

Cork County Development Plan Review

Settlements and Placemaking

Planning for our Towns and Villages

Background Document No. 4

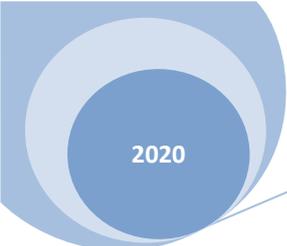


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1 Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This background document on Settlements and Placemaking examines the settlement network of the county and the issues that need to be considered as part of the review of the County Development Plan.
- 1.1.2 Section Two Strategic Policy Issues provides an overview of the national and regional policy issues relevant to the settlement network that need to be considered as part of the review of the County Development Plan, most notably the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and Government Guidelines etc.
- 1.1.3 Section Three Settlement Network provides an overview of the baseline situation with regard to the current settlement network of the county – where we are right now with regard to the composition of the settlement network, the role of the different settlements, current growth allocations, current capacity for development from a water services perspective and an insight into the demand for development across the network.
- 1.1.4 Section Four Stronger Urban Places looks in detail at the issues of density, placemaking and understanding the urban structure of the county.
- 1.1.5 Section 5 provides a summary of the main issues to be considered, from a settlement perspective, for the review of the County Development Plan.

2 Section 2: Strategic Policy Issues

2.1 Government Policy & Guidelines

2.1.1 Ireland's population continues to grow, with an expected additional 1 million people living in the State by 2040. Planning for this growth requires policies and actions to grow the regions outside Dublin and tackle issues that are contributing to Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions. Since the last County Development Plan a number of new policy documents and Guidelines have been published to help deliver more focussed, high quality and higher density development in the right locations that can help shift our reliance on unsustainable travel and deliver more climate resilient and adaptable places.

National Planning Framework

2.1.2 The National Planning Framework (NPF) makes provision for population growth of an additional 340,000 - 380,000 people in the Southern Region. The majority of the region's growth has been allocated to Cork City and County which equates to an additional 226,620 people or 60% of the Region's growth.

2.1.3 The NPF's sets out ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) or priorities to guide future development. These will be implemented through the Investment priorities detailed in the National Development Plan. The NSOs are as follows:

- Compact Growth,
- Enhanced Regional Accessibility,
- Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities,
- High Quality International Connectivity,
- Sustainable Mobility,
- A Strong Economy Supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills,
- Enhanced Amenities and Heritage,
- Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society,
- Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources,
- Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services.

2.1.4 NPF requires a major new policy emphasis on renewing and developing existing settlements, rather than the continual expansion and sprawl of settlements out into the countryside. The target is for at least 30% of all new housing to be delivered within the built-up footprint of existing settlements, including infill and/or brownfield sites. The rest of our homes will continue to be delivered at the edge of settlements and in rural areas.

2.1.5 The National Planning Framework seeks to make our cities, towns and villages the places where many more people choose to live, work and visit, by 2040. For this to come to fruition our towns and villages needs to be more attractive, vibrant and liveable places, offering a quality of life package that more people are willing to choose in the years ahead. The NPF identifies three key reasons why we need to create stronger urban places:

- **Community:** urban settlements are important places for trading goods, services and ideas, for information, learning and innovation, as well as for administration,

entertainment, healthcare and worship. They offer diversity, choice and opportunity, as well as connectivity and community. These opportunities for greater community interaction and convenient access to a range of services needs to be re-harnessed and built on, and negative perceptions of urban living challenged.

- **Economy:** attractive, liveable, well designed urban places are essential to economic prosperity as globalisations continues to have a concentrating effect. Employment trends indicate that city regions are the focal point for internationally mobile investment. The nature of urban places is recognised as a critical factor in determining economic growth. We need to offer a range of quality urban places in which people will choose to live, work and invest in order to drive growth, investment and prosperity.
- **Environment:** compact sustainable urban growth can reduce impacts on the environment by reducing land take, utilising existing infrastructure, reducing the need to travel, improving viability of public services and encouraging more active lifestyles.

2.1.6 This requires a particular policy response to ensure new development responds to its local context appropriately, delivers a range of densities to support local services, promotes sustainable travel modes and helps to optimise the existing building stock and tackle vacancy and under-utilised land. The NPF acknowledges the need for a range of strategies to achieve more balanced and sustainable growth and that a tailored approach is needed to best position settlements for their new roles. In particular the NPF highlights the need to:

- Encourage population and employment growth in towns of all sizes that are strong employment and services centres, where there is potential for sustainable growth;
- Need to identify new roles and functions for smaller urban centres experiencing decline, and improve their local infrastructure and amenities;
- Where areas have already experienced rapid expansion, need to facilitate investment to address any deficits in amenities, services, sustainable transport links or employment opportunities to serve existing populations;
- A renewed emphasis on achieving urban infill / brownfield development;
- Targeting regeneration and rejuvenation.

2.1.7 The NPF acknowledges that there are many examples of vibrant rural communities across Ireland in towns and villages, as well as within the open countryside and on our islands, while also acknowledging the challenges being faced by rural communities. The role of rural towns as local drivers for their surrounding area, supporting homes, jobs, clusters of services and transport hubs is recognised. The NPF recognises that changing settlement patterns have resulted in increased building vacancy within many towns and villages, adversely impacting on the vitality of these settlements. NPF objectives seek to strengthen and diversify rural towns to be a focus for local housing and employment growth, based on regeneration and development of vacant and derelict sites and utilising new technology and

digital connectivity. The decline of villages also needs to be tackled by sustainable targeted measures that address vacant premises and deliver sustainable reuse and regeneration outcomes.

- 2.1.8 Analysis in Section 3 of this report highlights the challenges posed by the extensive nature of the settlement network in Cork County, particularly in defining new roles for settlements, in seeking a more focused approach, and in prioritising the locations where investment in infrastructure, amenities or placemaking will deliver the greatest social, environmental, economic or cultural benefits for the county, region and country as a whole. The review of the County Development Plan will need to consider all of these issues.

Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (Southern Region)

- 2.1.9 The RSES sets out a 12 year strategic development framework for the delivery of the National Planning Framework within the Southern Region, and includes a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan which covers Cork City and the County Metropolitan Strategic Planning Area.

- 2.1.10 A key component of the strategy is to strengthen the settlement structure of the region, capitalising on the strength of the 3 cities and metropolitan areas, and of the network of towns, while also revitalising rural areas to make it one of Europe's most creative, innovative, green and liveable regions. The RSES provides a series of thirteen guiding principles to consider when allocating future population growth and has identified the following Settlement Typology:

- Cities and Metropolitan Areas – this includes the County Metropolitan towns of Carrigaline, Carrigtwohill, Cobh, Midleton, Monard, Passage West.
- Key Towns –e.g. Mallow and Clonakilty
- Towns and Villages
- Rural
- Networks

- 2.1.11 The RSES recognises that the Cork Metropolitan Area is

- the principle complementary location to Dublin with a strong international role.
- a primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region
- a compact city region with increased regional connectivity, focused on the delivery of sustainable transportation patterns, and
- needs accelerated urban focused growth to achieve its role and fulfil its potential.

- 2.1.12 The RSES indicates that population and employment growth must align with public transport investment, public transport nodal points and focus on regeneration, consolidation and infrastructure led growth of the city and suburbs, existing hierarchy of metropolitan towns and the metropolitan area's strategic employment locations. Economically, the strategy

focuses on delivering smart specialisation and clustering underpinned by a focus on place-making for enterprise development.

2.1.13 Within the wider county area the RSES has identified Mallow and Clonakilty as key towns and has identified the following networks:

- *North Cork Agri-Food Network* (Charleville, Fermoy, Mitchelstown) in a network with Mallow Key Town leveraging significant potential from food and beverage and agri-tech assets).
- *West Cork Marine Network*: A network based on the N71 West Cork to South Kerry Corridor across settlements of Clonakilty (Key Town), Skibbereen, Bantry, Schull and Castletownbere leveraging significant marine economy, tourism, food and beverage, digital and other assets with strategic transport connections to the Cork Metropolitan Area.
- *Cork Ring Network*: A network of Ring Towns of Mallow (Key Town), Bandon, Kinsale, Fermoy, Macroom and Youghal which have a strong relationship with the Cork Metropolitan Area and have opportunities for sustainable employment led growth, consolidation and enhancement.

2.1.14 Spatially, the Cork Metropolitan Area will be the focus of growth aligned with an updated sustainable transportation strategy as outlined in the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy. Economically, the strategy focuses on delivering smart specialisation and clustering underpinned by a focus on place-making for enterprise development.

2.1.15 Outside Metropolitan Cork, rural towns and villages are recognised as important drivers of socio-economic development. County Cork has a diverse network of towns and villages of varying scales and functions within the settlement hierarchy. The RSES recommends that Development Plans identify appropriate settlement categories and associated growth rates to reflect their role to ensure the delivery of a targeted approach to plan-making.

2.1.16 The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy makes provision for the following growth within Cork County to 2040:

	Population 2016	Population Target 2026	Population Target 2031	Population Target 2040	Total Growth to 2040
County Metropolitan Area	94,553	114,553	124,553	144,026	49,473
Remainder of Cork County	237,462	262,463	273,462	292,462	55,000
Total Cork County	332,015	377,016	398,015	436,488	104,473

Realising our Rural Potential – Action Plan for Rural Development (2017)

2.1.17 The CEDRA¹ report on Energising Irelands Rural Economy (2014) sets out an integrated approach to integrated rural development and defines rural Ireland as “all areas located beyond the administrative boundaries of the five largest cities”. This definition means that rural Ireland encompasses large, medium and small towns, villages and the open countryside.

2.1.18 This definition is carried forward to the Governments Action Plan for Rural Development (Realising our Rural Potential) published in 2017 which identifies five key pillars to support rural development, with associated objectives as outlined below, many of which are particularly relevant to the settlements and placemaking issues discussed in this paper:

1. Supporting Sustainable Communities

- Make rural Ireland a better place in which to live and work by revitalising our town and village centres.
- Enhance local services in the community.
- Empower local communities to ensure that a diversity of voices is heard and included in local decision-making processes, and that communities continue to identify their own needs and solutions.
- Build better communities through ongoing investment.

2. Supporting Enterprise and Employment

- Grow and attract enterprise and jobs through the Action Plans for Jobs and the Atlantic Economic Corridor, to promote balanced regional development. –
- Support sectoral growth – the agri-food sector, renewable energy sector, International Financial Services etc.
- Ensure rural communities have the necessary skills to meet the needs of the labour market and to encourage innovation and maximise assets.
- Support rural jobseekers.
- Support farm and fishing incomes.

3. Maximising our Rural Tourism and Recreation Potential

- Increase tourist numbers to rural Ireland by 12% by 2019.
- Support sustainable jobs through targeted rural tourism initiatives.
- Develop and promote Activity Tourism e.g. blueways, greenways, recreation etc.
- Develop and promote our natural and built heritage.

4. Fostering Culture and Creativity in rural communities

- Increase access to the arts and enhance cultural facilities in rural communities.
- Further develop and enhance culture and creativity in rural Ireland- Creative Ireland Programme.
- Promote the Irish language as a key resource.

5. Improving Rural Infrastructure and Connectivity

- Bring high speed broadband to every premises in Ireland.
- Improve rural transport links.
- Implement flood relief measures and other land management measures to protect our rural infrastructure.

¹ Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas

2.1.19 **Relevance to the CDP Review:** All of the pillars and objectives outlined above are extremely relevant to topics which will be addressed as part of the review of the County Development Plan. The policies and objectives of the current County Development Plan and Local Area Plans already deal with many of these issues and can be further updated and adjusted as appropriate as part of the review.

Climate Action Plan 2019

2.1.20 The Government's recently published Climate Action Plan 2019 highlights how the accelerating impact of greenhouse gas emissions is having a serious impact on the global climate. The window of opportunity to act is fast closing, but Ireland is way off course. As economic recovery has taken hold, it is clear the link between prosperity and emissions has not been broken.

2.1.21 By 2040 the population of Ireland is expected to grow to 5.7 million people. This growth, along with other National Planning Framework (NPF) growth projections on the economy and employment rates, will drive greater demand for transport across various modes, with increased movement of people and goods. While this is a sign of a vibrant economy, it intensifies our decarbonisation challenge, in particular as transport accounted for 19.8% of Ireland's greenhouse gases in 2017. Furthermore, air pollution emitted from transportation contributes to poor local air quality, in the form of increased micro-particulates and nitrogen oxides, which reduces people's quality of life and harms their health.

2.1.22 The Climate Action Plan points to key policy areas to make growth less transport intensive which include:

- The successful execution of the National Planning Framework which is designed to promote compact, connected and sustainable living;
- Expansion of walking, cycling and public transport to promote modal shift;
- Better use of market mechanisms to support modal shift;
- The successful roll-out of the National Broadband Plan, which can promote remote working and wider activities which reduce unnecessary journeys

2.1.23 While the most influential instrument to reduce the carbon intensity of travel will be the fiscal incentive around motorised travel, other important influences outlined in the document are:

- Ensuring the Electric Vehicle charging network underpins public confidence;
- Creating an early public procurement framework for Electric Vehicles;
- Accelerating steps to decarbonise the public transport fleet;

- Enhancing priority for public transport;
- Biofuel mix;
- Giving Local Authorities more discretion in designating low emission zones;
- Developing a strategy for the heavy freight sector.

2.1.24 The document also highlights that the built environment accounted for 12% of Ireland's greenhouse gases in 2017 and the plan includes a number of actions to retrofit existing energy inefficient buildings, provides incentives to switch from oil burners to heat pumps, promotes the installation of district heating in commercial buildings and seeks to apply new building standards to promote energy efficient building technologies.

2.1.25 The County Development Plan has a fundamental role in tackling these issues by ensuring new development is located and designed to prioritise walking and cycling. The Urban Capacity Study has provided essential data on the considerable capacity within the existing building stock and built envelope of our towns to accommodate additional residential and non residential uses and this can inform strategic policy decisions on delivering sustainable and climate adaptable development which can also help revitalise our town and village centres.

The Guidelines on Urban Development and Building Heights (2018)

2.1.26 These Guidelines were adopted on Friday 7th December 2018 under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act (2000) as amended. These policies now take precedence over any conflicting policies and objectives of development plans, local area plans and strategic development zone planning schemes.

2.1.27 The main provisions include a presumption in favour of buildings of increased heights of at least 6 storeys at street level within our existing town/ city cores and other urban areas with good public transport accessibility. A strong focus on brownfield land and redeveloping existing under-utilised sites is recommended. Consideration of general building heights of at least 3-4 storeys, coupled with appropriate density in locations outside city and town centres, including suburban locations is also provided for.

2.1.28 General support for increased building heights is also coupled with a need to provide for a balance of uses within our urban areas, rather than focussing on just one or two uses. Mechanisms such as phasing should be considered as a means to manage the redevelopment of a site block with the necessary supporting services (such as shops/ community facilities, education facilities etc.).

2.1.29 The Statutory Implications of these Guidelines for the County Development Plan Review means the forthcoming Plan must include the following:

- A positive disposition towards **appropriate assessment criteria** that will enable proper consideration of development proposals of increased building heights linked to the achievement of a greater density of development.

- Make provisions for actively planning to bring about increased density and height of development within the footprint of our developing sustainable mobility corridors and networks (Metropolitan settlements subject to CMATS).
- Identification and policy support for specific geographic locations or areas where increased building height is not only desirable but a fundamental policy requirement.
- Locations deemed suitable for a comprehensive redevelopment (e.g. may include clusters of tall buildings as a new urban district and which are in excess of 2 ha) should be accompanied by appropriate master planning exercises and local planning frameworks to deal with movement, public realm, design and other issues dealt with at a neighbourhood scale rather than at individual site scale.
- Within historic environments, consider whether increased building heights are an appropriate typology or not.

Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS)

2.1.30 The Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy has been developed by the National Transport Authority (NTA) in collaboration with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Cork City Council and Cork County Council. A key principle of CMATS is to reduce reliance on the private car within the metropolitan area while increasing the attractiveness of sustainable transport choices. The strategy addresses the needs of all modes of transport and seeks to coordinate land use and transportation investment in order to manage the significant increase in the demand for travel which will result from the projected 50%+ growth in population, and associated growth in economic activity, in the Metropolitan Area in the period to 2040. This travel demand needs to be managed and planned for carefully, in order to safeguard and enhance Cork's attractiveness as a place to live, work, visit and invest. The strategy provides a clear implementation plan around which other agencies involved in land use planning, environmental protection, and delivery of other infrastructure such as housing and water can align their investment priorities.

2.1.31 CMATS identifies key development priorities as follows:

- (a) Ensure effective integration between transport and land-use through the delivery of Public Transport Orientated Development, which provides higher density, a balanced mix of land uses and compact settlements that reduce trip distances and are of a magnitude that supports the viability of high capacity public transport;
- (b) The application of this principle in Cork would support the development of a high-intensity mix of uses being directed to locations at existing or planned stations along the suburban and light rail lines and along the high frequency bus corridors;
- (c) The density of future residential and employment developments such as the Tivoli Docks and existing, centrally located and accessible settlements will be increased. Higher densities contribute to a more compact urban footprint that can bring more

people closer to destinations and public transport services;

- (d) Deliver consolidated development in a manner that can avail of existing transport infrastructure, nearby amenities and facilities in the short term to deliver a critical mass of growth in population and employment which can support the transition and sequencing of investment to higher capacity public transport infrastructure and services;
- (e) Land use policies that minimise the requirement to travel longer distances by encouraging mixed-use development. This should include ensuring areas are developed in tandem with the delivery of schools and other amenities to maximise the use of more sustainable modes of transport; and
- (f) Land use policies that support the provision and design of new development in locations, layouts and at densities which prioritise walking and cycling and enable the efficient provision of public transport services.

2.1.32 The strategy includes proposals for investment in walking, cycling, bus connects, suburban rail, light rail and roads infrastructure including:

- 200km new footpaths, safer routes to school and transferring 24,000 daily car trips to walking.
- 41km of new cycle network, transferring an additional 56,000 car trips to cycling
- New bus routes, bus lanes, priority bus measures, new fleet and 6 strategic park and ride site proposals.
- Rail network improvements, new suburban rail stations and improved journey times
- 50km of national road network improvements including upgrades to the Dunkettle Interchange, M28 Cork – Ringaskiddy, N27 to Cork Airport and Cork North Ring Road and N40.
- 70km of Regional road improvements.

3 Section 3 The Settlement Network

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This section provides an overview of the baseline situation with regard to the settlement network of the county. It outlines the composition of the settlement network, the role of the different settlements, current growth allocations, capacity for development etc.
- 3.1.2 While this paper deals with the settlement network of the county it is important to acknowledge that these towns and villages exist in the wider context of supporting urban and rural communities.
- 3.1.3 For census purposes the CSO defines a settlement of under 1,500 people as rural. In Cork County, 284 of the 308 designated settlements in the county have populations under 1,500. In the North, West and Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Areas, many of the our smaller towns, while urban by definition for census purposes if the population exceeds 1,500, are also firmly rural in nature given their size and their social, economic and community relationship with their wider hinterland.

3.2 Settlement Network

- 3.2.1 Cork County has an extensive network of town and villages which have evolved through centuries of growth and change, to provide a rich variety of unique settlements of varying scale and character.

Census Towns

- 3.2.2 For Census purposes the county² has 110 designated Census Towns, which range from villages of just over one hundred people to large towns with populations over 10,000, as detailed in Table 3.1. In 2016, 50% of the population of the county³ resided within the 110 census settlements. Table 3.1 also provides details of the census towns within the Southern Region for comparison purposes.

² New county, post the boundary change.

³ 2016 population of the county, adjusted for the boundary change was 332,015.

Census Town Population	Cork County			Southern Region		
	No of towns	Total Persons and % of Total census town population	Growth/Decline Trends 2011-2016	No of towns	Persons and % of Total census town population	Growth/Decline Trends 2011-2016
10,000+	4	53,525 / 32.2%	100% growing Growth rate 5.5%	16	583,235 or 61%	87% growing 13% declining
5,000 to 9,999	6	37,709 / 22.7%	100% growing Growth rate 4.3%	15	109,271 or 11%	80% growing 20% declining
1,000-4,999	18	40,535 / 24.4%	78%growing * 22% declining* Growth rate 3.6%*	70	149,129 or 16%	77% growing 23% declining
500-999	26	18,190/ 11%	85% growing 15% declining Growth rate 9.6%	94	60,050 or 6%	67% growing 33% declining
Less than 500	56	16,097/ 9.7%	73% growing 27 % declining Growth rate 8.2%	201	56,350 or 6%	54% growing 46% declining

**Four towns in this category recorded a decline in population. In three cases (Clonakilty, Macroom and Bantry), the recorded decline is due to a change to the census boundary. When the same geographic boundaries are used for 2011 and 2016 there was actually an increase in population. Millstreet was the fourth town to record a small decline of 19 persons.*

3.2.3 Table 3.1 illustrates the strong growth performance of the census settlements of all sizes in the county. All Census towns over 5,000 in the county are growing and the majority of census settlements in the smaller population categories are also growing. The strong performance of these settlements reflects the policies and objectives pursued by the Council in previous plans and needs to be further reinforced in future plans. However growth rates in the smaller settlements are notably stronger than in the larger settlements. Ideally the larger settlements, due to their employment and service functions should be experiencing the strongest levels of growth.

Settlement network of CDP / LAPs

3.2.4 The County Development Plan 2014 sets out the settlement network of the county, which has been extended over the years as new locations have been formally designated as settlements. The 1996 County Development Plan identified 164 settlements. Since 2005, this has grown to include 308 locations as set out in Table 3.2. Due to the small size of many of these settlements, census populations are not available for them.

Plan	Main Settlement	Key Village	Village	Village Nuclei	Other Location	Total
CDP 1996	25	50	61	17	11	164
MDLAP 2017	26	52	95	88	47	308
Change	+1*	+2	+34	+71	+36	+144
*Monard						

3.2.5 Table 3.3 illustrates the current number of settlements at each level of the network within each Municipal District. The large numbers of settlements at the lower end of the network is notable, i.e. Villages, Village Nuclei and Other Locations.

Table 3.3 Settlement Network by Municipal District 2019

MD	Main Settlement	Key Village	Village	Village Nuclei	Other Location	Total	MD Population 2016
Bandon Kinsale	2	6	9	14	10	40	37,269
Carrigaline	3	1	4	1	5	15	35,141
Cobh	4	3	2	2	8	19	34,117
East Cork	2	4	8	10	8	32	45,441
Fermoy	2	10	9	8	0	29	36,406
Kanturk Mallow	5	8	24	12	2	51	54,092
Macroom	2	4	17	23	5	51	36,844
West Cork	6	9	23	18	8	64	52,705
West Cork Islands	0	7	0	0	0	7	
Total	26	52	96	88	46	308	332,015

3.3 The Role of the Settlement Network

- 3.3.1 The role of the settlements at each level of the hierarchy is defined in Chapter 2 of the County Development Plan 2014, as set out in Table 3.4. At the metropolitan and town level there is an emphasis on population and employment growth and capacity to provide services to support the wider hinterland.
- 3.3.2 Growth at Key Village level, of an appropriate scale and subject to the availability of water services, is aligned to support a wider hinterland and the retention of key services and inter urban public transport.
- 3.3.3 Similarly at Village level, development at an appropriate scale and subject to the availability of water services, is also intended to support the retention of key services and inter urban public transport. At village nuclei level small scale development with individual serviced sites is envisaged, while Other Locations generally have functional roles in relation to tourism, heritage, recreation or other uses.
- 3.3.4 In reality, apart from some of the main towns, most of the settlements are not served by good quality public transport and there is a high reliance on the use of the private car to make journeys to work, school or college, in addition for local trips to access services. Many of the smaller settlements are located a considerable distance from the main centres of employment thus necessitating long commutes to work. The sustainability of this pattern of development needs to be considered in light of our responsibility to deliver increased modal

shift towards sustainable travel and reduce reliance on the private car.

Table 3.4 Role of Settlement Network – County Development Plan 2014		
Network	Location	Strategic Aim
Cork Gateway / County Metropolitan	Metropolitan Towns Carrigaline, Carrigtwohill, Cobh, Midleton Monard, Passage West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Growth in population and employment so that the Cork Gateway can compete effectively for investment and jobs. ➤ Develop to complement & consolidate the development of the city as a whole. ➤ Consolidate employment at existing employment locations with improved supporting infrastructure, and in particular public transport improvements to provide linkages to local residential populations and Cork City. ➤ Critical population growth, service and employment centres within the Cork “Gateway”, providing high levels of community facilities and amenities with infrastructure capacity high quality and integrated public transport connections should be the location of choice for most people especially those with an urban employment focus.
Hub Town	Mallow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To grow its population to 20,000 as envisaged by the NSS. Develop as a major integrated employment centre so that it fulfils its role at regional and county level and should be location of choice for most people especially those with an urban employment focus.
Ring Towns	Bandon, Fermoy, Kinsale, Macroom, Youghal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To provide a better balance of development throughout the Greater Cork Ring Area, and fulfill their economic potential as quality urban centres providing employment, shopping, services and public transport for their rural hinterland so that they can become the location of choice for most people especially those with an urban employment focus.
County Towns	North (Buttevant, Charleville, Kanturk, Millstreet, Mitchelstown, Newmarket) West (Bantry, Castletownbere, Clonakilty, Dunmanway, Schull, Skibbereen).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To provide a better balance of development between each town and its rural hinterland and fulfil their role as economic and employment centres providing for the needs of their extensive rural hinterlands, so that they can become the location of choice for most people especially those with an urban employment focus.
Key Villages	To be identified in the Local Area Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establish key villages as the primary focus for development in rural areas in the lower order settlement network and allow for the provision of local services, by encouraging and facilitating population growth at a scale, layout and design that reflects the character of each village, where water services and waste water infrastructure is available. Supporting the retention and improvement of key social and community facilities, and inter urban public transport.

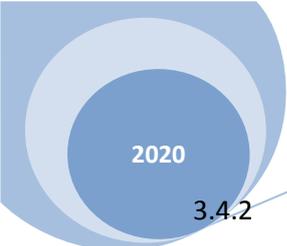
Network	Location	Strategic Aim
Village Nuclei	To be identified in the Local Area Plans	➤ Preserve the rural character of village nuclei and encourage small scale expansion at a scale, layout and design that reflects the character of each village, where water services and waste water infrastructure is available generally through low-density individual housing, in tandem with the provision of services.
Other Locations	To be identified in the Local Area Plans	➤ Recognise “Other Locations”, as areas which may not form a significant part of the settlement network, but do perform important functions with regard to tourism, heritage, recreation and other uses.

3.4 Current Growth Allocation

3.4.1 Current CDP / LAP policy advocates development across the settlement network and rural areas as detailed in Table 3.5. The majority of growth (76%) is allocated to the main towns, 9% to the Key villages, 5% to the villages and 2% to the Village Nuclei. Rural areas are allocated 8% of the housing growth.

MD*	Main Settlement	Key Village	Village	Village Nuclei	Other Location	Total	Rural houses*
Bandon Kinsale	2,846	778	392	260	0	4,276	250
Carrigaline	3,269	286	97	10	0	3,662	425
Cobh	10,106	608	75	85	0	10,874	560
East Cork	7,248	815	335	64	0	8,462	389
Fermoy	3,111	724	83	116	0	4,034	559
Kanturk Mallow	9,257	768	447	57	0	10,529	872
Macroom	1,534	472	524	665	0	3,195	741
West Cork	5,305	842	672	150	0	6,969	623
Total	42,676	5,293	2,625	1,407	0	52,001	4,419
	76%	9%	5%	2%			8%

* MD housing allocation refers to the new boundaries post the boundary extension, with the exception of the figures for the rural housing which are taken from the LAP / CDP, and relate to the old boundaries.



2020

3.4.2 As outlined in Table 2.1 in Section Two, the new County Development Plan will need to allocate population growth of 49,000 persons to the County Metropolitan Area, and 55,000 persons to the remainder of the County, in the period to 2040. The Core Strategy of the Draft Plan will set out proposals for how this growth should be allocated across the settlement network and rural areas.

3.5 Capacity for Development

Water Services

3.5.1 In many of our settlements the capacity for environmentally and economically sustainable development is limited due to a combination of factors, including the absence of sustainable public water services (drinking water and waste water treatment) and the limited local job opportunities necessitating long commutes to larger urban centres for employment. Such journeys are increasingly recognised as having a significant negative impact on quality of life due to the amount of time spent travelling and also contribute to unsustainable carbon emissions which are damaging the environment, while simultaneously contributing to congestion in our towns, thus having a negative impact on the environment of those settlements.

3.5.2 Table 3.6 provides a summary overview of the availability of public water services facilities within the settlement network of the county as an indicator of the capacity of the network to accommodate new development. At the lower end of the network there is a significant water services constraint:

- At Village level, 60% of settlements have no waste water treatment capacity or facilities and 34% have no public drinking water supply capacity or facilities
- At Village Nuclei level, 94% have no waste water treatment capacity or facilities and 49% have no public drinking water supply capacity or facilities.
- At Other Locations level, 93% have no waste water treatment capacity or facilities and 57% have no public drinking water supply capacity or facilities.

3.5.3 In the absence of water services capacity, or meaningful public transport services to many of the smaller settlements, and the principles of the NPF and the RSES, the sustainability of the current settlement network model needs to be considered as part of the review of the CDP.

Table 3.6. Water Services Capacity within the Settlement Network

Settlement Network	Water Supply				Waste Water				
	Total	Capacity	Future capacity	Limited capacity	No capacity	Capacity	Future capacity	Limited capacity	No capacity
Main Settlements	26*	9	3	10	4	10	14	2	0
Key Villages	45	15	6	17	7	11	20	6	8
Villages	96	37	2	24	33	20	13	6	57
Village Nuclei	88	21	1	23	43	3	2	0	83
Other Locations	46	12	0	8	26	1	0	2	43
Islands	7	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	7
Total	308	95	13	85	115	45	49	16	198

* Future capacity is subject to completion of projects on the Irish Water Investment Plan – awaiting approval from the CRU.

3.6 Demand for Housing across the settlement network

- 3.6.1 A Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment will be prepared for the County to inform the review of the County Development Plan and will provide an overview of the Cork Housing Market and the factors influencing the demand for housing across the county.
- 3.6.2 In order to inform the Housing Need Demand Assessment, an analysis has been undertaken of the Area of Choice data from Housing Applicants to look at the locational preferences of housing applicants. When housing applicants are filling in their application for housing support they can select three locations of choice from a defined list of 149 settlements across North, South and West Cork.
- 3.6.3 There are 308 settlements identified in the local areas plans but not all of these are included in the *Areas of Choice* open to applicants for housing support. The *Areas of Choice* available include:
- all the Main Settlements, except Monard (25/26),
 - all the Key Villages with the exception of Glounthaune (44/45)
 - 63 Villages out of a total of 96 identified in the LAPs(63/96)
 - 11 Village Nuclei out of a total of 88 identified in the LAPs (11/88)
 - One Other Location out of a total of 46 identified in the LAPs.(1/46)
 - 5 Islands (5/7).

3.6.4 Table 3.7 provides a summary of the findings of the analysis (using data from October 2018) and shows that 64% of persons who expressed a preference choose the main towns, 23% the Key villages and 11% the villages. Below the level of Village, there are very few housing locations to choose from on the Housing Assistance Form, so the numbers below that are negligible. There is considerable variation in selection across the settlement network, reflecting the composition of the settlement network in each Municipal District.

3.6.5 The strength of the preference for main settlements is interesting and perhaps points to a lack of real demand for any significant housing development at the lower levels of the settlement network. The lack of such demand is understandable given the limited services available at the lower levels of the network and the distance between many of the smaller settlements and the main centres of employment / services.

Table 3.7 Areas of Choice Data October 2018 by Settlement Network and Municipal District

Municipal District	Total number of LAP settlements	No of settlements available to Housing Applicants - Areas of Choice	No* of approved applicants	Main Settlement		Key Village		Village		Village Nuclei		Other Location	
				No.	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Bandon Kinsale	40	12	1317	717	54%	447	34%	71	5%	82	6%	0	0
Carrigaline	15	8	1047	778	74%	179	17%	86	8%	0	0	4	<1%
Cobh	19	7	1412	1217	86%	130	9%	65	5%	0	0	0	0
East Cork	32	13	2083	1455	70%	474	23%	150	7%	4	<1%	0	0
Fermoy	29	18	1304	645	49%	567	43%	89	7%	3	<1%	0	0
Kanturk Mallow	51	36	1833	1236	64%	172	9%	418	22%	7	<1%	0	0
Macroom	51	22	747	273	37%	194	26%	181	24%	93	12%	1	0
West Cork	64	28	2197	1354	62%	614	28%	212	10%	16	<1%	0	0
West Cork Islands	7	5	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	308	149	11,978	7,675	64%	2777	23%	1,272	11%	205	2%	5	<1%

**applicants can select multiple locations so this is not a true picture of the housing list.*

3.7 Settlement Strategy Principles for the next County Development Plan.

3.7.1 Having regard to issues raised in sections two and three of this document including:

- The significant levels of population growth to be accommodated in the county to 2040.
- The need to strengthen and support the renewal of our existing settlements rather than the continual expansion and sprawl of settlements and development into the countryside.
- The need to strengthen and diversify rural towns to be a focus for local housing and employment growth.
- The need to address vacancy and underutilisation of the building stock of our towns and villages and accommodate at least 30% of all new housing within the existing

- built up footprint of out towns and villages.
- The established pattern of distributing growth across the settlement network (Table 3.5).
- The demand for housing within the main towns.
- The need to reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable travel options like walking, cycling or public transport where available.
- The need to encourage greater geographical alignment between housing and jobs.
- The lack of water services capacity to accommodate development in the smaller settlements and,
- The need to accommodate rural housing needs in accordance with national policy.

consideration could be given to including settlement strategy principles in the new County Development Plan, along the lines of those set out below:

1. Encourage and facilitate more people to choose to live close to where they work to reduce the need to travel.
2. Prioritise the main towns as the focus for housing and employment growth so that more people can choose to live and work in the towns in the years ahead. This will require more investment in our towns to improve the range of facilities available, public realm, placemaking etc.
3. Proactively engage with securing the delivery of at least 30% of all new housing within the existing built footprint of our towns and villages, including the reuse of existing buildings and redevelopment of infill or derelict sites.
4. CDP will continue to allocate growth in line with the established distribution pattern.
5. Key villages with sustainable water services infrastructure will be allocated modest levels of growth.
6. Below the level of key village, growth will only be allocated to settlements with sustainable water services capacity.
7. Provision for rural housing needs will be included in the Core Strategy.
8. In the smaller rural towns and villages a proportionate and tailored approach will be taken to the scale, design and layout of new housing development to ensure it is appropriate to the rural setting, and includes the opportunity for people to build their own homes within a settlement setting.
9. Continue to facilitate the provision of one off rural housing in accordance with national policy and normal planning criteria, where people have a demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area.

4 Section 4: Stronger Urban Places

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section deals with the main ingredients in making stronger, more successful settlements – density, placemaking and understanding the urban structure of our settlements. These elements are the building blocks to deliver compact growth and provide quality urban environments for the diverse needs of the County’s communities.

4.2 Density and Mix

- 4.2.1 Density influences the intensity of development, and in combination with the mix of uses, can affect a place’s vitality and viability. The density of people living and working in a town has a direct impact on its diversity and attractiveness. It can also improve economies of scale, improving the viability of public transport to serve and connect the town to other places and allows more effective public expenditure on hard and soft infrastructure such as roads, utilities, education, leisure etc.
- 4.2.2 The requirement for higher density standards and more compact forms of growth in urban and suburban locations is set out in a number of National Government Guidance documents including Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009), the National Planning Framework 2018 and the Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines (2018).
- 4.2.3 However it is important to acknowledge that high density is not a new concept and most of our settlements already have examples of high density development. Historically, our County’s towns and villages were designed to create compact communities to facilitate trade, transport and social interaction. Buildings were generally arranged in terraced format, two to three storeys high usually following a perimeter block format. Where needed, buildings were designed to accommodate a commercial use on ground floor with a separate access to facilitate “living over the shop”. Analysis of some of these perimeter block formats in Cobh and Midleton illustrates that a combination of terraced units and living over the shop delivers densities well in excess of the 50 unit/ha high density threshold advocated in the Guidelines and the mix of uses which support compact urban living. In more recent decades the towns have been expanded predominantly with the development of lower density suburban housing estates. In the future, a greater mix of house types and formats, more terraced development and more mixed use patterns of land use will be needed to achieve higher densities and compact growth. New housing developments, irrespective of size, need to be more people-centred with provision for mixed tenure typologies and multi-generational patterns of living encouraged. New housing schemes also need a stronger sense of local character, identity, permeability, defensibility and have a high quality of residential amenity.
- 4.2.4 Recent experience with Strategic Housing Developments and decisions from An Bord Pleanála all highlight the increased emphasis of implementing the government guidelines on achieving higher density development in appropriate locations, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Higher density can deliver economies of scale and

can justify significant infrastructural investment, services and amenities including public transport, schools, health services, parks and amenities, all of which can greatly add to the quality of life. Within Metropolitan Cork, the delivery of the proposed €3.5 billion investment package under the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy is dependent on more effective integration between land use and public transportation. The delivery of more public transport orientated development and compact settlements, with a critical mass of population and employment, will support investment in sustainable travel and reduce the need to travel longer distances.

- 4.2.5 Allied to increasing density, the Plan Review will also need to consider how best to achieve a more mixed pattern of land use, with closer geographical alignment between housing, employment and other services to reduce the need to travel. This may include broadening the zoning regime and /or providing an alternative density measure such as plot ratio to ensure an appropriate density is delivered within mixed use schemes.

Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas

- 4.2.6 The Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas set out a two tiered approach to density. The Guidelines advocate the highest densities in settlements over 5,000 population, and along high quality public transport routes, and advocate lower densities in settlements with populations in the range of 400 – 5000 population. The requirements of the Guidelines are detailed in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below.

Table 4.1. Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas - Main provisions for Large Towns (5,000+ population) include:		
Location	Density	Applicable locations Cork County
Town Centres:	No Upper Limit.	Carrigaline, Cobh, Midleton, Mallow, Youghal, Bandon, Fermoy, Passage West, Kinsale, Carrigtwohill, Settlements currently under 5,000 population but with growth targets approaching or exceeding the threshold include Clonakilty, Bantry, Mitchelstown, Charleville & Macroom.
Brownfield Land	High density approach required, particularly those close to existing or future public transport corridors.	
Public Transport Corridors:	Minimum net densities of 50 units/ha promoted within 500m walking distance of a bus stop or 1km of a light rail or rail station.	
Inner Suburban:	The provision of additional dwellings can be achieved via infill residential development, sub-division of dwellings, mews etc.	
Institutional Lands:	Average densities of 35-50 dwellings/ha recommended. Concentrating development in certain areas to retain open character of certain attractive lands/ curtilage can be considered (up to 70 dwellings/ha).	
Outer Suburban/ Greenfield:	Densities in the range of 35-50 dwellings/ha encouraged. Densities < 30 dwellings/ha discouraged in the interests of land efficiency, particularly on sites greater than 0.5ha.	

Table 4.2 Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Main provisions for Smaller Towns and Villages (400 – 5,000 population)	
<p>General Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Significant enhancement of density and scale may be appropriate in locations close to Gateways and hubs served by high quality Public Transport. ➤ Also where it contributes to enhancement of town or village by reinforcing street pattern or assists in backland development. ➤ Should contribute to compact towns and villages and promote walking and cycling. ➤ Prioritising the redevelopment of central brownfield sites and backland development which link to the core. ➤ Preferable that the overall expansion of the settlement proceeds on the basis of a number of well integrated sites within and around the town/ village. ➤ Sequencing of development must avoid leapfrogging. 	
<p>Applicable locations :</p> <p>Skibbereen, Kanturk, Dunmanway, Millstreet, Newmarket, Buttevant, Castletownbere Schull, Cloyne,</p> <p>Consideration could also be given to preparing more detailed zoning maps for villages with populations in excess of 1,500.</p>	
Location	Density
Centrally located sites :	High density at the core is recommended. Generally 30-40+ dwellings/ha appropriate.
Edge of Centre Sites:	To achieve a clear urban hierarchy and transition between the high density core and lower density edge, a range of 20-35 units/ha is recommended.
Greenfield lands:	Only sites located contiguous to the built envelope should be permitted to ensure the sequential development of the town/ village. Densities of 15-20 units/ha recommended.
Low density option:	In some limited circumstances, especially where pressure for development of single homes in rural areas is high, proposals for lower densities may be considered on serviced land within the environs of the town or village.

Density Provisions of the Cork County Development Plan 2014

- 4.2.7 Currently, the County Development Plan has two density categories – High and Medium as detailed in Table 4.3. The Plan defines development of 35 units/ha and over as being high density, and places no upper limit on the density that may be appropriate on lands zoned for high density development. Table 4.3 indicates that a high density approach is applicable in all town centres across the County and close to future high quality public transport corridors.
- 4.2.8 Medium density is divided into two categories. Medium A is defined as 20- 50 units per ha while Medium B has a density range of 12-25 units per hectare. A number of exceptions to the ranges indicated are possible as detailed in the comment column.

- 4.2.9 While these densities apply to residential zoning, residential development may also form part of development on land zoned for Town Centre uses or as part of Special Policy Areas. Residential development within mixed use town centres zoned would generally be expected to be of higher density.

Density Category	Minimum Net Density	Max Net Density	Comment
High	35	No Limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable in town centres throughout the county and in other areas identified in LAP's normally in close proximity to existing or proposed high quality public transport corridors. • Normally requires/involves apartment development. • Subject to compliance with appropriate design/amenity standards and protecting the residential amenity of adjoining property and the heritage assets of town centres.
Medium 'A'	20	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicable in city suburbs, larger towns over 5,000 population and rail corridor locations (example Carrigwohill). • Apartment development is permissible where appropriate but there is no requirement to include an apartment element in development proposals. • Consider a lower standard of public open space provision where larger private gardens are provided. • Must connect to public water and waste-water services. • Broad housing mix normally required including detached/ serviced sites unless otherwise specified in relevant Local Area Plan.
Medium 'B'	12	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Max Net Density extended to 35 dwellings/ha in smaller towns outside Metropolitan Cork. • Normally applicable in smaller towns (less the 5,000 population). • Can be applied in larger towns through LAP's where there is a requirement to broaden the range of house types. • Densities less than 12 dwellings/ha will be considered where an exceptional market requirement has been identified. • Densities between 25 and 35 dwellings/ha will be considered where an exceptional market requirement has been identified. • Consider a lower standard of public open space provision where larger private gardens are provided. • Must connect to public water and waste-water services. • Broad housing mix normally required including

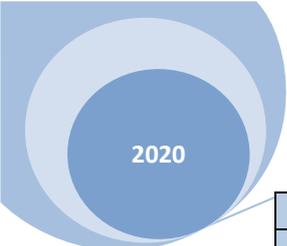


Table 4.3. Density Standards of the County Development Plan 2014			
Density Category	Minimum Net Density	Max Net Density	Comment
			detached/ serviced sites unless otherwise specified in relevant Local Area Plan.

Density of Residentially Zoned Land – Local Area Plans 2017

- 4.2.10 A review of the density requirements for the land zoned for residential use in the 2017 LAPs indicates that across the county as a whole, only Midleton and Carrigtwohill have land zoned for high density residential development. There are 4 sites zoned in Midleton comprising a total of 13.9ha (or 8% of the zoned residential land supply) and 3 sites in Carrigtwohill totalling 14.8h (10% of the residential land supply).
- 4.2.11 All towns in Metropolitan Cork have land zoned for Medium A density residential development, although the proportion of the land supply so designated varies significantly – 78% in Carrigaline and 31% in Carrigtwohill.
- 4.2.12 Within the Greater Cork Ring SPA only Youghal and Fermoy have lands zoned for Medium A density residential development. In Youghal it comprises 56% of the land supply and in Fermoy it is 60%. In North Cork, Mitchelstown is the only location to have land so zoned, where it amounts to one site / 2% of the land supply. None of the towns in West Cork have land zoned for Medium A density residential development.
- 4.2.13 The analysis shows that the majority of sites zoned for residential use across the county are zoned for Medium B density development which provides for development in the range of 12-25 units per hectare. The guidelines indicate that densities in this range are only suitable for the edges of the smaller towns under 5,000 population.
- 4.2.14 The former town council towns have all taken a different approach to density and details from these plans are not included in the analysis.
- 4.2.15 One of the main locations where high density residential development may be expected is within town centre areas. However as shown in Table 4.4, there are very few sites across the county zoned for high density residential use. Typically town centre zonings are for mixed use so residential may form part of a wider mix of uses including retail or office for example. The potential residential yield from such development is therefore difficult to quantify and such development is more likely to be brownfield in nature, and potentially less attractive to developers. Given that the demand for new retail and office development in many of the smaller towns may also be limited, consideration could be given to identifying some specific town centre sites for higher density residential use, in order to encourage the delivery of such housing within the core of our towns.
- 4.2.16 As there is no upper density limit to the High Density designation, it is important that other guidance is available to support such development to ensure it does not significantly impact on the amenities of an area or other neighbouring uses. The review of the CDP needs to provide for such guidance.

Table 4.4 Density requirements of residentially zoned land (MD LAPs 2017)								
Town	No. of sites	Total area Ha.	Residential zoned land supply					
			Sites for High Density No.	Sites for Medium A No.	Sites for Medium B No.	High density %	Medium A %	Medium B %
Metropolitan Cork								
Carrigaline	18	100.44	0	15	3	0	78	22
Cobh*	19	96.1	0	5	14	0	31	69
Carrigtwohill	20	145.6	3	5.5	11.5	10	31	59
Midleton*	27	186.5	4	18	5	8	80	12
Passage West	9	38.5	0	3	6	0	57	43
Ring								
Bandon	16	113.03	0	0	16	0	0	100
Kinsale*	7	46.5	0	0	7	0	0	100
Macroon*	2	5.83	0	0	2	0	0	100
Fermoy*	11	92.26	0	6	5	0	60	40
Mallow*^	10	304.93	0	6	1	0	26	.42
Youghal*	3	12.4	0	2	1	0	56	43
North								
Charleville	8	69.7	0	0	8	0	0	100
Mitchelstown	13	90	0	1	12	0	2	98
Kanturk	8	32.9	0	0	8	0	0	100
Millstreet	4	19.8	0	0	4	0	0	100
Newmarket	8	24.9	0	0	8	0	0	100
Buttevant	5	29.5	0	0	5	0	0	100
West								
Bantry	13	107.8	0	0	13	0	0	100
Clonakilty*	3	51	0	0	3	0	0	100
Skibbereen*	5	15.36	0	0	5	0	0	100
Dunmanway	12	38.9	0	0	12	0	0	100
Castletownbere	6	38.3	0	0	6	0	0	100
Schull	6	10.7	0	0	6	0	0	100
<p>* In the former Town Council towns data relates to zoned lands in the environs only and does not include land within the former Town Councils areas as they all take different approaches to density.</p> <p>^ Mallow land supply includes 2 large Urban Expansion Areas which represent 73% of the land supply. These zonings are not ascribed a specific density. Instead they have a requirement for a range of uses including residential, employment, educational etc. and a specific number of housing units (4,000 new units).</p> <p>Note: in Little Island there is one site for Medium B density residential development comprising 19.1ha</p>								

Issues for the CDP Review

4.2.17 The analysis above suggests a need to review the existing approach to density in the County Development Plan to better reflect current government policy. The key areas to be addressed include:

- How do we deliver a tailored approach to settlements with populations above /below the 5,000 person threshold, and those with high quality public transport provision? This may require a different set of density standards for settlements of different size, those identified for significant growth under the NPF and RSES (i.e. Metropolitan Cork, Mallow and Clonakilty), or those well served by public transport.
- What measures are needed to deliver higher density standards generally and a tiered approach to density within settlements – i.e. higher densities at the core and reducing density as one nears the outer edge of a settlement to achieve a clear urban hierarchy.
- What measures are needed to help people understand the advantages of higher density development and to have confidence that such homes can offer attractive, high quality homes in accessible locations?
- Within High Quality Public Transport Corridors, the guidelines indicate a minimum of 50/ha within 500m of a bus stop or 1km of a train station. What measures can the plan take to secure these densities? What other measures might be needed to support community development in these areas?
- How can the plan deliver a more mixed use land pattern? What uses should be mixed together? What other measures would support such an approach and supports sustainable travel?

4.2.18 A revised approach could therefore consider the following issues:

- Identifying some additional land along high quality public transport corridors within Metropolitan Cork for high density zoning to deliver integrated land-use and transportation development. This could include lands which may be currently zoned town centre or ‘existing built up area’.
- Within each Strategic Planning Area, review the quantum and distribution of land zoned for Medium A and Medium B Density development, having regard to the size of the settlement and the location of the lands / suitability for development. The guidelines would indicate that Medium B Density (15-25/ha) should be applied in more limited circumstances than currently provided for by the LAPs.
- All of the Main Settlements within the County have land identified as “existing built up area”. This typically includes land that has already been built on for a variety of uses, but may also include pockets of greenfield land, under-utilised land, vacant premises suitable for redevelopment, infill sites etc. Consideration could be given to identifying significant sites for specific zoning as part of the overall approach to

delivering compact growth and higher density residential development within the core of the towns.

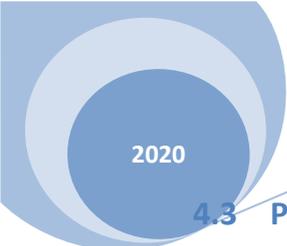
- Consideration could also be given to prioritising the redevelopment of central brownfield sites and backland development which link to the core as an essential part of the sequencing of future development. These can help create new streets or urban quarters within our settlement network, improving the overall vitality and attractiveness of our settlements.

Approach to Villages

- 4.2.19 In terms of the villages, no changes are proposed to the current approach of identifying an appropriate “Overall Scale of Development” and “Normal Recommended Scale of any individual scheme” as set out in the current Municipal District Local Area Plans.
- 4.2.20 The village network across the county varies considerably in terms of the population and the urban form of each settlement. In the absence of site specific zoning in the villages, and the large development boundaries in many cases, it is not possible to be specific about the appropriate density of development in villages. The Plan review will include more detailed guidance on the criteria which should inform decisions about what the appropriate density of development in a village setting is, having regard to the provisions of the Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, and other local issues.
- 4.2.21 A more detailed zoning map may be considered for the larger villages with a population in excess of 1,500.

Density within the Existing Built Up Area

- 4.2.22 As discussed earlier, all of the Main Settlements within the County have land identified as “existing built up area”. Consideration could be given to taking some significant sites out of this designation in favour of proactively zoning them for residential development, while other lands will remain part of this categorisation.
- 4.2.23 Under the NPF, at least 30% of new housing units are to be developed within the built envelope of our towns. This focus on urban renewal/ regeneration and tackling vacancy will support the delivery of higher densities within our urban settlements and a tailored urban design response to its urban context.
- 4.2.24 Within the “existing built up area”, the approach to density should also be guided by the site’s location relative to the town centre and its access to good quality public transport links as set out in the Guidelines, as well as the requirements of other policies in relation to building heights etc., and normal proper planning and sustainable development criteria. Intensification of uses in some areas and promoting more mixed use development also needs to be considered. The Plan review will include more detailed guidance on the criteria which should inform decisions about the appropriate density of development within the Existing Built up Area.



4.3 Placemaking

- 4.3.1 Placemaking is not a new concept but the NPF and RSES have placed a renewed emphasis on its importance. At its essence, it is about the layout, design and management of the built environment and public realm, how the buildings and spaces relate to each other and ensuring that places are attractive and enticing, thus strengthening the connection between people and the places they live, supporting a greater sense of ownership, community values and activity.

- 4.3.2 How future development is planned will continue to be a significant determinant of peoples' quality of life. People need focal points in their towns and communities to meet, sit or just watch the world go by. Successful places are designed, built and managed with an attention to quality and puts the human experience at the heart of the design process. Planning policy places a strong emphasises on developing sustainable communities and placemaking and the development of sustainable communities are mutually supportive. The renewed focus on compact growth requires a fundamental shift in the way we plan our urban centres and demands a more tailored approach to placemaking and the planning and delivery of development. On its own, just zoning land for development, is not enough to ensure the delivery of attractive successful places that people will choose to live in. The Development Plan will need to consider what additional criteria can help deliver quality development that reinforces the uniqueness of County Cork's diverse places.

- 4.3.3 Successful Placemaking has three main components:
 - Harnesses the unique characteristics of each place;
 - Improves the quality of life for all;
 - Results in sustainable, well-designed homes and communities;

- 4.3.4 The diagram below demonstrates how place-making and sustainable communities are interchangeable:



Place-making Principles

4.3.5 There are seven key principles of placemaking. These are detailed the table 4.7. The Development Plan aims to improve the quality of County Cork’s urban environments and encourage a high standard of design in all new developments. Adhering to the principles of “Placemaking” will achieve permeable, well connected, safe and sustainable built and natural environments, which enhance the special character and heritage of the County’s varied townscapes.

Table 4.7 Principles of Placemaking		
Theme	Strategic Objectives	Local Outcomes
Character and Identity	To promote local character within the townscape and village-scape of our settlement network by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.	Elements of local distinctiveness such as local materials, building forms and features reinforce the palette of the existing place eg. Wall hung slates on building facades in Kinsale.
Continuity and Enclosure	To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public areas.	Consistent building lines create a strong street frontage, provides enclosure to a street or square and generates active frontages with

Table 4.7 Principles of Placemaking		
Theme	Strategic Objectives	Local Outcomes
		frequent doors and windows.
Quality of the Public Realm/ Open Space	To promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and older people.	The best public spaces often have nodes of activity complimented by quiet zones, stimulate the senses, use quality local materials, have built-in versatility and are complimented by a coherent street furniture, lighting and signage strategy e.g. Clonakilty
Ease of Movement	To promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.	Streets and routes should be direct, overlooked, barrier-free and measures used to slow traffic down to encourage pedestrian and cycling safety.
Legibility	To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.	Emphasise the hierarchy of place with a graduation of building heights and density from the core, framing views and landmarks and creating new focal points.
Adaptability	To promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.	Maintain separate own door access to upper floors of buildings in the town centre to maintain vertical mixed use profiles.
Diversity and Vibrancy	To promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs	To ensure the town and village cores contain residential, social and economic uses to maintain a vibrancy beyond business hours.

- 4.3.6 The Development Plan Review needs to consider how effective policy, supplementary guidance and design standards can encourage Placemaking at a strategic level by directing the right type of development and land-use to the right place, and at local level by promoting a design-led approach to an agreed set of Placemaking principles and insisting on high quality development that embodies the special characteristics of our diverse Towns and Villages.
- 4.3.7 Cork County Council has been commended for a number of high quality town centre public realm intervention such as Clonakilty, Mallow and Killeagh, which have added to the attractiveness of these urban areas as a place to live, shop and visit. This experience needs to be developed in other areas, particularly those targeted for significant population growth.

4.4 Urban Capacity Study

- 4.4.1 The Council undertook an Urban Capacity Study⁴ of the town centre areas of the nine former town council towns of Cobh, Clonakilty, Fermoy, Kinsale, Mallow, Macroom, Midleton, Skibbereen and Youghal, and the town of Bantry in 2018/2019. The study identified that approximately 2,000 additional units could be delivered in the heart of our towns through a combination of Living Over the Shop initiatives, targeting vacancy, providing infill units within the fabric of our towns and rejuvenating under-utilised and derelict brownfield land. Similar capacity is likely to exist in the other towns of the county. It is important that this potential for development is tapped into in the context of achieving the compact growth and higher density development objectives of the National Planning Framework and delivering at least 30% of all new homes within the existing built footprint our settlements.
- 4.4.2 It is important that the compact growth opportunities are supported by a wider programme of targeted investment in the enhancement of the public realm, public parks and amenity spaces and regeneration of the settlements as a whole. Recommendations in this regard are included in Background Document No 3 - Urban Capacity Study and the Bringing Back Homes Initiative by the DOHPLG.

4.5 Understanding the Urban Structure of Settlements

- 4.5.1 Cork County's settlement network is made up of settlements of different historic origin, some planned, while others have evolved in a more organic way. The framework of routes and spaces that connect locally and more widely, and the way developments, routes and open spaces relate to one other are all an intrinsic part of the town or villages urban structure. The new NPF requirements to deliver at least one third of development within the built envelope of our settlements means understanding the way they are structured and function is critical to the delivery of compact growth and greater population uplift. The County Development Plan needs to include a comprehensive set of policies and guidelines to ensure new development proposals have a clear set of standards to follow which reinforces the unique character of the locality.
- 4.5.2 There are two predominant historic settlement types:
- a) Medieval Towns and Villages with an organic development format at its core transversed by laneways and may contain defences as can be seen on the plan and image of Market Street, Kinsale below.
 - b) Planned Towns and Villages with a formal urban structure, usually of perimeter block format transacted by laneways and pends⁵ within the block format –e.g. Fermoy

⁴ See background document No. 3 Urban Capacity Study Cork County Council 2019

⁵ Archway at ground floor level, with building overhead, providing access to the rear of the building.

Figure 4.1 Plan of Market St. Kinsale



Figure 4.2 Corresponding photo of Market Street, Kinsale



Figure 4.3 Plan of formal perimeter block, Fermoy.



Figure 4.4 Image of pend



4.5.3 The layout of the County's urban areas provides the basic plan on which all other aspects of the form and uses of a development depend. The function of our streets and public realm is a fundamental element of an area's urban structure. Historically streets were shared spaces for pedestrians, transporting goods and a meeting place for important social gatherings such as horse fairs, carnivals and markets. Since the advent of the car, the street has become increasingly segregated to facilitate transport vehicles and parking with pedestrians and cyclists relegated to narrow pavements adjoining the building facades.

4.5.4 The public realm is made up of the parts of a town or village that are available, without special charge, for use by everyone. This can include streets, parks, squares, arcades and public buildings, whether publicly or privately owned. It provides the setting not only for everyday life, but also for more formal civic occasions. It is enlarged and enriched by developments designed to welcome a broad range of people, and by creative management. It is restricted by buildings and spaces designed to keep out or discourage some users, and

by over-regulation. The RIAI toolkit is a useful document to promoting a design-led approach to improving the public realm of our Towns and Villages.

- 4.5.5 Our street network is cumulatively our biggest public space asset within the County. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) is an important guide in the consideration of walking and cycling routes and should be used with the perimeter block design principle. Policies TM 2-1 and TM 2-2 in the current County Development Plan makes reference to this in relation to the provision of walking and cycling routes. The Plan Review wants to highlight additional areas within the document that should be central to urban policy including the need to reinforce the “place function of our streets” together with a “minimal signage” approach on local streets to allow self regulation and results in lower speeds. These policy updates will result in a more pleasant town centre environment in which to sit and linger, safer streets, contribute to a less cluttered core and will encourage increased footfall to add to the vibrancy of the core. It also puts the human experience at the heart of the design process so walking and cycling are promoted above the use of the car for shorter trips in the design of residential layouts.
- 4.5.6 Activity levels in urban areas are directly linked to their density of development and the design of the urban structure. Pedestrian activity or street life increases in urban areas that can be defined as “walkable”. Within the past half century, more recent residential layouts in our towns and villages have been designed in cul-de-sac layouts which promoted car use. The Plan advocates that new residential development should generally follow the traditional perimeter block layout which is the traditional form of layout in most of our towns and villages. This contributes to increased pedestrian permeability.

Urban Grain

- 4.5.7 Urban grain relates to pattern of the arrangement of street blocks, plots and their buildings in a settlement. The degree to which an area’s pattern of blocks and plot subdivisions is respectively small and frequent (fine grain), or large and infrequent (coarse grain) often relates to the historic period in which a settlement was built. Medieval Towns like Kinsale have a fine grained pattern of development within its core comprising of narrow building frontages. Planned military towns such as Fermoy have a coarser grain with larger buildings arranged along wider streets and squares.

Height and Massing

- 4.5.8 Tall buildings have a positive role to play in signifying locations of civic, commercial or visual importance or focal points of urban activity such as town centres and /or transport junctions. In County Cork our urban centres have traditionally been built to a maximum of 4 storeys. Landmarks such as church spires or mills often provide some higher elements of interest within the roofscape of our urban centres.
- 4.5.9 The massing of development contributes to creating distinctive skylines in our towns and villages, or to respecting existing skylines. The character of a skyline is composed of the massing of blocks of buildings and the shape of roofs, as well as by the height of buildings. A building should only stand out from the background of buildings if it contributes positively to

views and vistas as a landmark. Buildings which have functions such as Civic importance are an example of this.

- 4.5.10 As outlined in Section 2, the recently published Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines (2018) identifies increased building height as a significant component of making optimal use of the capacity of sites in urban locations where transport, employment, services and retail development can achieve a requisite level of intensity for sustainability.
- 4.5.11 The Guidelines indicate a presumption in favour of increased building heights of at least six stories at street level within our existing town centres and other urban areas with good public transport accessibility, and at least three to four stories in suburban locations. The Guidelines further require that Development Plans:
- actively plan for and bring about increased density and height of development.
 - Identify areas where increased density and building height is a specific requirement.
 - Include assessment criteria that will enable proper assessment of proposals for increased building heights.
- 4.5.12 The County Development Plan must therefore take a proactive role to support increased building height and density generally throughout the settlement network and particularly in locations with good public transport accessibility along the commuter rail network such as Metropolitan Cork, Mallow and Monard SDZ.
- 4.5.13 The Development Plan Review will need to include appropriate assessment criteria that will enable proper consideration of development proposals for increased building height linked to the achievement of a greater density of development. This may also include design cues that may be desirable in sensitive locations to achieve higher buildings, such as the use of set-backs of floors higher than the general established building height in the town or village. The requirements of historic environment and tools such as environmental sensitivity mapping and urban design statements will also be considered.

Landscape

- 4.5.14 The character and appearance of land, including its shape, form, ecology, natural features, colours and elements, and the way these components combine are an intrinsic part of the unique character of Cork's County Towns and Villages. This includes all open space and its associated planting, boundaries and treatment. For example Bantry's townscape has been influenced by its location between the coast and mountains and Cobh's striking stepped urban form has been dictated by its steep topography and harbour-side position.
- 4.5.15 As the quest for achieving higher densities and building heights are advocated this makes the need for protecting landscape features and providing open space networks within our urban areas even more important. In smaller settlements which are easily accessible to the countryside, a focus on providing better walking and cycling links to the rural hinterland may be required.

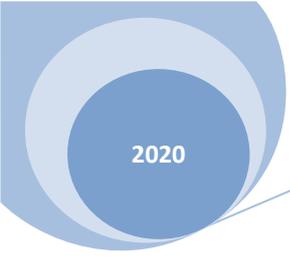
Quality Details and Materials

- 4.5.16 Our historic towns and villages have been built of quality local materials generally rendered facades with slate roofs and sliding sash windows. More important buildings such as churches and civic buildings were made of stone or brick. This refined palette of materials creates a rhythm within the street and a coherent architectural language. Some local variations within the County include, for example, slate-hung facades in Kinsale and 1st floor bay details in Mallow.
- 4.5.17 The number and composition of elements on a building's façade and the contrasting relationship between them as viewed from near and far determine visual quality and interest. The use of contemporary design responses is advocated within our towns and villages, however, the success of architectural interventions and extensions depends on how the design interprets and expresses the local narrative. The impacts of recently adopted Part L Building Regulation requirements to achieve highly efficient, low energy buildings will also have an impact of the design of new buildings.
- 4.5.18 The scale, massing and detailing of taller buildings within the urban environment needs particular attention including the silhouette, night-time appearance and relationship to other structures. The architectural quality should set exemplary standards in design having regard to their high profile and local impact. Energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions should be a key element of the building design.

5 Section 5: Key Issues for the Plan Review

- 5.1.1 Section Two has detailed that the National Planning Framework requires a major new policy emphasis on renewing and developing existing settlements, rather than the continual expansion and sprawl of settlements out into the countryside. The NPF seeks to make our cities, towns and villages the places where many more people choose to live, work and visit, by 2040. For this to come to fruition our towns and villages needs to be more attractive, adaptable, vibrant and liveable places, offering a quality of life package that more people are willing to choose in the years ahead.
- 5.1.2 This requires a particular policy response to ensure new development in urban areas provides for a mix of uses including employment, appropriately responds to its local context, delivers a range of densities to support local services, promotes sustainable travel modes and helps to optimise the existing building stock, tackle vacancy and under-utilised land and buildings. The NPF acknowledges the need for a range of strategies to achieve more balanced and sustainable growth and that a tailored approach is needed to best position settlements for their new roles. In particular the NPF highlights the need to:
- Encourage population and employment growth in towns of all sizes that are strong employment and services centres, where there is potential for sustainable growth;
 - Identify new roles and functions for smaller urban centres experiencing decline, and improve their local infrastructure and amenities;
 - Where areas have already experienced rapid expansion, there is a need to facilitate investment to address any deficits in amenities, services, sustainable transport links or employment opportunities to serve existing populations;
 - A renewed emphasis on achieving urban infill / brownfield development;
 - Targeting regeneration and rejuvenation
- 5.1.3 Analysis in Section 3 of this report highlights the extensive nature of the settlement network in Cork County and the significant deficits in terms of basic water services for the very small settlements at the lower end of the network. The more focused approach advocated by the NPF suggests the need to review the sustainability of the network and the role of the different levels of the hierarchy going forward. There is also a need to prioritise the locations where investment in infrastructure, amenities or placemaking will deliver the greatest social, environmental, economic or cultural benefits for the county, region and county as a whole.

- 5.1.4 Section 4 highlights the need to review the approach to density across the settlement network to bring it more in line with government guidelines and to optimise the use of serviced land within the core of the towns, along public transport corridors and close to the main centres of employment so that sufficient housing can be provided in the areas where most people want to live. The need to deliver increased building height and more mixed land use patterns is also recognised. Section four also highlighted the need for more tailored and proactive approaches to placemaking which has been informed by extensive analysis of some of our urban settlements as part of an Urban Capacity Study.
- 5.1.5 The main issue to be addressed in the forthcoming County Development Plan are summarised as follows:
- (a) Reviewing the role of different settlements and the total number of settlements within the network having regard to the demand for and capacity to accommodate development.
 - (b) Ensuring population growth is employment led and aligned to the settlements with water services capacity and high quality public transport, in the first instance.
 - (c) Need to provide a more tailored approach to density across the network and the need to promote higher density development and increased building height generally.
 - (d) Proactive approach to prioritising urban infill / brownfield land / opportunity sites across the network and hierarchy of settlements;
 - (e) Considering best approach to securing a more mixed land use pattern so employment, housing and other services are better integrated and support sustainable travel. This may involve changes to zoning or more detailed plans for key sites / areas etc.
 - (f) How best to optimise the existing building stock to help deliver compact growth;
 - (g) Need for more guidance / polices on a number of issues including:
 - Placemaking,
 - Ensuring new development respects the existing urban structure and character of the location.
 - Delivering higher density development.
 - Achieving increased building height.
 - Appropriate density of development within the existing built up area and within villages.
 - Arriving at the correct design solution to reflect a site's topography, context and local character.
 - (h) Need to consider the preparation of a strategic development framework to optimise the potential of the East Cork Rail Corridor/ CMATS.



Recent Irish & UK examples of High Density Residential Development

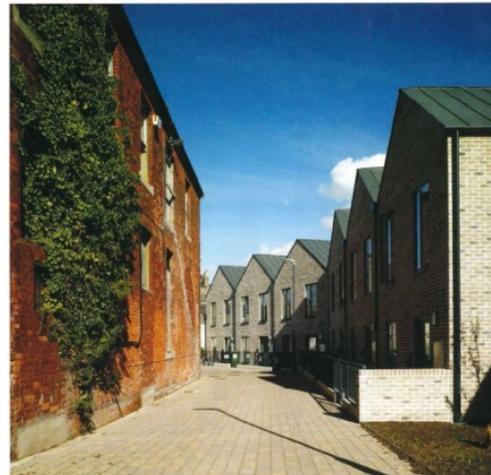
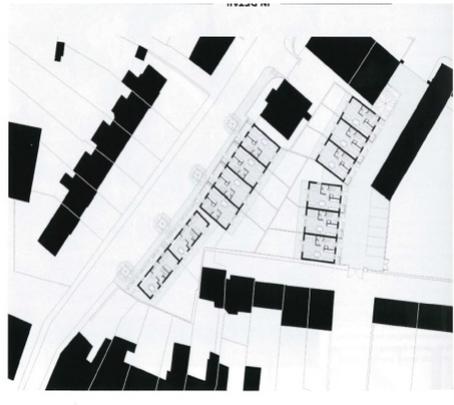
		<p>The Quadrants, Ballincollig Town Centre</p> <p>Density: 86 units per ha</p> <p>Covered area: 100%</p> <p>Plot ratio: 7.26</p> <p>188 Apartments.</p>
		<p>Leslie's Arch, Old Quarter, Ballincollig</p> <p>Density: 45 units per ha</p> <p>Site Area: 3.54 ha</p> <p>Includes 3 Detached units, 2 semi-detached units, 104 terraced units, 8 duplexes and 42 apartment</p>
		<p>Coopers Grange, Ballincollig (part of)</p> <p>Density: 39units per ha</p> <p>Site Area: 1.65ha ha</p> <p>Includes 65 terraced units.</p>



Tur Liath, Fermoy

Density: 65.3 units/ ha

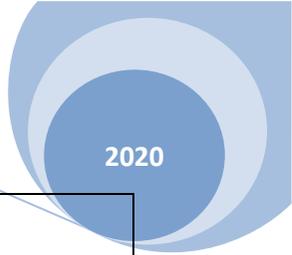
Social housing scheme included 10 units; 1- bed, 6 2-beds & 3 1-beds amounting to 623 m² residential development on the site. These are arranged around a courtyard to the rear.



Social Housing, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin

Density: 66.5 dwellings per hectare

Gross area per unit: 85m²



retail/commercial/patio housing base

mini towers which get views all around and create an interesting urban language

The big house laid out in checkerboard floors allows every apartment to have direct views to garden or neighbourhood space.

- + Density: 85 dwellings per hectare
- + Covered area: 100%
- + Plot ratio: 2.1 (5 storeys)
- + 1 Core per mini tower
- + 3 Apartments per floor
- + Gross area ground floor: 2650m²
- + Garden Area PF: 280m² x 4

Core
Apartments
Community garden spaces
Underground parking deck



Anglesea Rd, Dublin 4

Density: 85 units per ha

3 Apartments per floor



Goldsmith Street, Norwich

Density: 90+ units per ha

Site Area: .9ha

Scheme includes 45 houses and 60 apartments. Every unit has own door access to create a sense of ownership and identity. The scheme includes high quality amenity spaces integral to the overall design and layout of the Local Authority-led scheme.

**Harlow, NW London****Density: 52 units/ ha****Site Area: 1.62**

The scheme is very compact at 84 houses with an overall individual plot size of 125 m². The design includes a narrow house plan of just 5m.

**Sutherland Road, London****Density: 59 units/ ha****Site Area: 0.43ha**

The scheme consists of 59 affordable residential units including a mix of apartments and own door housing units, a health centre and communal garden. All units are dual aspect.

Historic Examples of High Density Residential Development



Cobh: Metropolitan Urban Centre (Rail Access)

Density of 65 units per ha.

Well defined blocks of linear/irregular shape due to steep topography.

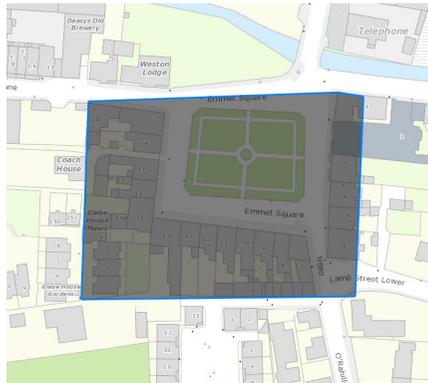
An analysis of the urban block of Midleton Street/ Thomas Kent Street reveals the block of 0.3742 ha accommodates 33 residential units (mostly terraced houses) and 10 Non Residential units with overhead accommodation.



Midleton: Metropolitan Urban Centre (Rail Access)

Density of 65 units per ha.

Courtyard scheme with parking allocated to the interior. All own door access units close to the town centre. Courtyard area defined as 0.4ha with 26 units accommodated.



Clonakilty: Key Growth Centre

Density of 24 units per ha

Well defined Georgian Square consisting of 20 2-3 storey terraced 2-4 bay properties. .

A small mews has been developed on backlands to the south. A total of 26 residential units, parking, a landscaped square, 1 hotel, 1 restaurant, 2 offices and a museum are contained within this 1.09ha area.



Castletownsend: Village

Density: 38.5 units per ha.

An analysis of a 0.7259 ha block of land at the Upper (west) section of the village reveals it accommodates 26 residential units of terraced and semi-detached nature together with 3 non-residential uses.

