenges, children and older members;
- Need for readily available access points to the River Lee which can be accessed without a key and at any tidal state;
- Need for buoy markings along the channel;
- Need for lighting improvements at the Marina;
- Need for additional facilities at Oysterhaven such as toilets and fresh water;
- Need for portage facilities at Trinity Bridge and Waterworks Weir and portage points by some of the bridges in the City;
- Opportunity to clean up and renovate old ferry slip on Lower Glanmire Road;
- Need for improved access to the River Lee from the Lee Fields to Blackrock area;
- Need for improved pedestrian and cyclist access to Lapps Quay;
- Need for expansion of Lapps Quay and slipways in the City to launch larger boats (Blackrock Village currently used to launch larger boats);
- Need for expansion of Lapps Quay and slipways in the City to accommodate all water users during peak periods such as the summer months;
- Need for sheltered/covered space at Lapps Quay to enable instructors to provide health and safety advice/guidance/instructions to participants before entering the water and to debrief participants following completion of the activity;
- Need for changing facilities and bathrooms at Lapps Quay pontoon;
- Need for buildings to store boats and take part in indoor training;

- Need for additional facilities to provide for, and enable the growth of sailing clubs;
- Need for funding support to purchase new boats to enable the growth of sailing clubs, etc;
- Need for access to swimming pools and class rooms to train new divers;
- Need for a 50m pool (Limerick cited as nearest location);
- Need for on water and white-water facilities such as a canoe polo pitch, slalom facilities, etc;
- Focus on 'Competitive/racing' boating clubs and need for non-competitive water sports in Cork to be provided with better facilities to accommodate growing demand; and
- Assistance with identifying and securing finance/funding and growing/developing links and relationships with other sporting/recreation organisations.

9.23 In addition to the foregoing, a detailed consultation has been undertaken with Rowing Ireland who extensively use the current water ways and river system. Rowing Ireland identified the following key requirements/need:

- Encouragement to combine school programs within the local rowing clubs;
- Improvement of current car parking and access for boat clubs and facilities;
- Provision of coaching courses and training programs within the docks area;
- Encourage more Regatta type events;
- Encourage clubs to establish community links; and
- Incorporate detailed consultations and club development plans as part of any future/wider Active Recreation/Water-Based strategies.

10. Major Development Areas

Introduction

10.1 CCC proposes to designate the following five no. Major Development Areas through the Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 to accommodate the planned population growth (as discussed previously) within the Study Area:

- City Docks;
- Tivoli Docks;
- Ballincollig (Maglin);
- Ballyvolane; and
- South Glanmire.

10.2 We provide below an overview of each of the five MDAs, in terms of their: profile; existing ARI provision; likely future ARI provision; and suitable locations for ARI land-use zoning.

MDA Mapping

10.3 To assist with this component of the Study, and enable the Study Team to understand the existing ARI provision within each of the MDAs, the following mapping has been prepared:

Map 10 – Location of ARI and MDAs within the Study Area – Cycling Buffers

10.4 Map 10 plots the extent of the MDAs as well as the location of existing ARI within the Study Area as identified by the Online Survey Audit and from a review of aerial mapping with respect to outdoor pitches and golf courses within the Study Area. Additionally, Map 10 includes a 2.7km/10 minute¹¹ cycle distance buffer from the boundary of the MDAs to illustrate the ARI that is located within a reasonable cycling distance from the MDA.

Map 11 – Location of ARI and MDAs within the Study Area – Walking Buffers

10.5 Map 11 plots the extent of the MDAs as well as the location of existing ARI within the Study Area as identified by the Online Survey Audit and from a review of aerial mapping with respect to outdoor pitches and golf courses within the Study Area. Additionally, Map 11 includes an 800m/10 minute¹² walking distance buffer from the boundary of the MDAs to illustrate the ARI that is located within a reasonable walking distance from the MDA.

¹¹ Widely accepted to represent a reasonable cycling distance.

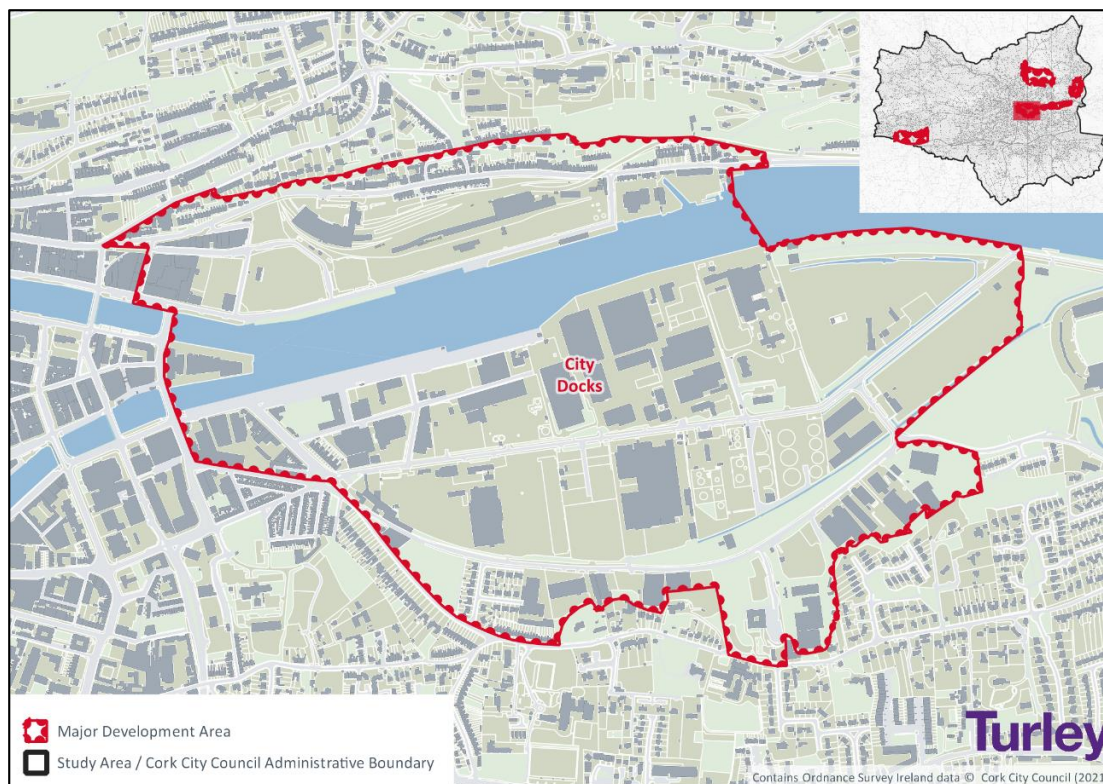
¹² Widely accepted to represent a reasonable walking distance.

City Docks MDA

Profile

- 10.6 The City Docks Major Development Area (MDA), which is identified in Figure 10.1 below), is located adjacent to Cork's City Centre to the east and covers an area of approx. 133ha.

Figure 10.1: Extent of the City Docks MDA



- 10.7 The extent of this MDA is generally defined by:

- Myrtle Hill Terrace, River Lee, Páirc Uí Chaoimh, pedestrian access route to Páirc Uí Chaoimh, Monahan Road and Birchgrove to the east;
- Lower Glanmire Road, Ship Street, Penrose Quay, Michael Collins Bridge, Custom House Street, Eamon De Valera Bridge and Albert Street to the west;
- Summerhill North and lands along the northern side of Lower Glanmire Road to the north which includes brownfield lands, greenfield /undeveloped parcels, existing residential areas and a mix of religious/commercial/retail/tourism accommodation properties; and
- Albert Road, Victoria Road, Blackrock Road and existing residential areas such as Cleve Hill, Chiplee and Lindville to the south.

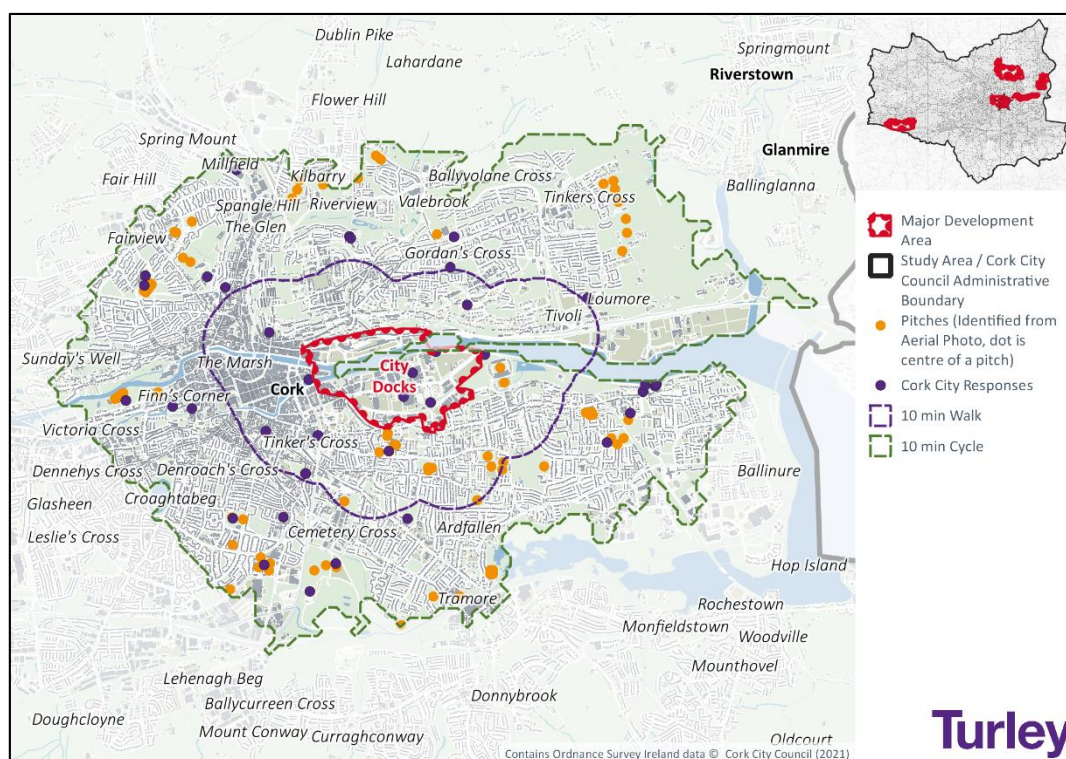
- 10.8 The MDA contains a mix of land uses including Port of Cork lands, Kent Train Station lands, the River Lee, industrial/commercial/retail/leisure/recreation uses, residential areas, car parking areas and other infrastructure such as roads, railway lines, etc.

- 10.9 The area is benefitted by approx. 5km of accessible waterfront with a series of linked green and blue spaces providing a broad range of well-designed recreational facilities, including multiple access points to the River Lee.
- 10.10 The physical land area of this MDA predominantly comprises brownfield lands, owing to the former dock use/location, but a number of open/greenfield spaces are interspersed throughout, such as Kennedy Park, along with road side planting/landscaping and landscaping associated with individual sites/developments.
- 10.11 The City Docks MDA has been identified as a major growth area for the City which will accommodate up to 23,000 residents and 25,000 workers by 2040 so as to help reverse the trend of urban depopulation in Cork City.

Existing Provision

- 10.12 Figure 10.2 identifies the extent of this MDA and includes a 10 minute walking and cycling buffer to identify the location of ARI within the MDA and within a reasonable walking and cycling distance from the MDA.

Figure 10.2: Location of ARI within and nearby the City Docks MDA



- 10.13 Within the City Docks MDA, the main ARI provision is based around the local slipways and water access for the rowing and boat clubs. There is also a number of indoor facilities within the local area that cater for clubs such as figure skating and gyms. A number of the larger rowing clubs are located within the City Docks such as Lee Rowing Club, Shandon Boat Club and the Cork Dragons.
- 10.14 Within a 10-minute walk time and cycle time, there is a variety of provision available to the local community such as indoor facilities and pitch-based sports such as GAA, rugby

and soccer. This cycle time stretches down to the Lower Glasheen region to the south west and Gordons Cross to the north.

Future Provision

- 10.15 Future provision should include additional ARI and improvements to existing ARI, such as its accessibility credentials, which should also include accessibility improvements to slipways for the community/general public. Additional indoor ARI should also be provided within Commercial Park which could cater for the needs of local clubs and community groups that have been identified within the consultation process.

Suitable Areas for Zoning ARI

- 10.16 There are significant areas of accessible water front available within the City Docks with roughly 5km of waterfront in this section. Currently there is industrial and business use, but these can be converted to sports and leisure provision, such as indoor provision for gyms and swimming pools.
- 10.17 When areas are designated for suitable ARI provision they should be incorporated into a wider green and blue infrastructure strategy to allow for active and sustainable travel to occur.
- 10.18 There is currently a lack of playing pitches within this MDA, due to the current land uses, as a result indoor provision would be easier to incorporate due to current infrastructure available such as accessibility of roads, power and energy etc.

Policy Recommendations

- 10.19 ARI provision for the City Docks MDA will be facilitated/supported by the following policies:
- Require a minimum of 15% open space in new residential developments (in addition to City Park aka Marina Park).
 - Require development of small scale ARI, such as linear parks, outdoor linear play/gym areas, MUGAs, etc, within larger developments and public realm improvement schemes, to augment the existing provision of ARI.
 - Support investment in/improvement of existing park areas, such as Marina Park, Kennedy Park and Spine, Monahan's Road Park and Mahony's Avenue Park, to incorporate additional ARI provision.
 - Promote investment in/improvement of existing footpaths/cycle ways to enhance usage and to form part of a wider urban network of active travel and recreation infrastructure.
 - Encourage investment in/improvement of existing and additional access points to the River Lee to improve accessibility and enhance water based ARI opportunities.
 - Explore potential to deliver additional water-based infrastructure required (community boat club / slipway, school rowing club, and more).

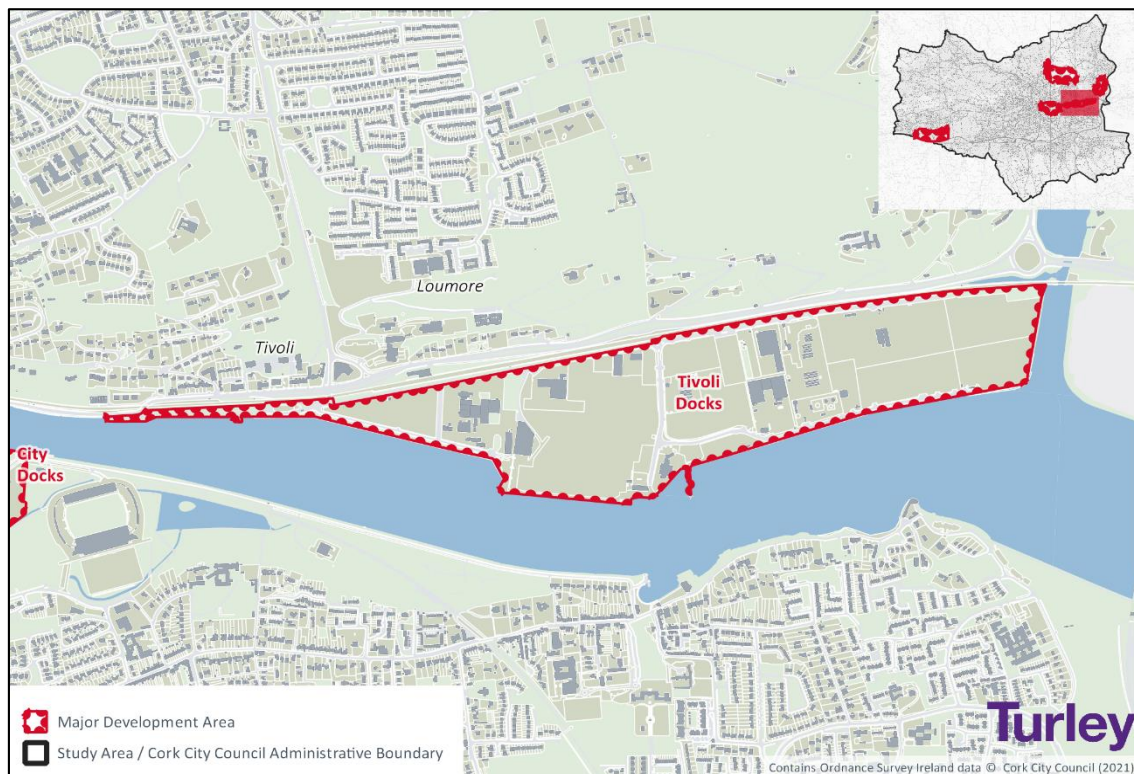
- Undertake a feasibility study to deliver a swimming pool to service the future population of the City Docks / Tivoli Docks MDAs and potential to provide this facility on a floating lido.

Tivoli Docks MDA

Profile

10.20 The Tivoli Docks Major Development Area (MDA), which is identified in Figure 10.2 below), is located approx. 250m to the north east of Páirc Uí Chaoimh on the opposite side of the River Lee.

Figure 10.3: Extent of the Tivoli Docks MDA



10.21 The MDA covers an area of approx. 62Ha and its extent is generally defined by the:

- Glashaboy River to the east;
- Port of Cork 200 Garden to the west;
- Tivoli Estate Road and Cork to Cobh/Midleton train line to the north; and the
- River Lee to the south.

10.22 This MDA is focused on the Tivoli Docks and Industrial Estate area which is owned by the Port of Cork. With the transfer of container traffic and other services to the new Cork Container Terminal at Ringaskiddy, these lands are now available for development/regeneration.

10.23 Similar to the City Docks area, this MDA predominately comprise built-on/brownfield/hard surfaced areas, however there are some greenfield/open space

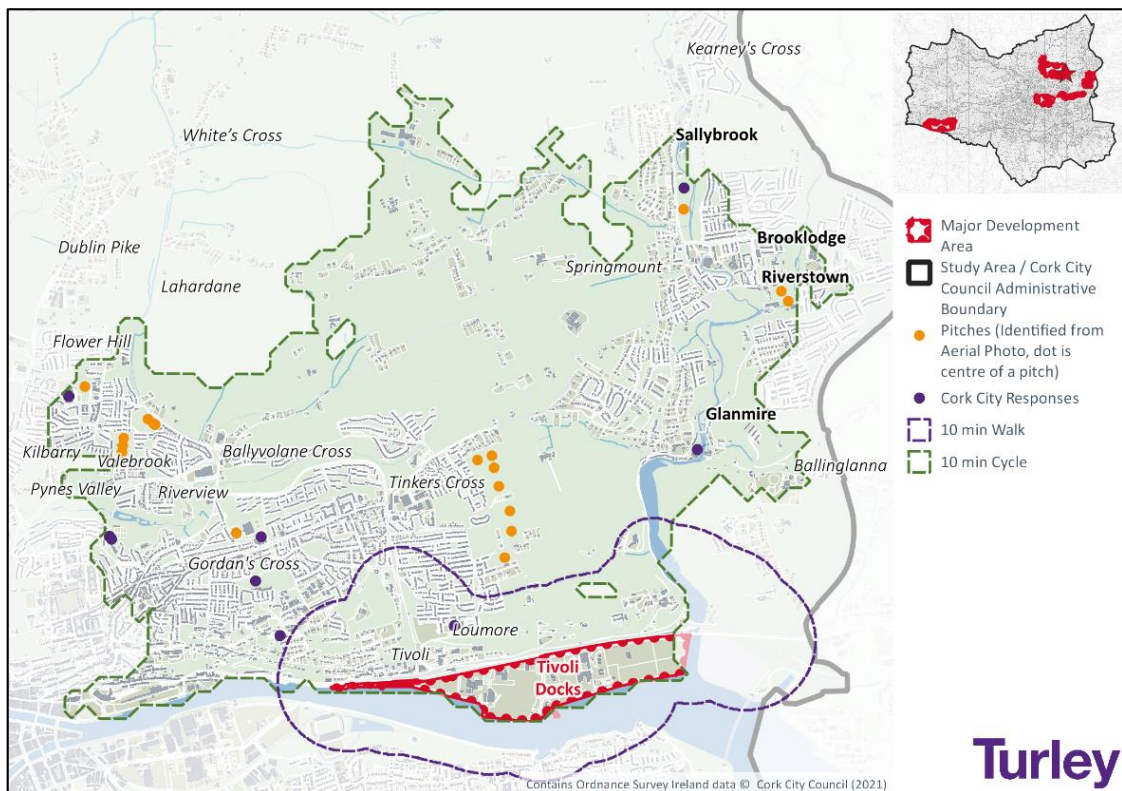
and landscaped areas located within the MDA, most notably the narrow/linear east to west oriented Port of Cork 200 Garden.

- 10.24 As expected with a dock/industrial estate, a number of haulage, distribution/storage and transport uses are located here along with large car parking areas and shipping/dock infrastructure.
- 10.25 The area is befitting by approx. 3km of accessible waterfront and provides an opportunity to deliver a series of linked green and blue spaces that can provide a broad range of well-designed recreational facilities, including access points to the River Lee.
- 10.26 The Tivoli Docks MDA has been identified as a major growth area for the City which will accommodate up to 11,500 residents and 5,000 jobs among other land uses and infrastructure, such as a new train station.

Existing Provision

- 10.27 Figure 10.4 identifies the extent of this MDA and includes a 10 minute walking and cycling buffer to identify the location of ARI within the MDA and within a reasonable walking and cycling distance from the MDA.

Figure 10.4: Location of ARI within and nearby the Tivoli Docks MDA



- 10.28 Within the Tivoli Dock MDA there is very little current ARI due to the current industrial and commercial land uses. The closet provision is located to the north within the Mayfield area which includes a number of local GAA and Soccer clubs. Across the river to the south there is a number of local rowing and boat clubs which use the local Blackrock slipway.

- 10.29 Within the walk and cycle time buffers there is a large number of existing facilities, particularly to the north within the Glanmire and Mayfield region with GAA and other pitch-based sports within larger parks. These buffer area also encompass the central regions of Cork City, close to the campus of University College Cork.

Future Provision

- 10.30 Noting the increased development and population outlined for this MDA, an appropriate amount of new ARI provision should be allocated for the MDA, especially for the workday residents.
- 10.31 This future provision can include an indoor health and fitness suite which can cater for the increased workday and permanent residents in the area. These indoor facilities can be multi use to account for swimming, studios, gyms, tennis courts and small MUGA sites.
- 10.32 The future provision of indoor facilities can be incorporated into and linked within the green and blue spaces plan.

Suitable Areas for Zoning ARI

- 10.33 The 3km of accessible waterfront represents a suitable area for providing future ARI and there is potential to incorporate new ARI with a series of linked green and blue spaces which could provide a broad range of well-designed recreational facilities, including multiple access points to the water.
- 10.34 Within the Tivoli Docks a large parcel of land is available to incorporate future active infrastructure development, predominantly indoor infrastructure such as swimming pools, gyms, and studio space.

Policy Recommendations

- 10.35 ARI provision for the Tivoli Docks MDA will be facilitated/supported by the following policies:
- Require a minimum of 15% open space in new residential developments.
 - Seek the provision of ARI as part of new educational developments/campuses, either on or off site to meet the needs of future pupils and ensure that the ARI is designed and sited in a manner to enable dual usage outside of school hours to meet the needs of local residents/businesses.
 - Require development of small scale ARI, such as linear parks, outdoor linear play/gym areas, MUGAs, etc, within larger developments and public realm improvement schemes.
 - Explore potential to deliver larger scale ARI within the Tivoli Docks MDA and/or within the proposed new North East Regional Park to the north of this MDA.
 - Support investment in/improvement of existing and new park areas, such as Port of Cork Garden 2000, to incorporate additional ARI provision.

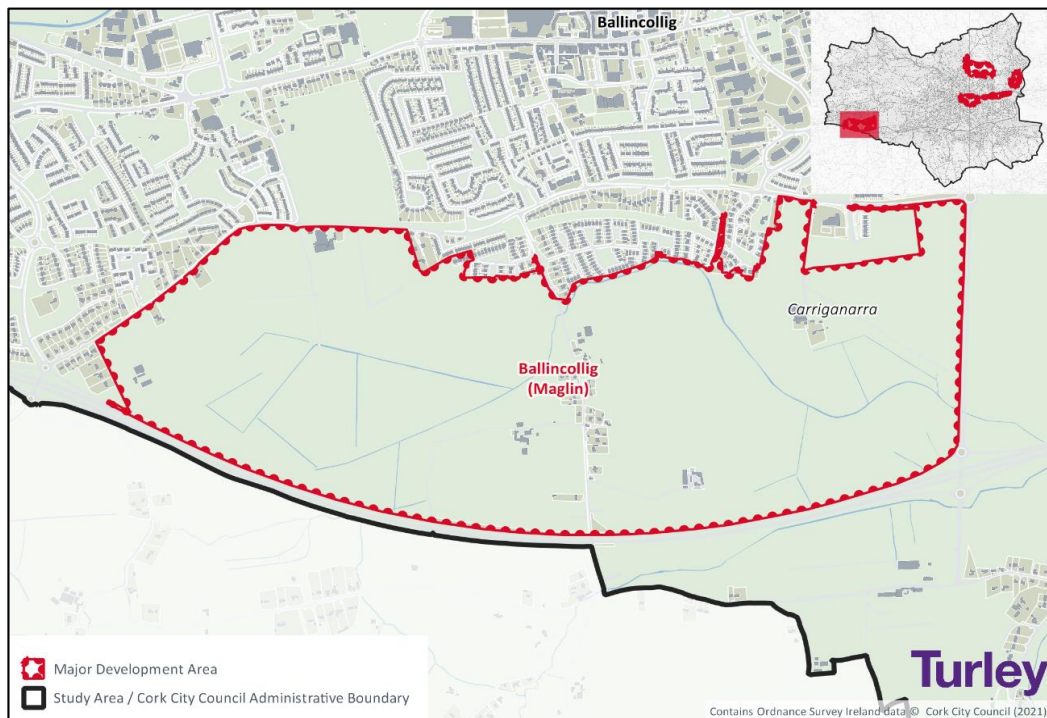
- Promote investment in/improvement of existing footpaths/cycle ways to enhance usage and to form part of a wider urban network of active recreation and travel infrastructure.
- Encourage investment in/improvement of existing and additional access points to the River Lee to improve accessibility and enhance water based ARI.
- Explore potential to deliver additional water-based infrastructure such as a community boat club, a slipway, a school rowing club, changing areas, a board walk, fishing areas, etc.
- Undertake a feasibility study to deliver a swimming pool to service the future population of the Tivoli Docks MDAs, such as the potential to provide this facility on a floating lido.

Ballincollig (Maglin) MDA

Profile

10.36 The Ballincollig Major Development Area (MDA), which is identified in Figure 10.3 below), is located approx. 7km to the west of Cork City Centre.

Figure 10.5: Extent of the Ballincollig MDA



10.37 The MDA covers an area of approx. 236Ha and its extent is generally defined by the:

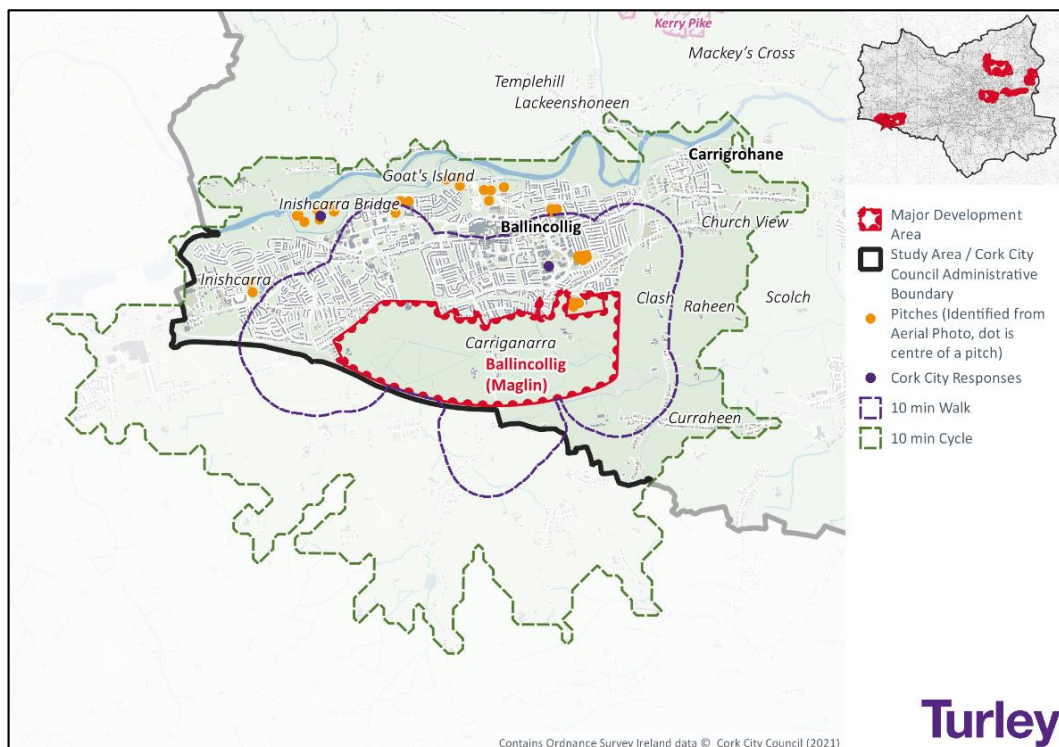
- N22 to the east;
- Woodberry Road to the west;
- Link Road/Sunningdale/Castle Road and existing developments including residential areas and a school to the north; and the
- N22 to the south.

- 10.38 This MDA is bisected by Maglin Road in a north-south direction and the Curraheen River runs through the eastern section of the MDA in a southeast-northwest direction and part of the western section of the site in a northeast-southwest direction towards the N22. As a result, parts of the MDA have been identified as flood zone B areas.
- 10.39 The area predominately comprises greenfield/agricultural lands with a number of residential (predominantly one-off housing) and farming/agricultural land uses located within the area.
- 10.40 The former Ballincollig Castle ruins are located within the western section of the MDA and Healy's Honey is located to the west of Maglin Road near the southern boundary of the MDA.
- 10.41 There are a number of mature hedgerows and trees located within the area but views over the area are obtainable from the N22 to the south via gaps/breaks in the landscaping buffer.
- 10.42 The Ballincollig MDA has been identified as a major growth area within the overall Study Area which will accommodate up to 4,000 homes/11,000 residents. In addition, 4,000 to 8,000 jobs are expected to be delivered within the wider Ballincollig Local Area Plan area.

Existing Provision

- 10.43 Figure 10.6 identifies the extent of this MDA and includes a 10 minute walking and cycling buffer to identify the location of ARI within the MDA and within a reasonable walking and cycling distance from the MDA.

Figure 10.6: Location of ARI within and nearby the Ballincollig MDA



- 10.44 There is currently no ARI located within the proposed boundary for this MDA. However, it is noted that there is ARI provision located towards the northern area of Ballincollig within the 10-minute walk time catchment area. This ARI provision is centrally located at community sports clubs such as the Ballincollig Rugby Club.
- 10.45 There is limited indoor provision within the walking catchment area with only a few studio spaces available, typically located within an industrial park. Notwithstanding, it is noted that the cycle buffer (10 minutes) from this MDA encompasses all of the Ballincollig Town area which includes a variety of different ARI provision, such as grass pitches.
- 10.46 University College Cork's Curraheen Park and the Bishopstown Campus of the Munster Technological University (MTU) are located to the east just beyond the 10 minute cycling buffer of this MDA. These areas include high quality ARI and it is noted that the existing provision at MTU is to be supplemented with the delivery of an elite level/multi-purpose indoor arena and high-performance athletics centre being a joint venture between MTU and Athletic Ireland.
- 10.47 This large indoor athletics facility will complement the development of the new CIT Arena with the addition of indoor sprints, pole vault and jumps and associated facilities. The complete development will include a two-storey multi-purpose sports arena, located south of the existing outdoor Athletics Track and will comprise eight courts, fitness studios, a health and fitness facility, dressing rooms, seminar and social facilities.
- 10.48 The accessibility credentials of Curraheen Park and the Bishopstown Campus could be improved with the provision of additional active travel infrastructure such as a shared walking and cycling path from this MDA which could also link with the Curraheen Public Walk being a two-mile-long (3km) riverside walk.

Future Provision

- 10.49 This MDA is set to experience a significant increase in homes and residents which will require an in tandem planned increase in the provision of ARI.
- 10.50 In terms of sports-based pitches there will be a future need for 8 GAA sites, with at least 3 of these being designated for junior use. There will also be the need for 2 rugby pitches and 3 soccer pitches as well as one new sand or water based AGP for hockey use. This future provision can be located within one central site for the community to use in a multi-use/sport hub model.
- 10.51 This new multi-use/sport hub will require flood mitigation measures noting that the predominant current land use within the MDA is agricultural land. There may be an opportunity to develop this new hub in partnership with MTU, noting that its Bishopstown Campus is located to the east of Ballincollig. This hub could help MTU to provide essential ARI nearby its campus to provide for the needs of their growing student population.
- 10.52 Noting the close proximity of this MDA to the western part of the City, the inclusion of shared active travel paths (walking and cycling) should also be considered.

Suitable Areas for Zoning ARI

10.53 The approximate total area for the new future ARI provision would equate to 10 hectares to account for the required sports pitches, ancillary provision, car parking and access. Ideally this new provision should be located within the same parcel of land to allow for a partnership approach and dual/multi use.

Policy Recommendations

10.54 ARI provision for the Ballincollig MDA will be facilitated/supported by the following policies:

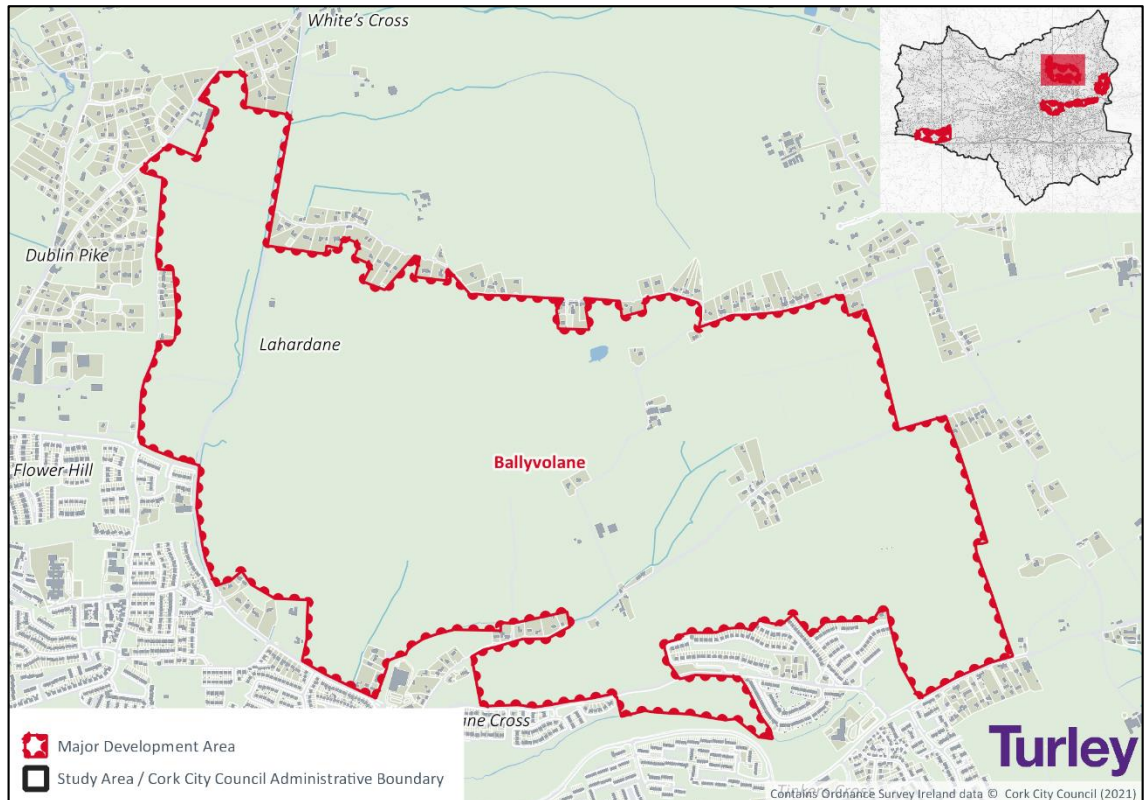
- Require a minimum of 15% open space in new residential developments.
- Seek the provision of ARI as part of new educational developments/campuses, either on or off site to meet the needs of future pupils and ensure that the ARI is designed and sited in a manner to enable dual usage outside of school hours to meet the needs of local residents/businesses.
- Require development of small scale ARI, such as linear parks, outdoor linear play/gym areas, MUGAs, etc, within larger developments and public realm improvement schemes.
- Secure the delivery of larger scale ARI within the Ballincollig MDA and/or wider Ballincollig Local Area Plan area to address existing and future ARI needs, such as playing pitches to the east of the N22.
- Encourage development of new park areas within those areas subject to flooding from the Curraheen River.
- Explore the potential to maximise utilisation of the Curraheen River corridor by:
 - anchoring the river as a focal point within new park areas;
 - developing a green/blueway along the river to connect with a wider network of active recreation and travel infrastructure; and
 - provide access to the Ballincollig Castle ruins from this green/blueway to form part of a wider active travel tourism route.
- Support investment in/improvement of existing and new park areas, such as Ballincollig Regional Park, to incorporate additional ARI provision.
- Explore potential of Curraheen River to support/accommodate water based to recreation such as canoeing/kayaking, fishing, etc.

Ballyvolane MDA

Profile

10.55 The Ballyvolane Major Development Area (MDA), which is identified in Figure 10.4 below), is located approx. 3km to the north east of Cork City Centre.

Figure 10.7: Extent of the Ballyvolane MDA



10.56 The MDA covers an area of approx. 302Ha and its extent is generally defined by:

- Field boundaries, residential developments and the Rathcooney Cemetery to the east;
- Ballincollie Road/L2980 and residential/commercial developments to the west;
- A rural road and residential developments to the north; and the
- Ballyvolane New Road(R614)/Rathcooney Road/Banduff Road /Old Youghal Road(R615) and residential/commercial/retail/community developments to the south.

10.57 A number of existing roads are located within the MDA with the Ballyhooly Road(R614) bisecting the western section of the MDA in a north-south direction and the Rathcooney Road bisecting the south eastern section of the MDA in a southwest-northeast direction.

10.58 The area predominately comprises greenfield/agricultural lands with a number of residential (mix of one-off and multi-unit housing developments), farming/agricultural, commercial/retail and community land uses located within/throughout/adjacent the area.

10.59 There are a number of mature hedgerows and trees located within the MDA and the topography of the area generally slopes to the south/south east with the most

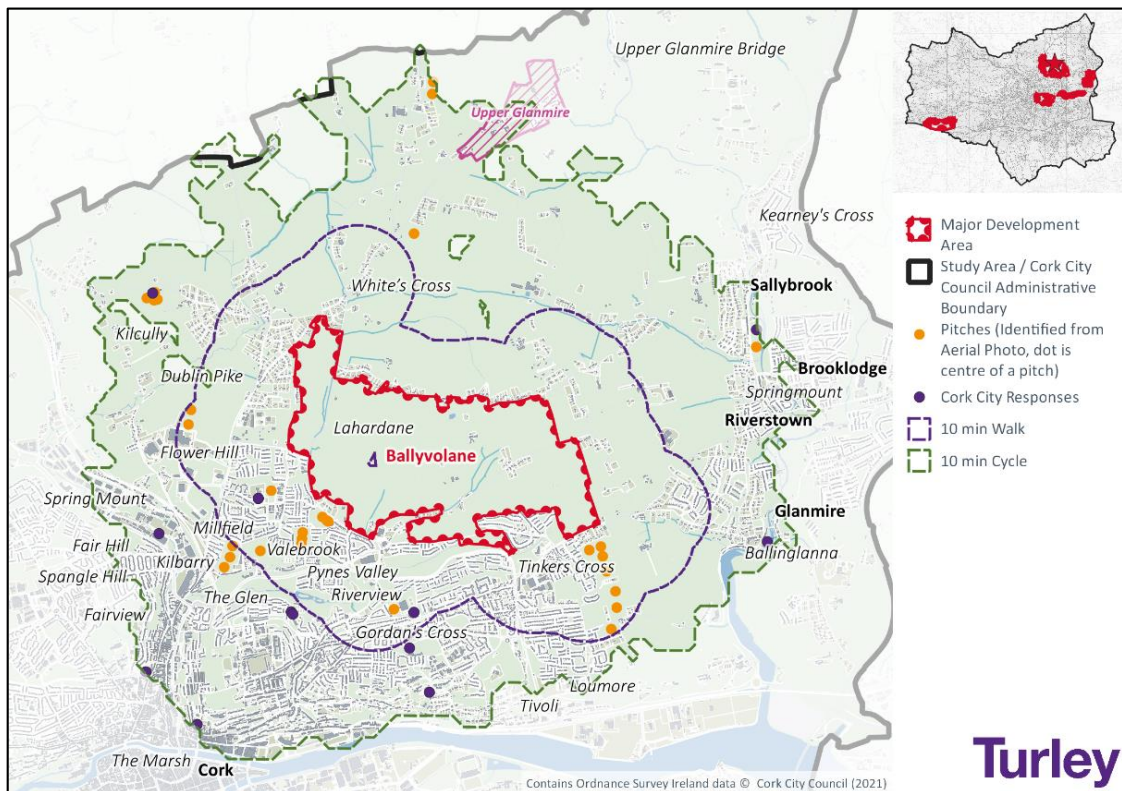
pronounced falls located along the eastern and southern sections of the MDA. The topography along the northern sections of the site appear to be relatively level.

- 10.60 The Ballyvolane MDA has been identified as a major growth area within the overall Study Area which will accommodate up to 3,500 homes/9,600 residents. In addition, 3,400 jobs are expected to be delivered within the wider Ballyvolane Local Area Plan area.

Existing Provision

- 10.61 Figure 10.8 identifies the extent of this MDA and includes a 10 minute walking and cycling buffer to identify the location of ARI within the MDA and within a reasonable walking and cycling distance from the MDA.

Figure 10.8: Location of ARI within and nearby the Ballyvolane MDA



- 10.62 The Ballyvolane MDA has no current ARI provision located within the extent of the MDA due to the land being predominantly used as arable or agricultural land. This MDA is located within the north eastern portion of the City, close to existing ARI within Glanmire and Mayfield.
- 10.63 The 10-minute walk and cycle buffers include significant parts of the City's northern built-up footprint as well as hinterland areas and some areas located outside of the Study Area.
- 10.64 This will enable a large proportion of the current population living within this remit to use the current provision of ARI. The MDA's eastern cycle buffer overlaps with a portion of the South Glanmire MDA's cycle buffer and so provision of ARI within this

MDA could also provide for the needs of residents/workers in the South Glanmire MDA area.

Future Provision

- 10.65 As with other MDA's within the locality, a significant population growth is anticipated along with the development of new housing areas which will lead to an increased need for new ARI. It is predicted that the MDA will increase by 3,500 homes (9,600 residents) and over 3,000 new jobs are to be delivered.
- 10.66 With the future provision being located on current agricultural land, there will be a need for accurate site assessments and topographical surveys to make the land suitable for sports or ARI provision.
- 10.67 If the topography permits, there is likely to be a need for the following additional sports pitches within this MDA: 6 more GAA pitches, 3 soccer pitches, 2 rugby union pitches, 1 cricket square and a hockey based AGP. These should be located within close proximity to the new and existing housing developments to make them accessible.
- 10.68 Due to this population increase there will also be a need for further ARI in terms of indoor provision which can equate to health & fitness suites, swimming pools and a leisure centre. A robust feasibility study should be undertaken to determine the required facility mix.

Suitable Areas for Zoning ARI

- 10.69 The area required to meet the future ARI provision for this MDA is likely to be up to 10 hectares, which takes into account the new ARI provision, car parking, ancillary need and accessibility. This should be located close to existing and new housing developments with links to active travel walkways or public transport.

Policy Recommendations

- 10.70 ARI provision for the Ballyvolane MDA will be facilitated/supported by the following policies:
- Require a minimum of 15% open space in new residential developments.
 - Seek the provision of ARI as part of new educational developments/campuses, either on or off site to meet the needs of future pupils and ensure that the ARI is designed and sited in a manner to enable dual usage outside of school hours to meet the needs of local residents/businesses.
 - Support investment in new park areas, such as the proposed new North East Regional/City Park.
 - Secure the delivery of larger scale ARI within the Ballyvolane MDA, wider Ballyvolane Local Area Plan area or in off-site locations, such as playing pitches within the proposed new North East Regional/City Park, to address existing and future ARI needs.

- Require development of small scale ARI, such as linear parks, outdoor linear play/gym areas, MUGAs, etc, within larger developments and public realm improvement schemes.
- Promote investment in/improvement of existing footpaths/cycle ways to enhance usage and to form part of a wider urban network of active recreation and travel infrastructure.

South Glanmire MDA

Profile

10.71 The South Glanmire Major Development Area (MDA), which is identified in Figure 10.5 below), is located approx. 5km to the east/north east of Cork City Centre.

Figure 10.9: Extent of the South Glanmire MDA



10.72 The MDA covers an area of approx. 91Ha and its extent is generally defined by:

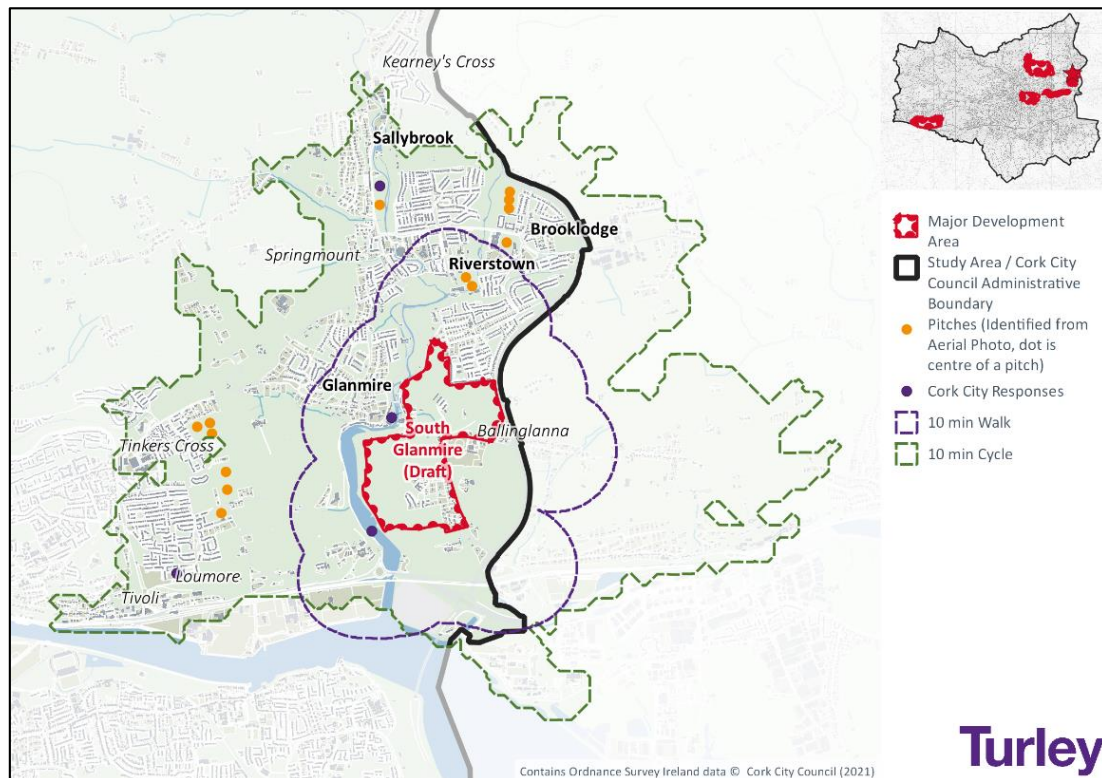
- L2998 (The Cootages) and the M8 to the east;
- Glashaboy River, wooded areas, residential development and East Cliff Road to the west;
- Residential neighbourhoods to the north; and the
- Woodlane, field boundaries/agricultural lands and wooded/planted areas to the south.

- 10.73 The L2998 bisects the MDA in an east-west direction creating two a distinct northern and southern sub-area within the MDA.
- 10.74 The southern section of the MDA predominately comprises greenfield/agricultural lands and a number of residential developments with a mix of one-off and multi-unit housing.
- 10.75 The northern section of the MDA is the subject of a large residential development that was approved by An Bord Pleanála in 2018 with the following description:
- ‘10 year permission for demolition of existing dwelling house and farm buildings and construction of 608 no. residential units, crèche, conversion of former coach house to provide retail/professional services, reservation of 1.2ha site for 16 classroom school, road improvements and associated site works’.
- 10.76 The above-mentioned development is currently under construction. Noting this, future ARI provision is likely to be provided within the southern section of the MDA which has been earmarked for circa 400 new homes, or outside of the MDA.

Existing Provision

- 10.77 Figure 10.10 identifies the extent of this MDA and includes a 10 minute walking and cycling buffer to identify the location of ARI within the MDA and within a reasonable walking and cycling distance from the MDA.

Figure 10.10: Location of ARI within and nearby the South Glanmire MDA



- 10.78 Within the MDA of South Glanmire there is currently a severe lack of available ARI in terms of provision to the local community. There are only 5 available sites

within/nearby a 10-minute walk time of the MDA, which are currently at capacity as they are local GAA and Soccer clubs.

- 10.79 The lack of existing ARI facilities is also reflected within the consultation and survey findings, outlined previously within the Study, by a number of local clubs within a walk time of this MDA which reinforce the requirement for additional ARI.

Future Provision

- 10.80 The predicted population growth within this MDA is expected to incorporate an additional 5,000 new residents which will require additional ARI provision to cater for this new community.
- 10.81 In terms of pitch based sport needs, a further 4 GAA pitches, 2 soccer pitches, 2 rugby pitches and an additional hockey and cricket field will likely be required. There will also be a need for an additional indoor facility in the form of a leisure development.

Suitable Areas for Zoning ARI

- 10.82 The suitable areas for future development will be dependent on topographical and additional surveys to account for slope and flooding issues.

Policy Recommendations

- 10.83 ARI provision for the South Glanmire MDA will be facilitated/supported by the following policies:
- Require a minimum of 15% open space in new residential developments.
 - Seek the provision of ARI as part of new educational developments/campuses, either on or off site to meet the needs of future pupils and ensure that the ARI is designed and sited in a manner to enable dual usage outside of school hours to meet the needs of local residents/businesses.
 - Support investment in new park areas, such as the proposed new North East Regional/City Park to the west of this MDA.
 - Secure the delivery of larger scale ARI within the South Glanmire MDA or in off-site locations, such as playing pitches within the proposed new North East Regional/City Park or to the lands to the east of the L2998, to address existing and future ARI needs.
 - Require development of small scale ARI, such as linear parks, outdoor linear play/gym areas, MUGAs, etc, within larger developments and public realm improvement schemes.
 - Promote investment in/improvement of existing footpaths/cycle ways to enhance usage and to form part of a wider urban network of active recreation and travel infrastructure.

11. How Can Cork City Council Deliver

How can CCC Protect, Enhance and Increase ARI

11.1 We set out below a number of policy recommendations which can help to protect, enhance and increase ARI within the Study Area.

Delivery ID	Policy Recommendations for Implementation
1	Consult with the target groups CCC want to work with to develop a better understanding of the barriers they face in terms of access and participation, such as working closely with Cork Sports Partnership and Cork Sport 2040 group. CCC should ensure that their infrastructure reduces these barriers and offers the relevant programs.
2	Be aware of, and signpost people to the wide range of activities/facilities across the city and region.
3	Where gaps in provision exist, offer formal and informal outreach activities and taster sessions in popular venues at the heart of local communities such as community centres, youth clubs, parks, places of worship, day centres etc
4	Offer concessions and subsidised activities where cost is known to be a barrier to participation, these can be in conjunction with current community or school schemes.
5	Capture appropriate membership/usage data to help CCC record participation/ throughput by priority groups and set targets to pro-actively increase them year on year.
6	Work with partners from health, social care, youth services and/or other relevant sectors/services to provide a joined-up offer for target groups which includes sport and active recreation
7	Ensure marketing messages are simple, targeted, accessible and available via appropriate channels
8	Encourage formal and informal participation in sport and active recreation as early in life as possible
9	Develop and formalise links between school, college or university and accredited local sports clubs, coaches and facility operators to maximise the opportunities available to the student body
10	Develop ways of measuring the impact of your projects on wider social outcomes, this can be in combination with initiatives developed through the Departments of Public Health.

How can ARI be embedded?

- 11.2 In terms of embedding ARI, we note that streets and roads typically make up three quarters of public spaces in most metropolitan cities. Therefore, their appearance and functionality have a significant impact on the lives of people and communities. These active strategies and infrastructure elements should be embedded within the overall Development Plan of the City and be incorporated into daily activities.
- 11.3 Many local authorities have adopted a range of strategies to increase walking in their neighbourhoods. Evidence on links between walking and the physical environment provide some clear messages for planners. It suggests that people walk more in places with mixed land use (such as retail and housing), higher population densities and highly connected street layouts.
- 11.4 Various external studies have studied aspects of increasing cycling these approaches include:
- Intensive intervention with individuals
 - Individualised marketing to households
 - Improving infrastructure for cycling and
 - Multifaceted town level or city level programmes
- 11.5 People living in rural areas and villages may find it as hard to be physically active as people in towns and cities. Difficulties in safely accessing many services by walking, cycling, or by public transport, can pose a real challenge in some rural areas.
- 11.6 A lack of pavements or cycle ways on busy rural roads can discourage use of these travel modes even when moving between towns and settlements not too far apart. A challenge for planners is to consider how access can be improved, and how the needs of walkers and cyclists can be taken into account in the design and planning of the rural road network.
- 11.7 One specific example which promotes physical activity is allowing bicycles on buses, so people can get from one town or village to another and then use their bikes to get around at their destination point.
- 11.8 In addition to the above recommendations with respect to transport infrastructure, there is also the opportunity to further embed ARI within the Study Area by making better use of/improving the network of shared spaces with schools and Green Infrastructure.
- 11.9 Recommendations on how this can be achieved are set out in the preceding Stakeholder Engagement and Comparative Analysis sections of the Study. Indeed, the findings and recommendations from these Sections have informed our planning policy recommendations in Section 12.

Interrelationship of Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 11.10 There is obvious synergy and connection between the active infrastructure study and the green and blue infrastructure study, which is currently being drafted. A typical green and blue infrastructure study can be defined as carefully planning network of high quality natural and semi-natural assets and habitat types of green and blue spaces. This also involves strategically planned environmental features that maintain and delivers ecosystems services.
- 11.11 These green and blue studies typically offer multi-functional benefits integral to the health and wellbeing of communities and to the ecology and economy of a region. Incorporated within this is the development of active infrastructure such as outdoor sports facilities, playing pitches, parks/open spaces and other active amenities.
- 11.12 One of the biggest crossovers between the strategies would be the connectivity between active infrastructure facilities and greenways / parks / open spaces via active travel and greenway links. These green active travel routes can serve as an attractive option for members of the community to travel between sites and locations whilst reducing the overall carbon footprint and reduce the reliance on cars.
- 11.13 Green active travel routes create attractive places and journeys for people and improve the environment. The deliberate choice to combine natural planting or water systems together with paths for people on foot or bike delivers a range of benefits. From environmental improvements such as increased habitat and biodiversity to improved health and wellbeing for people.
- 11.14 Across the active infrastructure study and the green / blue study there are a number of common themes that can be developed in unison for a combined approach:
- Partnership Working – is highly beneficial and helps ensure successful delivery. Organisations, landowners and other stakeholders are stronger working together around a common vision and can realise efficiencies in mutually desirable outcomes.
 - Engagement with local communities – This helps build feelings of ownership of local green active travel routes, increases their use by local people, and offers volunteers opportunities as part of ongoing management of the routes.
 - Green surroundings make travel more enjoyable to active destinations - Often resulting in their preferential use of green active travel routes over more direct routes. This also has health and well-being benefits
 - Safe environment to access infrastructure – green / blue active travel routes often provide an alternative to busy on-road routes, encouraging feelings of safety and therefore a more diverse range of users (including those new to cycling or with children)
 - Retrofitting or newly planned approaches - Whether retrofitting new or enhanced green infrastructure to existing active travel routes, adding new

cycle / walking / blue paths to existing greenspace, or newly planning both together from the start as part of a deliberate combined approach

- 11.15** This active travel pathway and active infrastructure is evident in Map 5 (as referenced within Section 6 of this Study) showing the G&B Infrastructure Strategy overlay with the location of ARI. These existing green corridors can be extended and enhanced within Cork to connect population centres such as West of Cork, close to MTU campuses and Ballincollig, which will also help to link up small hub sites of active facilities to other areas.
- 11.16** Other examples of these active greenways can also be seen to the west of cork, linking up the City Centre to Glanmire, which is also a growth area. Further blue initiatives within the waterfront or waterways should be undertaken with further consultation with the organisations of sport and community groups.

Opportunity for Green Belts

- 11.17 The 'Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework' (NPF) states that *'Green belts and green spaces in our cities, towns and villages play an integral role as part of the fabric of our settlements, either through their use for community recreation and amenity purposes, supporting biodiversity or as a natural delineation of the settlement itself, forming the interface between urban and rural areas'*.
- 11.18 The NPF also advises that Green Belts adjoining our urban areas also fulfil a strategic purpose, as a potential asset for future/planned development as an urban extension, particularly at a city scale. In addition to this, green spaces and parks are identified as having a role in determining the quality of life in, and sustainability of, our settlements.
- 11.19 Consequently, National Policy Objective 62 of the NPF recommends that planning authorities should *'Identify and strengthen the value of greenbelts and green spaces at a regional and city scale, to enable enhanced connectivity to wider strategic networks, prevent coalescence of settlements and to allow for the long-term strategic expansion of urban areas'*.
- 11.20 Policy Objective 17 of the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan¹³ is also important to note as it confirms that:

*'It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and **Greenbelt Strategy**. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of **parks, recreation and high quality public open space** in the Cork Metropolitan Area' (our emphasis).*

- 11.21 Policy Objective 17 also outlines that such a Strategy may include, inter alia:

- *'a. An enhanced network of regional scaled parks in Metropolitan Cork and invest in upgraded facilities including Tramore Valley Park, Marina Park, Bishop Lucey Park Redevelopment, Northwest Regional Park, Riverside Public Walk (Lee Field*

¹³ As contained in the Southern Regional Assembly - Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032

to the Marina). Lee Fields Walk/Cycle extension to Ballincollig, Lough Redevelopment, Tivoli Docks Park, neighbourhood parks and public parks in the Metropolitan Towns.

- 11.22 It is noted that Cork City is undertaking a Green and Blue Infrastructure Study in tandem with this ARI Study which will likely provide detailed recommendations with respect to Green Belts.
- 11.23 We note that investment in ARI, particularly outdoor grassed facilities/pitches, can provide additional rationale and purpose for the designation of Green Belts and green spaces in the Study Area which can help to support biodiversity, delineate settlements and contribute to additional resilience with respect to drainage/flooding and climate change strategies/initiatives.
- 11.24 The Study Team acknowledges the importance of Green Belts and that they can provide opportunities for the provision of additional ARI, particularly with respect to pitch based sports.
- 11.25 However, an intrinsic characteristic of Green Belts is their 'openness' and 'greenness' so any provision of ARI within these designated areas will need to be designed in a manner that is respectful to, and does not jeopardise, the 'openness' and 'greenness' of the Green Belt or encourage urban sprawl.

Climate Change

- 11.26 We set out principles below which can be applied to help respond to climate change, create sustainable communities and drive industry innovation across the sector.
- 11.27 Sustainability plays a key role in the design and management of ARI. Promoting sustainability can help to drive down running costs and make a real contribution in the battle against climate change. It is important to embrace environmental sustainability at the outset of the design process and to treat it as a vital consideration throughout.
- 11.28 We know sport and physical activity is essential to physical and mental wellbeing, and part of encouraging and enabling physical activity is about making positive choices – choosing to get around without using polluting vehicles, improving the accessibility, permeability and connectivity of neighbourhoods by foot and/or by bike and ensuring that routes/linkages are direct and safe.
- 11.29 Applying key concepts such as active design can dramatically reduce the carbon footprint of new projects and encourage more active lifestyles within the Study Area. Walking, running and cycling are some of the easiest ways for people to stay active and the benefits of a walkable community are recognised in planning and design literature.
- 11.30 Local facilities such as shops, schools and open spaces bring residents together, reinforce communities and reduce reliance on private transport. However, the potential for walking and cycling is affected by distance, the nature and quality of a route are important perceptions of safety and security.

- 11.31 It is possible to design communities and new facilities with active design principles to allow for a co-ordinated and holistic approach with respect to active infrastructure.
- 11.32 For example, when constructing new sport facilities, it is important to implement practical measures to make these facilities more comfortable, make more efficient use of energy and other resources.
- 11.33 The bullet points below highlight a possible framework to develop a robust strategy for any facility:
- Sustainability Strategy – Identify key issues and set out the vision and target outcomes.
 - Reduce Energy Use – Reduce energy consumption as the first measure to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.
 - Passive Design – Building orientation and placement on site is critical to achieving net zero targets.
 - Fabric Efficiency – Maximise the building fabric and glazing performance.
 - Efficient Systems – Invest in appropriate energy-efficient products and logistics.
 - On-site Renewables – Incorporate low and zero carbon (LZC) technologies to produce energy on site.
 - Off-Site Renewables – Only use energy providers who use renewable energy.
 - Carbon Offsets – If needed, offset remaining carbon by buying carbon credits.

Retrofitting ARI

- 11.34 In addition to the foregoing, we set out below a set of recommendations and actions which can help to inform/improve the retrofitting of existing ARI within the Study Area.
- 11.35 In the first instance, active recreation organisations/owners should seek advice from Cork City's Planning Department to determine if planning permission is required for any proposed retrofitting or improvements to their ARI.

Car Parking and Access

- 11.36 If the intention is to refurbish or extend the existing indoor infrastructure, improvements to car parking may be needed to cater for the increased numbers of members and visitors.
- 11.37 The need for overflow car parking for special events or significant match days should also be considered. Provision should be made for safe access across and around the car park and an appropriate quantum of parking should be designated as accessible parking bays.

Pedestrians

- 11.38 Separate routes for pedestrians and vehicles should be provided. Surfaces for pedestrian use should be smooth and even, and suitable for mobility scooters and wheelchairs.

Cyclists

- 11.39 Access roads should be wide enough for cyclists and passing traffic. It is important to discourage cyclists from using pavements or pedestrian areas. Dry, secure bicycle parking facilities should be provided close to the entrance and should not be hidden from public view.

Building and Ancillary Improvements

- 11.40 We set out below a number of recommendations which relate specifically to existing active recreation buildings:

Internal Space

- 11.41 Basic cosmetic changes and improvements to comfort will make the ancillary and indoor provision space a more attractive area to be which can help to retain membership and attract new members.
- 11.42 The layout of the existing clubhouses should be carefully considered and an assessment made in terms of how well it functions. Some minor internal adjustments can have a big impact. For example, increasing the number of changing rooms can enable more matches to be played at peak times, potentially increasing member numbers.

Draught Prevention

- 11.43 Draught-proofing is one of the cheapest and most efficient ways to save energy and money in any type of building.
- 11.44 By sealing gaps and preventing draughts, warm air will be contained and therefore less energy will be needed to heat the building. The most common place for gaps to occur are around poorly fitting doors and windows, but gaps can also occur around loft hatches, electrical fittings or pipework leading to the outside. Draught stripping is cheap and easy to install to block such draughts

Insulation

- 11.45 Insulation reduces heat loss or gain through the walls, roof and windows making temperature control more economical. By maximising the performance of the building fabric, the need for additional energy from gas or electricity to heat or cool the building is minimised. Improving the building fabric is a very effective way to reduce energy consumption
- 11.46 Existing buildings may be draughty and have very little insulation. It is possible to insulate existing floors, walls, windows and roofs and there are various ways to improve these elements depending on the type of construction of the existing building. However, careful positioning of a vapour barriers, detailing and workmanship is required.

- Cavity Wall Insulation: For masonry walls with a cavity at least 50 mm wide, a simple way to insulate is to put insulation into the cavity:
 - Cavity wall insulation is blown into the cavity from the outside of the building.
 - Cavity wall insulation can be made out of mineral wool, beads or granules or foamed insulants.
 - If your walls are exposed to driving rain or you have any areas of damp in your building, this type of insulation is not recommended.
- Internal Solid Wall Insulation: For buildings with solid walls that do not need upgrading on the outside, this is done by fitting rigid insulation boards to the internal face of the external walls:
 - Generally cheaper to install than external wall insulation.
 - Will slightly reduce the floor area of any rooms in which it is applied.
 - It is disruptive but can be done room by room.
 - Requires skirting boards, door frames, pipes, electrical cables and sockets to be removed and reattached.
- External Solid Wall Insulation: For buildings with solid walls that do need upgrading on the outside, this involves fixing a layer of rigid insulation boards to the external surface of the external walls and then covering it with a special type of render or cladding.
 - There are some products where the cladding is combined with the insulation board to make the installation process simpler.
 - Can be applied without disruption to the inside of the building.
 - Avoids reducing internal floor area.
 - Potential need to adjust or replace rainwater fixtures, soffits and treatment to reveals/openings.
 - Improves the weatherproofing and sound resistance • Increases the life of the walls by protecting the brickwork.
 - Renews the external appearance. However, planning permission will be needed.

Improving Thermal Efficiency in Roofs

11.47 In terms of a Warm Roof:

- A 'Warm Roof' is where insulation is applied to the underside of, or set within, the roofing structure depth depending on space available and satisfying any ventilation requirements.
- A warm roof has condensation risks at the roof level where warm air can move into the insulation and form condensation when it meets the cold air.
- The recognised way of preventing this is to install a vapour control layer on the warm side of the insulation, which limits the amount of water vapour that can enter the insulation layer from the building.
- The vapour control layer must be continuous, well-sealed at joints and placed behind services, such as electrical cables, to avoid puncturing.
- Care should be taken not to puncture the vapour control layer during roof maintenance.

11.48 In terms of a Cold Roof:

- A 'Cold Roof' is where the insulation is laid above the ceiling in the loft. The roof space is therefore above the insulation and is therefore 'cold'.
- A cold roof solution is generally cheaper but again it should be ensured that the loft space is well ventilated to avoid condensation.
- Condensation can occur when warm wet air meets surfaces in the cold roof space.
- The condensation risk is increased where there is a lot of water vapour from showers or from the kitchen and this water vapour passes into the cold roof space and forms water droplets on cold surfaces.
- Ventilating roof spaces and providing adequate ventilation and extract to shower and kitchen areas reduce such condensation risks.

11.49 In terms of a 'Flat Roof':

- A flat roof should preferably be insulated from above the waterproof layer.
- A layer of rigid insulation board can be added either on top of the roof's waterproof layer or directly on top of the timber roof surface with a new weather proof layer on top of the insulation. In either case moisture from inside must be prevented from entering the insulation and the risk of interstitial condensation.
- Ideally this should be done when the roof covering is being installed or being replaced. It is not recommended to insulate a flat roof from beneath as this can lead to condensation problems.

Improving Thermal Efficiency in Windows

- 11.50 In the case of windows that are single glazed, consider replacement with double (or triple) glazing. Although installation costs are high, payback can be significant after several years.
- 11.51 The double glazing contains a void (air or gas) that forms an insulating barrier that keeps heat in. This will make the building warmer, quieter and more energy efficient. The cost of secondary glazing or replacement double-glazed panes is generally less than full replacement with new proprietary double glazed units.
- 11.52 If double glazing is not an option, curtains lined with heavy material can reduce heat loss from the room through the window and limit draughts.
- 11.53 The recent rises in energy prices and improvements in technology make the cost benefits more favourable than in the past. For clubhouses, upgrading single glazing to the latest high performance double (or triple) glazing (low-emissivity glass, gas-filled sealed units with warm-edge spacers) will cut heating bills significantly and potentially give a pay-back

Improving Thermal Efficiency in Floors

- 11.54 Older buildings are likely to have suspended timber floors. Timber floors can be insulated by lifting the floorboards and laying mineral wool insulation supported by netting between the joists. Ensure air bricks and sub floor ventilation is not blocked. Some clubhouses will have a ground floor made of solid concrete. A layer of rigid insulation can be laid on top of an existing floor, but be mindful of doors skirtings pipes etc which may need to be refitted.
- 11.55 Having a timber floor insulated professionally, including filling the gaps between the floorboards and around the skirting, depends on the size and shape of the room and the insulation material used. The insulation will make the room feel warmer in the winter and reduce heating bills.

12. Active Recreation Infrastructure - Planning Policy Objectives

12.1 The following recommendations have been informed by the findings, conclusions and recommendations from the preceding sections of this Study.

12.2 Cork City Council should seek to ensure that all communities are supported by a range of ARI that is fit for purpose, accessible to all and adaptable to meet future needs as well as being connected with and complemented by a wider network of high quality open spaces, parks and active travel greenways/blueways.

12.3 To achieve this, we recommend that the following Policy Objectives be incorporated into the relevant chapter of the emerging Draft Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028:

- **Objective 1:** To protect and retain the range and quality of existing active recreation infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council by applying a presumption against the loss of land zoned Active Recreation Infrastructure to other forms of development.
- **Objective 2:** To support the improvement of existing, and the provision of new, Active Recreation Infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council to meet current and future growth needs.
- **Objective 3:** To support the improvement of existing, and the provision of new, Active Recreation Infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council that incorporates universal design principles to ensure accessibility for all ages and abilities and which is designed in a manner to reduce anti-social behaviour.
- **Objective 4:** To support the improvement of existing, and the provision of new, Active Recreation Infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council that is accessible by sustainable and active travel/transport means such as walking, cycling and public transport.
- **Objective 5:** To support the improvement of existing, and the provision of new, Active Recreation Infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council that aligns with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- **Objective 6:** To work in partnership with local communities, recreation/sports groups and private parties to deliver new and/or improved Active Recreation Infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council.
- **Objective 7:** To support local communities, recreation/sports clubs and private parties in developing Active Recreation Infrastructure for minority/alternative sports within the administrative area of Cork City Council by providing indoor and outdoor spaces for the pursuance of these activities.

- **Objective 8:** Promote the multi-use of public and private indoor and outdoor Active Recreation Infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council to accommodate a diverse range of recreational needs and ensure maximum utilisation of existing infrastructure.
- **Objective 9 –** To develop a robust and bespoke feasibility study to examine the development of multi-use/sport hub sites within the administrative area of Cork City Council in collaboration with the national governing bodies of sport.
- **Objective 10 –** To support community clubs and organisations through the capital grant funding process to help improve existing, and deliver new, Active Recreation Infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council.
- **Objective 11 –** To support clubs and organisations in the development of inclusive strategies and improving participation in key demographic groups.
- **Objective 12 –** To develop an artificial grass pitch strategy to identify gaps in current provision within the administrative area of Cork City Council and predict future demand.
- **Objective 13:** To zone lands at Lota/Lotamore as open space to support the development of a regional park to the north east of Cork City.
- **Objective 14:** To zone the lands at Hollyhill as open space to support the development of a regional park to the north west of Cork City.
- **Objective 15:** To support the development of Management Plans for current and future parks within the administrative area of Cork City Council to maximise their active recreation credentials while also ensuring the retention, and where possible, the improvement of their natural setting and biodiversity credentials.
- **Objective 16:** To support and facilitate the provision of indoor and outdoor Active Recreation Infrastructure in larger parks within the administrative area of Cork City Council to cater for all age groups and abilities.
- **Objective 17:** To support the development of an integrated and connected network of Active Recreation Infrastructure, Green and Blue Infrastructure and shared walking/cycling paths within the administrative area of Cork City Council.
- **Objective 18:** To require new residential developments (over 10 units) and other major developments to positively contribute to Active Recreation Infrastructure within the administrative area of Cork City Council by ensuring that new Active Recreation Infrastructure forms an integral part of proposed open spaces within the site or by providing financial contributions to enhance existing, or deliver new, Active Recreation Infrastructure in the area.
- **Objective 19:** To commission a 'River Use and Management Plan' to:
 - examine the commercial and recreational potential of the River Lee and Upper Harbour area for all users (i.e. general public, visitors and tourists);

- identify essential/critical infrastructure gaps and an appropriate location for the delivery of this infrastructure in partnership with key stakeholders and in accordance with national/international best practice/standards, such as a new public slipway(s), pontoon(s) and additional facilities (e.g. club house(s), changing area(s), sheltered area(s), etc);
- outline a clear strategy for the management and ongoing maintenance of the navigable waterways in the City subject to relevant environmental, social and economic considerations; and
- outline a clear strategy for achieving optimal active and passive recreational usage of the City's waterways subject to relevant environmental, social and economic considerations.

13. Conclusion and Recommendation

- 13.1 This Study seeks to provide Cork City Council with an up-to-date understanding of the quantity and quality of existing Active Recreation Infrastructure (ARI) within its recently enlarged administrative boundary and to identify the current and future ARI needs of the City up to 2028 and to 2040.
- 13.2 The main workstreams undertaken as part of, and to inform, the Study include: desktop research and analysis; detailed stakeholder audit; audit of existing ARI in the Study Area by digital means via an Online Survey; one-to-one engagement with key stakeholders; and comparative analysis of Cork City with Bristol City and South Dublin.
- 13.3 There is clear national, regional and local planning policy support for the protection/maintenance/promotion/improvement of, and investment in, existing and new ARI, which is aligned with, and reinforced by, the relevant body of international, national/regional and local recreation, sport and health plans/strategies/policies.
- 13.4 Indeed, the extant Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 contains a clear intention to provide appropriate levels of ARI for the residents of the City. It is not surprising that significant improvements to ARI have been made over the last 10 years and that a number of new planned investments in ARI have also been identified.
- 13.5 Noting Cork City's ambitious growth plans up to 2040, it is imperative that the emerging Draft Plan, and subsequent plans, continue to provide policy support for the improvement of, and investment in ARI to ensure that future provision aligns with the projected growth levels. This is particularly evident noting that the majority of ARI organisations respondents to the Online Survey Audit: consider that the current level of ARI within the Study Area is not meeting the needs of the organisations; and expect a significant growth in membership numbers over the next six years.
- 13.6 We note that the Study Area contains a number of opportunities to deliver new ARI, particularly within the urban footprint of the City, the new Major Development Areas and the proposed new Regional Park areas. Cork City's core is benefitted by enhanced levels of accessibility but the availability of space is a challenge, whereas the City's suburban and hinterland areas benefit from availability of space but with reduced levels of accessibility.
- 13.7 This Study has identified a variety of challenges and opportunities with respect to ARI provision within the Study Area and a number of recommendations have been made on a range of ARI related topics/strategic themes.
- 13.8 Importantly, a set of planning policy objectives has been outlined and a number of priorities set, including, but not exclusive to, the need to: provide additional all weather pitches; strengthen relationships with active recreation bodies/organisations and schools to maximise utilisation of existing ARI; explore potential of delivering multi-use/sport hubs; ensure ARI is universally accessible to all users; ensure ARI is adaptable and flexible to accommodate as many sports as possible; and undertake relevant further analysis, such as a feasibility study for water based ARI.

Appendix 1: Study Brief

The Cork City Active Recreation Study comprises the following four stages:

- Stage 1: Project Inception
- Stage 2: Desktop Investigation, Surveys, Consultation and Mapping
- Stage 3: Draft Report
- Stage 4: Final Report

The specific requirements from each stage as required by the tender Brief are outlined below

Stage 1 - Project Inception

The Consultant shall undertake a project inception meeting/workshop with a Working Group at Cork City Council (CCC) to agree the necessary steps in the delivery of Stage 1 of the study which shall include, but not be limited by, the following:

- Agreement of the project scope, including the project methodology and the step by step guide for delivering the study in accordance with the programme of delivery set out within this tender. (Please refer to the scope of requirements set out within this tender).
- A policy brief that summaries and responds to requirements set out in the NPF 2040 and Southern RSES 2031 and other key national guidance in relation to Active Recreation planning and delivery.
- Establish a list of the ready availability sources, such as survey works, investigations and relevant good practice examples of recreation assets. Where Cork City Council has relevant sources of information, they will make these available.

Stage 2 -Desktop Investigation, Surveys, Consultation and Mapping

- This stage will include a review of existing documents, looking at good practice from elsewhere, engaging with stakeholders and carrying out an audit of existing facilities and mapping the findings. Where Cork City Council has relevant sources of information, they will make it available to the consultant.
- Review existing documents and policy prepared by Cork City Council and other statutory bodies. Guidance can be taken from Chapter 11 of the Cork City Development Plan 2015 – 2021. Also guidance should be made to the Cork City Council Climate Action Plan 2019 and the Cork City Heritage Plan 2015 – 2020.
- Carry out an audit and review of existing recreational facilities within the City, including water based activities.
- Identify how active the population of Cork is in recreation and benchmark against other comparative cities with similar populations and facilities.

- The audit will identify opportunities and deficiencies in the current levels of provision in terms of active recreational facilities at a citywide level, district level, neighbourhood level and local level benchmarked against international good practice.
- Identify the active recreational needs in the existing City and the new major development areas, e.g. Docklands including the river, the Maglin in Ballincollig, North Environs and South Environs of the City. There is a need to acknowledge the existing asset context, the projected population growth and proposed options for recreational infrastructure provision in terms of location, clustering and providers.
- Undertake focused consultation with key Cork City Council and key external stakeholders setting the aims of the strategy and requesting their input on how best to inform the process within an agreed format. Key stakeholders include the following;
 - Cork City Council
 - Cork County Council
 - Governing Sports Bodies
 - Cork Sports Partnership
 - Cork Sports 2040
 - Voluntary and Community Groups
 - Office of Public Works
 - National Parks and Wildlife Service
 - Port of Cork
 - Climate Action Regional Office
 - Southern Regional Assembly
- Carry out all baseline mapping needed to set out a proposed strategically planned network of recreation facilities for Cork City within or immediately adjacent to the Cork City boundary. This map will distinguish areas within the city as follows: City Centre, City Suburbs and City Hinterland areas.
- The Study should include an audit of water based activities and provision of access to the water should be prepared in tandem with current users on the river, for example the new Port of Cork Marina at the Custom House, Meitheal Mara, Shandon Boat Club and Naomhoga Chorcaí, Lee Rowing Club, Cork Boat Club, Blackrock Sailing Club and other passive users. All activities should complement the safeguarding of the Cork Harbour SPA and SAC.
- Investigate the opportunity presented by greenbelts in the provision of appropriate lands for suitable recreation and amenity purposes.
- Identifying State lands that would be suitable for recreational purposes.
- Submit a summary report of the desktop investigation (including any associated draft maps and GIS files) to Cork City Council.
- The Study will in parallel with the Green and Blue Infrastructure Study support the promotion of more sustainable forms of travel and activity - based recreation.

Stage 3 - Draft Report

Informed by the Audit the consultants shall provide:

- A detailed analysis to identify recreational needs (informed by the audit, site visits, other surveys, desktop surveys, character assessments, mapping data, and policy reviews) within the city as identified in Stage 1;
- Carry out and produce a detailed analysis of the distribution and condition of the existing sports facilities and grounds in the City;
- Make recommendations based on international best practice and precedents for the location of new Recreation facilities in the City (brownfield and greenfield sites) in particular in the new major development areas in the City.
- Identify where Recreation Infrastructure and Green and Blue Infrastructure assets overlap and complement each other within Cork City;
- Make policy recommendations for the City Development Plan in relation to the provision, delivery, and management of recreation space. This analysis should highlight the benefits of investing in Sport.
- A detailed set of recommendations including policies, objectives, and actions that will inform the new City Development Plan and which will protect, enhance, and further develop the active recreational infrastructure network within the City.
- Engage in workshops with stakeholders and city residents.

Stage 4 - Final Report

The final output of the study will be a Report with information and graphics to illustrate existing and proposed active recreational infrastructure in Cork and shall be completed and presented before the Draft City Development Plan goes to Council in March 2021. Timeframes may vary for delivery of the Project. The Report shall contain;

- A critical review of international, national, and regional good practice and a review of the policy of the current City Development Plan and link to specific recommendations on policies for the new City Development Plan (2022 - 2028).
- A description of engagement carried out, a summary of feedback and outcomes, and the recommendations relating to same.
- Spatial representation (Mapping) of the findings which identify recreational assets.
- A detailed set of recommendations including policies, objectives, and actions that will inform the new City Development Plan and which will protect, enhance, and further develop the active recreational infrastructure network within the city.
- Set out an implementation plan for the delivery of the Study. Identify specific, achievable, measurable, outcome - based objectives and smart indicators to monitor the progression of the Study.

- Set out a detailed set of recommendations for the retrofitting of Recreational Infrastructure in existing urban areas.
- The final Report will identify the existing active Recreational infrastructure facilities in the City and make recommendations for additional infrastructure that will be needed in the City. Emphasis will be placed on delivering the correct amount of Infrastructure when the major new development areas are being developed.

Appendix 2: Planning Policy Review

Introduction

1. We outline below the findings from our critical review of the relevant national, regional and local planning policy and guidance documents as they relate to active recreation infrastructure.
2. The documents reviewed can be summarised as follows:
 - Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework;
 - Project Ireland 2040 - National Development Plan;
 - Southern Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031
 - Cork City Development Plan 2015 – 2021

Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework

3. The National Planning Framework (NPF) was published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in February 2018. It sets out the overarching policy and planning framework for the social, economic and environmental development of the country.
4. The main objective of the NPF is to guide planning activities on a local, regional and national level, to ensure sound investment decisions and opportunities for sustainable economic development are maximised.
5. The NPF seeks to guide the future development of Ireland to cater for the following by 2040:
 - *'a projected 1 million increase in our population;*
 - *the need to create 660,000 additional jobs; and*
 - *the need for 550,000 more homes'.*
6. The ambition of the NPF is to create a single vision, a shared set of goals for every community across the country. These goals are expressed through the 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) within the NPF, including the top priority of 'Compact Growth'.
7. The NSOs are supported by 75 National Policy Objectives (NPOs) and 10 Strategic Investment Priorities (SIPs) with SIP 7 relating to 'Culture, Heritage and Sport' (see the National Development Plan Section below for more detail).

Active Recreation Infrastructure

8. Having reviewed the NPF, it is noted that it does not provide a definition for, or make specific reference to, 'Active Recreation Infrastructure'. However, the NPF makes multiple references to 'recreation infrastructure', 'sport', and 'amenities' throughout under a number of outcomes, objectives and priorities which are relevant to this Study

on 'Active Recreation Infrastructure' and which inform our recommendations, as outlined below.

9. National Strategic Outcome 7, entitled 'Enhanced Amenity and Heritage' is of particular note with respect to recreation infrastructure as it seeks to ensure '*...that our cities, towns and villages are attractive and **can offer a good quality of life**. It will **require investment** in well-designed public realm, which includes public spaces, parks and streets, **as well as recreational infrastructure...**' (our emphasis).*
10. The priorities/actions identified under NSO 7 that are relevant for this Study include:
 - '*Implementation of planning and transport strategies for the five cities and other urban areas will be progressed with **a major focus on improving walking and cycling routes**, including continuous greenway networks and targeted measures to enhance permeability and connectivity;*
 - '*The Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Funds will **support transformational public realm initiatives** to give city and town centre areas back to citizens, encouraging greater city and town centre living, **enhanced recreational spaces** and attractiveness from a cultural, tourism and promotional perspective; and*
 - '***Invest in and enable access to recreational facilities**, including trails networks, designed and delivered with a strong emphasis on conservation, allowing the protection and preservation of our most fragile environments and providing a wellbeing benefit for all' (our emphasis).*
11. The importance of recreation infrastructure is also evident in Figure 6.1 of the NPF, as it contributes to a number of the elements which support and provide a 'quality of life', such as health, leisure and social interactions, and overall life satisfaction.

Figure 6.1 | Elements Supporting Quality of Life



12. The NPF outlines that the increase in the proportion of more compact forms of growth in the development of settlements of all sizes has the potential to make a transformational difference by bringing new life and footfall to urban centres that allows people to be closer to recreational opportunities, as well as to walk or cycle more.
13. The NPF places an emphasis on recreation infrastructure under Chapter 6.2, entitled 'Healthy Communities'. Indeed, it is stated that '*Communities that are designed in a way that support physical activity, e.g. generously sized footpaths, safe cycle lanes, safe attractive stairways and accessible recreation areas, all encourage residents to make healthy choices and live healthier lives*' (our emphasis).
14. The Framework confirms that countries with extensive cycle infrastructure report higher levels of cycling and lower rates of obesity and that healthy places in turn create economic value by appealing to a skilled workforce and attracting innovative companies.
15. In light of this, National Policy Objective (NPO) 27 seeks to '*Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments, and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages*' (our emphasis).
16. The NPF confirms that the numbers of people aged 15 or under will decline slightly, by around 10%, by 2040, to comprise approximately 17% of the increased population which compares to 22% of the population in 2016. However, it recommends that '*...the continued provision and enhancement of facilities and amenities for children and young people, such as childcare, schools, playgrounds, parks and sportsgrounds, remains necessary and will need to be maintained at similar levels for the foreseeable future thereafter*'.
17. The NPF advises that '*...if a significant proportion of future population growth occurs within or close to the current built-up footprint of settlements as targeted, it will be possible to maximise the use of existing facilities near where children and young people live*' and that '*It will continue to be a requirement that proposals for residential development make provision for children's play in accordance with local development plan policies*' (our emphasis).
18. The NPF also recognises the contribution of Ireland's marine environment and identifies it as '*...a national asset that yields multiple commercial and non-commercial benefits including tourism and recreation*' (our emphasis). This is indeed relevant to Cork City noting that it is bisected by the River Lee.
19. The NPF advises that '*Green belts and green spaces in our cities, towns and villages play an integral role as part of the fabric of our settlements, either through their use for community recreation and amenity purposes, supporting biodiversity or as a natural delineation of the settlement itself, forming the interface between urban and rural areas*' (our emphasis).
20. Indeed, the NPF identifies green spaces and parks as having '*...a role in determining the quality of life in and sustainability of, our settlements*'.

21. National Policy Objective 62 recommends planning authorities to ‘*Identify and strengthen the value of greenbelts and green spaces at a regional and city scale, to enable enhanced connectivity to wider strategic networks, prevent coalescence of settlements and to allow for the long-term strategic expansion of urban areas*’ (our emphasis).

Cork City

22. The NPF states that ‘*Cork already performs well as a major urban centre in Ireland and the City has positioned itself as an emerging medium-sized European centre of growth and innovation. Building on this potential is critical to further enhancing Ireland’s metropolitan profile*’.
23. Thus, the NPF advises that an ambitious vision is required for Cork ‘*...at the heart of which must be an internationally competitive, sustainable urban environment. This means providing housing, transport, amenities and energy systems in a best practice European context*’ (our emphasis).
24. In terms of challenges, the NPF states that ‘*One of the greatest challenges in achieving significant growth that will move the Cork metropolitan region to the next level is addressing the long term decline of the City’s urban population*’.
25. The NPF identifies an enhanced urban environment as being a key part of addressing the decline in the City’s urban population which includes ‘*...better housing choice and quality, new employment locations, improved public spaces and enhanced public transport as well as safe and pleasant options for walking and cycling*’ (our emphasis).
26. The NPF confirms that the population of Cork City and Suburbs stood at 208,669 people at the time of the 2016 Census. Table 2.1 of the NPF entitled ‘Targeted Pattern of Growth, 2040’ identifies a population growth target for Cork City and Suburbs of 105,000 - 125,000 people by 2040 which would bring the overall population to at least 315,000 people.
27. Section 2.2. of the NPF, entitled ‘Overview of the NPF Strategy’ (see pg. 22) sets out the following actions/priorities for Ireland’s Cities, which includes Cork:
- ‘*Supporting ambitious growth targets to enable the four cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford to each grow by at least 50% to 2040 and to enhance their significant potential to become cities of scale.*
 - *Enabling the four cities to be regional drivers and to lead in partnership with each other and as partners in regional/inter-regional networks as viable alternatives to Dublin.*
 - *Focusing investment to improve the collective ‘offer’ within each of the four cities, i.e. infrastructure, quality of life and choice in terms of housing, employment and amenities*’ (our emphasis).
28. In terms of key future planning and development and place-making policy priorities for the Southern Region, the NPF places an emphasis on:

- *'Developing and implementing comprehensive and strategic metropolitan area spatial plans for Cork city that secure long-term transformational and rejuvenation-focused city development, with a special emphasis on capitalising on the potential of underutilised and publicly owned and centrally located sites and activating their potential to boost the population and economic output levels of city centre areas as drivers for wider regions.'*
- *Developing a more **integrated network of greenways, blueways and peatways** to support the diversification of rural and regional economies and promote more sustainable forms of travel **and activity based recreation**' (**our emphasis**).*

29. The NPF identifies a number of key future growth enablers for Cork, and we note the following:

- *'Delivering ambitious large-scale regeneration projects for the provision of new employment, housing and **supporting infrastructure** in Cork Docklands (City Docks and Tivoli) as integrated, sustainable developments, including relocation of two 'Seveso' sites from the City Docks (**our emphasis**);*
- *Progressing the sustainable development of new greenfield areas for housing, especially those on public transport corridors, such as Monard;*
- *Identifying infill and regeneration opportunities to intensify housing development in inner city and inner suburban areas, supported by public realm and **urban amenity projects** (**our emphasis**);*
- *Enabling enhanced opportunities for existing communities as development and diversification occurs, particularly through employment, learning and education support;*
- *The continued expansion of and integration with the City's third level institutions;*
- *The development of a much enhanced Citywide public transport system to incorporate subject to further analysis, proposals for an east-west corridor from Mahon, through the City Centre to Ballincollig and a north-south corridor with a link to the Airport'.*

30. We outline below other notable text extracts taken from the NPF with respect to Cork:

- *'Cork is emerging as an international centre of scale and is well placed to complement Dublin, but requires significantly accelerated and urban-focused growth to more fully achieve this role;*
- *The planned rate of growth in the Cork City and suburban area should be between two or three times the national average (50% to 60%), over the same period;*
- *The higher targeted rate of growth for Cork also means planning for significant numbers, i.e. at least 105,000 more people by 2040;*

- *National Policy Objective 3b - Deliver at least half (50%) of all new homes that are targeted in the five Cities and suburbs of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford, within their existing built-up footprints;*
- *National Policy Objective 7 - Apply a tailored approach to urban development, that will be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, with a particular focus on:- Dublin; the four Cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford...;*
- *National Policy Objective 67 - Provision will be made for Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans to be prepared for the Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford Metropolitan areas and in the case of Dublin and Cork, to also address the wider city region, by the appropriate authorities in tandem with and as part of the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies;*
- *...introduce more strategic and co-ordinated planning of our cities and large towns across local authority boundaries, including statutorily backed Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans in the five cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford; and*
- *Counties Cork and Kerry and Cork City comprise the South-West regional area. A Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) for the Cork Metropolitan Area, including Cork Harbour, will be prepared through the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy process. This will also build on work previously undertaken as part of the non-statutory Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP), addressing both the CASP Study Area and North and West Cork.*

Project Ireland 2040 - National Development Plan

31. The National Development Plan 2018 - 2027 (NDP) sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the implementation of the National Planning Framework, through a total investment of approximately €116 billion.
32. The NDP states that ‘Investment in culture, heritage **and sports**, appropriately aligned with other NSOs included in the NPF, **can play a very important role in improving amenities and the attractiveness and liveability** of different areas, whether in cities, other urban areas, small towns and rural areas’ (**our emphasis**).
33. The Plan further advises that ‘This investment can complement and reinforce the impact of investment in sustainable public transport networks and in other amenities’.
34. While the NDP does not specifically refer to ‘Active Recreation Infrastructure’, it contains a regional objective to improve Ireland’s outdoor recreation infrastructure.
35. Indeed, in recognition of the vital role of culture, heritage and sport in our national life, the NDP allocates in excess of €1 billion to strategic investment priorities in this area. So far as sport is concerned, the Plan advises that ‘Over €100 million in capital funding has been allocated for the Sport Capital Programme (SCP) for the coming four years’ and that ‘This programme will be further expanded over the period 2022 to 2027 which will allow for the continued development of new and improved sports facilities’.

36. The NDP describes the SCP as *'...the primary mechanism for providing funding to sport and community organisations at local, regional and national level'*.
37. The NDP recognises that *'Enhanced sports facilities represents a significant improvement to the community infrastructure in these areas making them more attractive places to live, work and visit'*.
38. The NDP notes that the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport is administering Government grants towards the redevelopment of Páirc Ui Chaoimh, (total contribution €30 million).
39. In the longer term, the NDP states that funding of sports facilities is being considered as part of the Sports Policy Review (which was to be finalised in 2018) and that a number of the Sport National Governing Bodies have ambitious plans for large scale sport developments in the coming years.
40. Accordingly, the NDP outlines that *'...a new Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund of €100 million is being established for larger sports projects where the proposed Government contribution exceeds amounts available under the SCP'*.

Southern Regional Assembly - Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032

41. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region is a 12-year strategic regional development framework which identifies high-level requirements and policies.
42. It primarily aims to support the delivery of the programme for change set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan 2018-27 (NDP).
43. As the regional tier of the national planning process, the RSES will ensure coordination between the City and County Development Plans and Local Enterprise and Community Plans of the ten local authorities in the Region, including Cork City Council.

Active Recreation Infrastructure - General

44. Similar to the NPF, the RSES does not make specific reference to 'Active Recreation Infrastructure', however, it embraces the many factors which determine quality of life including infrastructure investment in sporting facilities.
45. The importance of recreation and sporting facilities is highlighted with the inclusion of a dedicated section in the RSES (i.e. Section 7.2.5) entitled 'Regional Recreational and Sporting Facilities'. Within this section, the RSES states that *'Our parks, sporting arenas and facilities are essential to the quality of life of all our communities. The quality of recreational and sporting facilities contributes to good physical and mental health, sporting achievement and excellence and to wider social, cultural and economic benefits for our communities'*.
46. The RSES then confirms that it *'...supports the development of new regional scale recreational and sporting facilities including new stadiums and provision of public parks*

and green areas. In addition, the RSES supports the development of new and upgraded local sporting and recreational facilities’.

47. Thus, the RSES recommends that local authorities and partner organisations should seek to provide for a range of open space and sporting and recreational facilities to include:
- *‘Formal open space (passive) as a relaxed setting for visual amenity purposes, for walking, sitting and generally enjoying landscapes and nature;*
 - *Informal (active) open space or recreational areas designed for greater physical movement and sporting activities;*
 - *Access and co-operative arrangements for use of open spaces belonging to privately managed or community/voluntary clubs and organisations and often not readily open for public use;*
 - *Provision for full accessibility to sporting and recreational areas and facilities; and*
 - *Sustainable linkages to nearby communities and neighbourhoods including provision of new or enhanced cycling and walking routes’.*
48. These recommendations are supported by Regional Policy Objectives (RPO) 198 and 199.
49. It is also noted that the RSES contains dedicated sections which outline the importance of walking and cycling (i.e. Section 6.3.6.10) and support for the development of trails, walkways and linear parks (i.e. Section 7.2.6) and greenways, blueways and peatways (i.e. Section 7.2.7) and which are supported by Regional **Policy Objectives (RPO) 174, 200 and 201**, respectively.
50. Other RSES RPOs that are of note/relevance with respect to ‘Active Recreation Infrastructure’ include:
- **RPO 9 - Holistic Approach to Delivering Infrastructure:** It is an objective to ensure investment and delivery of comprehensive infrastructure packages to meet growth targets that prioritise the delivery of compact growth and sustainable mobility as per the NPF objectives including: recreation and open space amenity;
 - **RPO 54 – Tourism:** It is an objective to:
 - a. Enhance provision of tourism and leisure amenity to cater for increased population in the Region including recreation, entertainment, cultural, catering, accommodation, transport and water infrastructure inter alia;
 - b. Promote activity tourism subject to appropriate site selection and environmental assessment processes;

- d. Sustainably develop walking and cycling trails opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes and promote the sustainable designation and delivery of Greenway and Blueway Corridors;
- e. Facilitate appropriate tourism development and in particular a National Greenways, Blueways and Peatways Strategy, prioritising sustainable projects that achieve maximum impact and connectivity at national and regional level;
- **RPO 176 - 10-minute City and Town Concepts:** It is an objective to attain sustainable compact settlements with the “10-minute” city and town concepts, whereby, a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycle timeframes from homes or are accessible by high quality public transport services by connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services.

Active Recreation Infrastructure – Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan for Cork

51. Cork’s Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) confirms that the population of the Metropolitan Area stood at over 304,000 in 2016 and that it accounted for one fifth of the Region’s total population, making it the second largest metropolitan area in the State.
52. The Cork MASP outlines that *‘With a planned growth rate (50-60%) to 2040 in the Cork City and suburban area of between two to three times the national average and up to 50 % for the rest of the metropolitan area, this is a strong platform of scale, critical mass and capacity and uniquely positions the Cork Metropolitan Area as:*
 - *A principle complimentary location to Dublin with strong international role;*
 - *A primary driver of economic and population growth in the Region;*
 - *A compact City and Metropolitan Area with increased regional connectivity;*
 - *A City and Metropolitan Area focusing growth on the delivery of sustainable transport patterns’.*
53. The Cork MASP acknowledges that *‘The NPF explicitly states that significant accelerated and urban focused growth is needed to fulfil this potential, along with accelerated investment, **physical and social infrastructure**, and protection and enhancement of the natural environment’ (**our emphasis**)*.
54. The Cork MASP contains the following Vision Statement for the Cork Metropolitan Area:

*‘Sustainably develop the potential and capacity of Metropolitan Cork, which has the State’s Second City of international scale, **as a healthy**, people centred, affordable, socially and economically inclusive, innovative and technologically smart international gateway offering a high-quality environment, a vibrant city at its heart, supported by a network of compact metropolitan towns, connected by*

sustainable transport networks, serviced by a high standard of **physical and community infrastructure offering a high quality of life for all**. A metropolitan area that inspires pride, encourages creativity and achievement with high standards of environmental sustainability' (**our emphasis**).

55. It is noted that this vision is supported by a number of guiding principles including:

- **Metropolitan scale amenities:** Provision and enhancement of regional parks, recreation and sports amenities, natural amenity and habitat protection, strategic green infrastructure including walking, cycling, greenways and blueways in an integrated network across the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- **Integrated transport and land use:** Target growth along high quality public transport corridors and nodes linked to the delivery of key public transport projects under the development of a Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy including an enhanced public realm, walking and cycling infrastructure, light rail corridor, suburban rail corridor and strategic bus network corridors, all interconnecting with the city centre and connecting with strategic employment locations in the metropolitan area.
- **Accelerate housing delivery:** Activate strategic residential development areas and support the steady supply of sites to accelerate housing supply and the adoption of performance-based design standards as supported by NPF National Policy Objective 13 to achieve higher densities in the urban built up areas, supported by better services and public transport.
- **Better alignment of growth:** Target 'catch up' investment to support employment, infrastructure and amenity provision and/or sustainable transport links in metropolitan towns and suburban areas that have experienced high levels of population growth but are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services.

56. So far as 'Active Recreation Infrastructure' is concerned, we note that the Cork MASP does not specifically use this terminology. Nevertheless, Policy Objective 17 of the Cork MASP is important to note as it confirms that:

*'It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, **Recreation** and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of **parks, recreation and high quality public open space** in the Cork Metropolitan Area' (**our emphasis**).*

57. Policy Objective 17 outlines that this Strategy may include, inter alia:

- 'a. An enhanced network of regional scaled parks in Metropolitan Cork and invest in upgraded facilities including Tramore Valley Park, Marina Park, Bishop Lucey Park Redevelopment, Northwest Regional Park, Riverside Public Walk (Lee Field to the Marina). Lee Fields Walk/Cycle extension to Ballincollig, Lough Redevelopment, Tivoli Docks Park, neighbourhood parks and public parks in the Metropolitan Towns.

- *b. The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including parks, natural green spaces and ecosystems, greenways and blueways.*
- *c. The implementation of Greenway initiatives that provide important economic, leisure and tourism, health, active and sustainable travel and environmental benefits to the metropolitan area including the Lee to Sea Greenway initiative subject to the outcome of environmental assessments and the planning process.*
- *d. In order to support decision-making in increasing recreation and tourism opportunities along the coastline, which is in close proximity to European Sites, the carrying capacity of SACs/SPAs will need to be established to understand what limits should be set for the extent of development.*
- *e. Protect and proactively manage and integrate natural spaces.*
- *f. The sustainable development of key recreation, sports and community facilities across Metropolitan Cork.*
- *g. The development of a Metropolitan Greenbelt Strategy in co-ordination between Cork City Council and Cork County Council'.*

58. In addition, we outline below other Cork MASP Policy Objectives which are of note/relevance with respect to 'Active Recreation Infrastructure':

- **Policy Objective 18 - c.** Support the acquisition and development of the City Quays in Cork for a high-quality water front public realm for public use.
- **Policy Objective 21 - b.** Support the role of Cork as a WHO Healthy City and seek investment in the delivery of recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health services infrastructure that retains and improves on this status, in support of a "healthy heart" to the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- **Policy Objective 21 - d.** Seek delivery and supports to achieve Healthy Ireland objectives.

Local Planning Policy Context

59. The current local planning policy context for the Cork City ARI study is established in the Cork City Development Plan (CCDP) 2015-2021, which came into effect on 20th April 2015.
60. However, it is noted that on 31 May 2019, the administrative area of Cork City Council was expanded, growing to nearly five times its current size and taking in areas including Douglas, Rochestown, Ballincollig, Blarney and Glanmire. As part of this planned expansion, the population of the city grew by 85,000 people to an overall population of 210,000 people.
61. As the extant CCDP 2015-2021 was adopted prior to the City boundary expansion, it does not contain any specific objectives, policies or land use zonings for the new areas

of the City. It is noted that the emerging Draft Cork City Development Plan will be required to include relevant objectives, policies and land zonings for these new areas.

62. So far as ARI is concerned, Chapter 11 of the CCDP entitled 'Recreational Infrastructure' is of particular note in terms of informing the context of this Study.
63. The CCDP notes that '*Cork City has intensified over the past 20 years and will continue to intensify in the future...*' and so confirms that it is '*...essential that existing recreational assets are retained, enhanced and added to in order to provide for the existing city population as well as the needs of new residents and employees that will populate major development areas*'.
64. The CCDP acknowledges that recreational assets are not only important to the City and its constituent neighbourhoods but to the wider metropolitan area, as well as the City's appeal for tourism and international capital. Furthermore, the CCDP highlights that recreational assets are also of wider significance in relation to drainage / flooding and climate change.
65. In terms of recreational achievements, the CCDP advises that Cork has made significant improvements to its recreational infrastructure over the last 10 years including active sports facilities such as sports pitches at Mahon, all-weather pitches at The Glen and changing pavilions at Pophams Park and Fair Field.
66. In terms of challenges, the CCDP outlines that the next 10 years will see the City Council protect existing assets and address a number of strategic challenges, such as:
 - Delivering a strategic plan for a network of large City Parks to provide for the recreational infrastructure needs of the metropolitan area, and deliver a number of these including Marina Park, Tramore Valley Park, North West (Killeens) City Park and North East City Park;
 - Re-evaluate neighbourhood level provision of infrastructure, including recreational needs;
 - In the historic city, including the City Centre, create positive public space in the form of pocket parks, plazas, paved spaces adjacent to the north and south channels and enhanced streetscape to meet recreational need; and
 - Balance measures to support and enhance biodiversity against recreational needs, and to improve ecological networks in areas of the city with lower levels of connectivity.
67. The CCDP incorporates the following strategic approach to help achieve a green, connected and fit-for-purpose Cork with sustainable neighbourhoods in line with the Core Strategy:
 - Introduce an open space strategy;
 - Create sustainable connectivity between green areas;

- Provide for the recreational infrastructure needs of the city, its neighbourhoods and catchment, and related biodiversity needs of the city; and
 - Provide the resources to deliver and manage the recreational infrastructure required by the city.
68. The CCDP then sets out a number of Recreational Infrastructure Strategic Objectives under Objective 11.1, and we note the following with respect ARI:
- c. To ensure that all areas of the city have an appropriate provision of local public amenity space and facilities to enable people of all ages to recreate, meet, enjoy and contribute to improved health;
 - d. To ensure that play provision meets the needs of all age groups to best practice standards in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility;
 - e. To ensure that playing pitch and active sports infrastructure meets the needs of Cork's population;
 - h. To ensure that streets within the city fulfil their potential as public space as well as movement corridors;
 - i. To ensure that the city's open space and recreational assets are managed effectively, efficiently and smartly so that the maximum benefit for all in the common good can be gained from them, given finite space within the city and the finite monetary resources available.
69. Objective 11.3 - Active Recreational Needs Study of the CCDP is also of note as it contains a commitment to '*...progress a review of the Recreational Needs Study 2003 to inform the Open Space Strategy for Cork City and project development*'. The CCDP advises that the study will seek to determine the gaps in active recreational provision (including playing pitches and organised sport) taking into account current and future needs based on an assessment of population growth.
70. The CCDP then sets out a number of objectives in relation to a range of recreational infrastructure aspects. However, we make specific reference to the following only as they are of relevance with respect to ARI:
- Sports
 - Sports Facilities and Grounds
 - Water Sports
 - City Centre Recreational Infrastructure
71. So far as 'Sports Facilities and Grounds' are concerned, the CCDP identifies a lack of available land in the city and notes that new opportunities for sports grounds, particularly the provision of playing pitches, are limited.

72. The CCDP emphasises a need to retain such facilities in their current locations and where they are of most value and accessible to the community being served particularly younger people.
73. It further recommends the following:
- Sports facilities should be upgraded and maintained to the highest standards to ensure quality of provision;
 - Accessibility to existing and new facilities should be promoted through improved public transport links and walking / cycling;
 - Major new sporting developments should be located to be served by the City's improving public transport network;
 - City Council will aim to ensure that all sports with a demonstrably high participation level are provided for through the provision of sports facilities;
 - Needs will be identified through the Recreational Needs Study when this is updated;
 - City Council will seek to ensure that the potential of existing and new sports assets are maximised for public benefit, including the sharing of facilities; and
 - City Council will seek sports grounds to be provided as part of major developments in addition to the public open space standards set out in Table 16.2 of Chapter 16: Development Management.
74. Noting the above, the CCDP sets out the following objectives with respect to Sports Facilities and Grounds:

Objective 11.8 - Active Recreational Facilities	To support the development of indoor and outdoor active recreational facilities which are easily accessible to all members of the community.
Objective 11.9 - Protection of Sports Grounds and Facilities	<p>To protect, retain and enhance the range and quality of sports facilities and grounds in the city and to ensure that lands zoned 'sports ground' is not developed for other purposes. There will be a general presumption against the loss of land zoned as sports grounds for development for other purposes. Limited ancillary* development may be considered if the proposed development:</p> <p>a. Is ancillary* to the principal use of the site as sports grounds and does not affect the quantity or quality of the pitches and provision of adequate training areas and facilities or adversely impact upon their use; and</p>

	<p>b. Only affects land incapable of forming part of the playing surfaces and does not result in the loss of any playing surface or pitch.</p> <p>*Ancillary uses include other sport and leisure facilities such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, meeting rooms, gym, sports training halls, catering facilities, caretakers accommodation and appropriate car parking facilities. Crèches and community uses are open for consideration provided that they are linked to the sports use.</p>
Objective 11.10 - Sports Facilities and Grounds	<p>a. To promote the provision and management of high quality sporting facilities;</p> <p>b. To facilitate access to sports facilities for all members of the community and ensure that the particular needs of different groups are incorporated into the planning, design and management of new facilities. The City Council will continue to encourage joint provision and dual use of sports facilities in appropriate locations;</p> <p>c. To promote, in co-operation with the County Council, the urban fringe and Green Belt as important resources for the provision of sports facilities e.g. golf courses, pitches etc.;</p> <p>d. To take account of the priorities set out in both national and local sports strategies when planning new facilities;</p> <p>e. To consider the sports facilities, recreation and amenity needs of an area for which planning permission is sought and effect their provision through the planning process, e.g. provision of Multi-Use Games' Areas (MUGAs) etc.</p>

75. The CCDP outlines that Cork has a very strong tradition of water-based transport, water sports, recreational boat use and water heritage, including rowing, sailing, canoeing and traditional boating (e.g. currachs).
76. The CCDP confirms that the City Council aims to commission a River Use and Management Plan to examine the recreational potential of the River Lee and the Upper Harbour.
77. A need for a new public water slipway that is accessible to vehicles and capable of serving the city and the needs of individuals/organisations is also referenced in the CCDP. The relevant objective in the CCDP is reproduced in the table below.

Water Sports

Objective 11.12 - River Use and Management Plan	<p>a. To pursue the development of a River Use and Management Plan to define how the recreational use of the city's waterways can be optimised subject to Ecological Assessment and Appropriate Assessment Screening;</p> <p>b. To explore the potential for a new public water slipway in Cork City in partnership with stakeholders</p>
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78. Finally, under the City Centre Recreational Infrastructure sub-section, the CCDP advises that the City Council aims to complement the existing network through a number of initiatives, including maximising the potential of the river corridors as recreational and high quality public spaces that provide focal points.
79. The relevant objective in the CCDP is reproduced in the table below.

City Centre Recreational Infrastructure	
Objective 11.18 - City Centre Recreational Infrastructure	To work towards the improvement of the City Centre's public realm so that it is both allocated and designed to meet the civic and neighbourhood priorities for the City Centre, and to ensure that recreational infrastructure is provided to meet the needs of all age groups.

Draft Cork City Development Plan (DCCDP) 2022 – 2028

80. CCC is currently reviewing the Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021 and preparing a new City Development Plan (the Draft Plan) which will cover a period from 2022-2028.
81. The DCCDP, when adopted, will replace the CCDP 2015-2021, the Cork County Development Plan 2014 and the Municipal District Local Area Plans 2017 (solely for the former County Council areas now within the Cork City boundary including Ballincollig, Blarney, Glanmire and Tower).
82. CCC recently undertook a Pre-Draft Consultation stage of the Draft Plan process which concluded on 21 August 2020. We note below the key points from our review of the DCCDP Issues Paper and the Chief Executive Report that was prepared following the conclusion of the Pre-Draft Consultation stage.

Issues Paper

83. The Issues Paper (IP) advises that the NPF sets a target for Cork City to grow by an additional 125,000 people by 2040 which means providing housing for an additional 6,250 people and creating over 3,750 jobs per annum over the next 20 years.
84. The IP states that this growth can only be achieved if Cork continues to be a great place to live, with a mix of urban and suburban housing, a resilient economy, top-class

educational institutions, good quality health and social services and an appropriate mix of cultural, sports and recreational amenities.

85. With this increased growth and demand, the IP recognises that one of the challenges the City faces is how to manage the natural assets (which include our open spaces such as parks and greenways) whilst accommodating and meeting the recreational needs of our existing and growing population and improve the attractiveness of Cork City as a place to live.
86. The IP notes that a key input into the Draft Plan will be the completion of a Recreational Needs Study to identify active sports requirements for the city and its constituent communities.
87. In terms of existing infrastructure, the IP highlights that Cork City has a variety of public parks, sports pitches, playgrounds, walk and cycle ways and areas of open space on land and water.
88. These assets are described as having multiple uses throughout the year ranging from sport, recreation, leisure and play to music, drama, and special events such as 'Summer events in the Park', 'Carnival of Science', 'Harbour Festival', Patricks Day Festival, Jazz Festival and 'SeaFest'.
89. In terms of our indoor spaces, the IP confirms that these are wide ranging in the City and are provided by both public and private sectors.
90. The IP acknowledges the importance of both outdoor and indoor recreational facilities particularly their contribution towards good physical and mental health, for all age groups and abilities.

Key Strategic Issues and Chief Executive's Recommendations for the Draft City Development Plan

91. It is noted that the Chief Executive's Report (CER) in relation to the public consultation on the Issues Paper has been prepared and is available as Volume 1 and Volume 2 on the Council's website.
92. The CER summarises the issues raised in the submissions received to the public consultation and sets out the Chief Executive's opinion and recommendations on policies to be included in the Draft City Development Plan.
93. Volume 1 of the CER contains the following recommendations with respect to recreation:
 - Protect and enhance our waterways and their corridors and to promote the integration of the City and the waterways through the development of the public realm, amenity spaces and use of waterways for sport and recreation;
 - Support the sports and recreation facilities, institutes, clubs and amenities across the City;

- Ensure that green and blue infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation and biodiversity are considered in all developments, commensurate to scale and context, at the earliest stages of design.
94. Volume 2 of the CER notes that Cork City Council has commissioned an Active Recreation Infrastructure Needs Study which will be a key input into the Draft Plan and will help to identify active sports requirements for the city and its constituent communities.
 95. It is noted that Volume 2 states that Cork City Council supports the 'Liveable City' concept which integrates a range of planning principles including urban design, community development and place making, to create a socially sustainable city with physical and social infrastructure.
 96. Furthermore, Volume 2 identifies a long-standing recognition that there is a need for a higher order City Park to serve the needs of the north-west of Cork City, in order to provide for the passive and active recreational needs of the population.

Appendix 3: Online Survey Audit Questions

Appendix 4: Copy of Detailed Comments to Questions 19 and 35 of the OSA

The approach to Lapps Quay from each side is across a very busy road - making it difficult to access for pedestrians and cyclists.
There is regularly big events and matches which require extra parking. Some areas outside the grounds are unsafe for parking and some yellow lines and parking signage would help with safety.
Access to the club is via a residential estate, one way in and one way out system. The club is sandwiched between the City Council / Water Treatment and the Riverview Estate. There is regular City Council traffic that cuts between the club house and the pitch's, lighting is only reasonable, the footpaths do not extend all the way to the club and without formal car parking, traffic congestion and safety can be a concern.
Road to area has no footpath.
Broken footpaths, no ramp access, no lift to second floor.
Cannot access the jetty from Lapps Quay. Need to use the rowing clubs for taking the boats in and out of the water.
As you approach club there are no paths.
No paths as you approach club grounds.
Road access is good but other modes not well served.
Shortage of access ways to water with parking.
Bus stop nearby but no pathway from the bus stop to the industrial estate where we currently operate from.
Poor lighting and road conditions.
We need pathway to dressing rooms as you are currently going through the grass.
Our main entrance is on a blind corner directly across from Apple computers and is very dangerous.
Pitches are 3 miles from Innishannon village in the country side. Pull in bays on the road leading to pitches would be a great addition.
The pathways around the club need upgrading and street lighting.
Only one shared entrance with a University.
Cycleways could be improved.
Linkage of public transport and cycle ways would improve access.
Better lighting needed on the Marina for Winter mornings/evenings.
The footpaths in Shandon/Blackpool are often cluttered with bins, parked cars, etc and are generally of a poor quality as a result of lack of investment. The only dedicated cycleway in the vicinity of the school and Neptune is on Pope's Quay. There are no traffic calming or traffic reduction measures on any of the streets in Shandon/Blackpool. As a result, it is not inviting to walk or cycle for many people living in our community.
Congestion on Patrick's Hill at certain times of the day. No facility to turn cars or other vehicles, no drop off area.
lights are needed in Wandesford quay, at T junction near car park entrance - students turning right have to negotiate traffic.
Blackrock now serves cyclist & pedestrians well. It is a pity that water users are not served so well.

Appendix 5: Minutes of the One-to-One Stakeholder Engagement Meetings

Appendix 6: Pitch Based ARI Requirements – Study Area

Appendix 7: Non-Pitch Based ARI Requirements – Study Area

Table 9.3 – Cork City Non-Pitch Based ARI Requirements

This table covers the indicative changes/increased requirements in non-pitch based ARI provision between 2016, 2028 and 2040 if average provision ratios from the Core Cities are used. The ratios/figures provided below are for guidance only using assumptions made from the Core City ratios.

	Cork (in 2016)	Cork (in 2028)	Cork (in 2040)	Increase / Change between 2016 & 2028	Increase / Change between 2028 & 2040	Increase / Change between 2016 & 2040
Sports Halls	16	20	24	3.6	4.4	8.0
25m Pool Equivalents	7	8	10	1.5	1.8	3.3
Athletic Tracks	2	2	2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Indoor Bowls	1	1	1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Squash Courts	16	19	24	3.5	4.3	7.8
Indoor Tennis Courts	6	7	9	1.3	1.6	3.0
Outdoor Tennis Courts	30	36	45	6.6	8.1	14.7
Golf Course - 9 hole equivalents	6	7	9	1.3	1.6	2.9
Fitness Clubs	25	30	37	5.5	6.7	12.2
Studios	22	27	33	4.9	5.9	10.8

Table 9.3 – Cork City Non-Pitch Based ARI Requirements

This table provides comparative Data for UK Core Cities versus potential requirements for Cork using 2016 population statistics (i.e. 210,853 people).

	Cork (in 2016)	Birmingham	Leeds	Sheffield	Manchester	Liverpool	Bristol	Nottingham	Newcastle	Averages
Sports Halls	16	60	64	38	38	41	34	27	25	41
25m Pool Equivalents	7	21	26	17	21	12	21	15	14	18
Athletic Tracks	2	4	2	3	3	1	1	1	0	2
Indoor Bowls	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1
Squash Courts	16	59	70	39	41	22	33	35	33	42
Indoor Tennis Courts	6	23	27	14	9	16	14	20	8	16
Outdoor Tennis Courts	30	88	111	66	64	64	183	48	47	84
Golf Course - 9 hole equivalents	6	25	60	21	10	11	10	7	10	19
Fitness Clubs	25	108	92	56	65	51	40	47	44	63
Studios	22	102	85	48	60	44	60	37	41	60

Table 9.4 – Cork City Non-Pitch Based Sport Requirements 2028

This table provides comparative data for UK Core Cities versus potential requirements for Cork using 2028 population statistics (i.e. 257,832 people).

	Cork (in 2028)	Birmingham	Leeds	Sheffield	Manchester	Liverpool	Bristol	Nottingham	Newcastle	Averages
Sports Halls	20	60	64	38	38	41	34	27	25	41
25m Pool Equivalents	8	21	26	17	21	12	21	15	14	18
Athletic Tracks	2	4	2	3	3	1	1	1	0	2
Indoor Bowls	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1
Squash Courts	19	59	70	39	41	22	33	35	33	42
Indoor Tennis Courts	7	23	27	14	9	16	14	20	8	16
Outdoor Tennis Courts	36	88	111	66	64	64	183	48	47	84
Golf Course - 9 hole equivalents	7	25	60	21	10	11	10	7	10	19
Fitness Clubs	30	108	92	56	65	51	40	47	44	63
Studios	27	102	85	48	60	44	60	37	41	60

Table 9.5 – Cork City Non-Pitch Based Sport Requirements 2040

This table provides comparative Data for UK Core Cities versus potential requirements for Cork using 2040 population statistics (i.e. 315,000 people).

	Cork (in 2040)	Birmingham	Leeds	Sheffield	Manchester	Liverpool	Bristol	Nottingham	Newcastle	Averages
Sports Halls	24	60	64	38	38	41	34	27	25	41
25m Pool Equivalents	10	21	26	17	21	12	21	15	14	18
Athletic Tracks	2	4	2	3	3	1	1	1	0	2
Indoor Bowls	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1
Squash Courts	24	59	70	39	41	22	33	35	33	42
Indoor Tennis Courts	9	23	27	14	9	16	14	20	8	16
Outdoor Tennis Courts	45	88	111	66	64	64	183	48	47	84
Golf Course - 9 hole equivalents	9	25	60	21	10	11	10	7	10	19
Fitness Clubs	37	108	92	56	65	51	40	47	44	63
Studios	33	102	85	48	60	44	60	37	41	60

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Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council



We are Cork.

Turley