

CUNNANE STRATTON REYNOLDS

Carrigaline Village Public Realm and Waterfront River Park

Planning Statement

To accompany
**A development application made under Part 8 of the Planning and
Development Regulations 2001 - 2022**

by

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Site Context	3
Proposed Development	4
Planning History	5
Planning Policy	5
National Planning Framework (NPF)	5
Regional Planning Policy	6
Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region	6
Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan	7
Local Planning Policy Context	7
Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028	7
Volume Four - South Cork	8
Planning Considerations	9
Principle of Development	9
Environmental Assessment	9
EIA Screening	9
AA Screening	10
Cultural Heritage	10
Flood Risk	10
Conclusion	10

Introduction

We, Cunnane Stratton Reynolds are appointed to prepare a planning statement in support of a Part 8 planning application made on behalf of Cork County Council. The proposed development seeks to develop the Carrigaline Village Public Realm and Waterfront River Park project along the north side of the Owenboy River between Main Street (R611) and Bothar Guidel (R612) including existing car park in Carrigaline, Co. Cork.

This application is made in accordance with Part XI of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 – 2021.

This planning statement will assess the proposed development in terms of compliance against relevant planning policies and objectives at national, regional, and local levels and provide the planning context for the proposed scheme. This statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings and supporting documents which have been prepared in support of the proposed scheme submitted as part of this application. For ease of reference this statement is set out under the following headings:

- Introduction.
- Site Context.
- Proposed Development.
- Planning History.
- Planning Policy.
- Planning Considerations; and
- Conclusion.

Site Context

The proposed development site is on the northern bank of the River Owenabue within Carrigaline Town Centre. The site is currently in use as a through road and car parking area and is accessed via the R611 Cork Road to the west and the R612 Crosshaven Road to the east. The site is bounded to the north by commercial properties and some planting. The site is located within the Carrigaline development boundary and is designated within CL-T-01, “Town Centre/Neighbourhood Centre” land use zoning within the Cork County Council Development Plan 2022-2028. See Figure 1 below for site location.



Figure 1 Site Location (Red Line) in surrounding context. Source: Google Earth.

The western area of the site, much like Carrigaline Town Centre is located within Flood Risk Zone A, with a portion of

the eastern extent of the site within Flood Risk Zone B. There is a designated pedestrian walkway traversing the site from east to west, with the designation set out under reference CL-U-06, which seeks the following:

“Pedestrian walkway along riverbank to Ballea road. Future development of this walkway will need to take account of environmental, biodiversity and landscape sensitivities, providing for an appropriate set back from the edge of the river and designing/ developing it in accordance with IFI Guidelines – Planning for Watercourses in Urban Areas.”

There are no further designations or allocations associated with the proposed development site.

Proposed Development

The proposed development seeks to develop the Carrigaline Village Public Realm and Waterfront River Park project along the north side of the Owenboy River between Main Street (R611) and Bothar Guidel (R612) including existing car park in Carrigaline, Co. Cork.

The proposed development comprises the following elements:

- Environmental improvement works and enhancement of public realm and outdoor living to provide ‘a civic identity to the new public realm strongly connected with the water and the river ecology’.
- New waterfront public space (reclaimed from the existing car park) will encourage community activities and connection to the water.
- Enhanced public space to include inclusive street furniture (universal), waterfront seating, rain gardens, trees and shrubs and a covered pavilion.
- High quality urban design and material finishes are proposed including Biodiversity/Pollinator Planting and Sustainable Urban Drainage systems.
- Enhanced pedestrian connectivity and accessibility.
- A multifunctional Public Pavilion will provide a sheltered performance stage for community events, connected to the waterfront.
- Upgrade of public lighting and other ancillary works.
- Additional carparking near the Bothar Guidel / Lidl Roundabout to replace parking reclaimed from the existing Owenabue car park.
- Alteration of entrance to the carpark near the Bothar Guidel / Lidl Roundabout to increase pedestrian safety.

The proposed development is shown in Figure 2 below, for further detail, please refer to the Layout and Landscape Design Rationale prepared by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds.

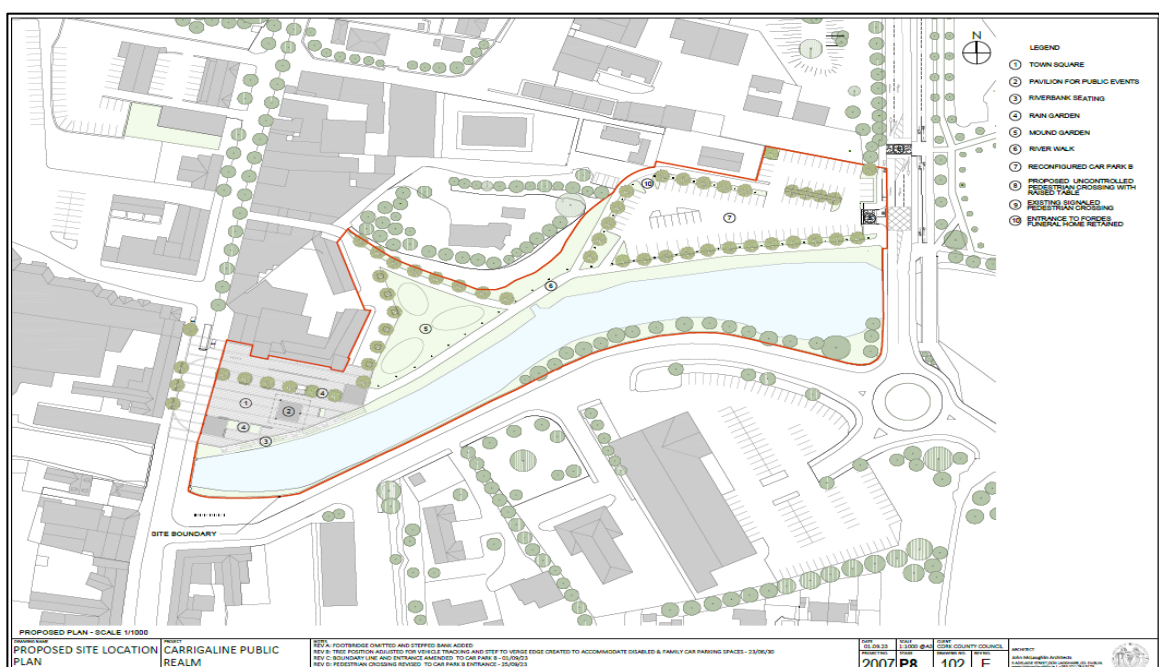


Figure 2 Proposed Site Layout. Source: Atkins

Planning History

Following a review of the Cork County Council online planning register, the planning history of the subject site is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Subject Site Planning History

Subject Site	
Planning Reference Number	036833
Date Received	23 December 2003
Proposed Development	Change of use of permitted retail outlet to a pizza restaurant and an ancillary delivery outlet
Decision	Granted – 1 January 2004
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Planning Reference Number	047013
Date Received	15 September 2004
Proposed Development	construction of two storey building consisting of 3 no. retail units at ground floor level and 3 no. office units at first floor level
Decision	Granted – 7 February 2005
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Planning Reference Number	175835
Date Received	18 July 2017
Proposed Development	Decommission and remove the existing District Regulating Installation and Install a new 1.42x0.51x1.86 (LxWxH) enclosure to house a natural gas District Regulating Installation including a 3 m high 'lamp post' style relief vent stack with all ancillary services and associated site works
Decision	Granted – 10 November 2017

Planning Policy

Provided for under statute, guidance for land development proposals within the State is governed by national and regional policies attaching to geographically defined areas and / or land uses and takes the form of Plans and Guidelines. The policies and objectives of these national and regional documents underpin the policies and objectives of local Development Plans, Local Area Plans (LAPs) and other non-statutory Plans that in turn, set the detailed local statutory planning context of sites.

This section of the report highlights the Strategic Planning Context of the subject lands, namely the key National and Regional Planning and Development Plans, Policies and Guidelines where they relate to the spatial organization of land use at the subject location and the development and activities proposed.

National Planning Framework (NPF)

At the making of the NPF in 2018, current trends suggested that the State's population could increase by a further one million people over the period to 2040. Government planning policy acknowledged that this was going to require an enormous shift in thinking in how and where people live, work, participate in recreation and travel. The development potential of existing sites was to be maximized whilst making the most of available infrastructure, especially, but not confined to, investment in public transport. There is also a requirement to enhance development where it will minimize the need to travel and promote linked trips. Planning and development policy is also required to assist in the promotion of healthy lifestyles and for a range of facilities and services that assist in improving quality of life.

To address these challenges the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government produced the National Planning Framework (NPF) on behalf of Government, with input from other Departments and Agencies.

The aim of the NPF is to direct future development and investment in Ireland to sustainable locations and to promote sustainable development and proper planning across the entire State. The National Development Plan (NDP) (Ireland 2040) articulates shared national development goals, including improved living standards, quality of life, prosperity, competitiveness, and environmental sustainability and provide greater clarity for private sector investment.

The NPF recognizes the value of cultural heritage as a key component of, and contributor to, the attractiveness and sustainability of our cities, towns, villages, and rural areas in terms of developing cultural creative spaces, private inward investment, and attracting and retaining talent and enterprise.

The NPF sets out 10 no. National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), the most relevant to the proposed scheme are set out below:

NSO 1 – Compact Growth

“This NSO seeks to manage the sustainable growth of our urban areas to add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work. NSO 1 promotes the re-use or intensification of existing land in urban settlements to provide housing, jobs, amenities, and services. The achievement of more compact development forms will require focus on the following four key areas:

- *The livability or quality of life of urban areas including access to amenities.*
- *Making the continuous regeneration and development of existing built-up areas.*
- *Tackling legacies through holistic social and well as physical regeneration.*
- *Linking regeneration and redevelopment initiatives”.*

NSO 7 – Enhanced Amenity and Heritage

“This NSO seeks to ensure that our urban areas are attractive and offer a good quality of life. This is linked to and must integrate with our built, cultural, and natural heritage, which has intrinsic value in defining the character of urban and rural areas and adding to their attractiveness and sense of place. Appealing places are also defined by their character, heritage, and sense of community. This includes attractive buildings and street layouts, civic spaces and parks and regeneration of older areas and making places feel safe through active use and design”.

Further to the above, the NPF also sets out National Policy Objectives (NPO), the key NPO’s in the context of the proposed development are:

- **NPO 4** seeks to “Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being”.
- **NPO 6** aims to “Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality, in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area”.

Regional Planning Policy

The following policy documents set out the key regional planning policies in the context of the proposed development in Carrigaline.

Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

The application site is designated within the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region. The RSES provides the basis for the integration of land use and transport planning in the Southern Region, informing the preparation and implementation of plans, programs, and projects at all levels. The following objective set out within the RSES are relevant to the proposed development in Carrigaline.

- **RPO 200** - Green Infrastructure and Recreation It is an objective to support investment in the on-going maintenance and enhanced facilities in existing green infrastructure and support the provision of new public parks, green space in tandem with projected population growth to create green, healthy settlements throughout our Region. Local authorities shall identify the potential locations of new public parks and open spaces jointly (with neighbouring local authorities) and individually to develop both regional scale recreational open space and local parks and open space.

Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan

Carrigaline is identified as a Metropolitan Town within the Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (CASP). In turn the proposed development site is therefore subject to the policies and objectives of the CASP, the most relevant of which are set out below:

- **CASP Policy Objective 1 (e)** - Support communities in Metropolitan Towns through regeneration initiatives, investment to support retrofitting holistic infrastructures (physical, social, recreational, public transport, active travel networks including enhanced filtered mobility for pedestrians and cyclists inter alia), seek vibrant metropolitan communities with a high quality of life, mixed uses and services and seek the infrastructure led sustainable compact growth of metropolitan settlements.
- **CASP Policy Objective 17** - Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy - It is an objective to achieve a healthy, green, and connected metropolitan area through the preparation of a Metropolitan Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy. This will require co-ordination between relevant stakeholders to deliver the sustainable development of parks, recreation, and high quality public open space in the Cork Metropolitan Area. This Strategy may include, inter alia:
 - The sustainable development of green infrastructure as an interconnected series of green spaces including parks, natural green spaces and ecosystems, greenways and blueways.

Local Planning Policy Context

The site is located within the administrative area of Cork County Council. Thus, the proposed development is subject to the provisions of the current Cork County Development Plan 2022– 2028.

Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028

Volume 1 of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out the key policies and objectives for planning and sustainable development throughout the County. Carrigaline is designated as a Metropolitan Town within Objective CS 2-7: Network of Settlements – Higher Order Settlements and has the following strategic aim:

“Growth in population and employment so that the Cork Metropolitan Area (CMA) can compete effectively for investment and jobs in line with the key enablers identified in the RSES for the Southern Region and the Cork MASP. Consolidate employment at existing employment locations with improved supporting infrastructure, and in particular public transport improvements including those identified in the CMATS (2020). Continue with the strategic rebalancing of the city and county through the development of the UEAs along the East Cork Corridor and the Monard SDZ. Critical population growth, service, and employment centres within the Cork Metropolitan Area, 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.”

In the context of the proposed development, the key policies and objectives within the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 are set out below:

- **GI 14-2: Green Infrastructure Objectives for Main Towns and Settlements-**
 - a) Ensure that all main towns have an adequate level of quality green and recreational infrastructure (active and passive) taking account of existing deficits, planned population growth as well as the need to serve their surrounding hinterlands. To ensure where possible that this green and blue infrastructure maximises its multifunctional capacity (ecosystem services).
 - b) Promote the corridor concept, in particular using rivers and streams as one of the natural foundations for multi-functional green and blue infrastructure corridors.
 - c) Seek to create new and improved connections (physical/ecological corridors) between open spaces/ green infrastructure and other important destinations as part of the enhancement of the overall network.

- **GI 14-4: Recreation and Amenity-**
 - a) Support the provision of recreation and amenity facilities in new developments and ensure that the widest range of facilities is provided at locations which can serve the wider community and intergenerational activities, which are accessible to members of the community of all ages and abilities, through initiatives in partnership with community groups and sporting organisations.
 - b) Seek opportunities to improve the quality and capacity of existing recreation and amenity facilities, through initiatives with both public and private sector (sport's governing bodies, local community partnerships and private development proposals) and where appropriate the Council will use its powers under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to require development levies to achieve the enhancement of these facilities.
 - c) Ensure the protection and seek the enhancement and wise management of existing recreational facilities and public open space and ensure that all new developments make adequate provision for recreational and amenity facilities in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Recreation and Amenity Policy (Interim) and any successor policy and having regard to the Council's policy regarding the management of Green Infrastructure assets.

- **GI 14-5: Replacement/Redevelopment of Leisure and Recreational Facilities-**
 Protect and improve existing areas of public and private open space, including sports grounds, or other recreational facilities in accordance with the Council's Recreation and Amenity Policy and any successor policy and protect such areas from development or change of use.

- **GI 14-6: Public/Private Open Space Provision-**
 - b) Promote the provision of high quality, accessible and suitably proportioned areas of public open space and promote linking of new open spaces with existing spaces to form a green infrastructure network.

- **TM12-2-1: Active Travel-**
 Deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking and cycling to promote accessible, attractive, liveable, vibrant, and safe settlements to work, live, shop and engage in community life, within a ten-minute walk of one's home. Prioritise development in our settlements that is well located and designed to facilitate walking, cycling and public transport trips. Promote equal access for all through the adherence to universal design in the external built environment to facilitate greater use of public transport, walking and cycling.
 - f) public realm upgrades will be promoted to enhance walking and cycling provision in settlements.

Volume Four - South Cork

Volume Four of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out the local planning policies for the South Cork area, which includes the Carrigaline, Cobh, East Cork, and Macroom Municipal Districts. Carrigaline is identified as a Main Town within the Carrigaline Municipal District.

In terms of placemaking, paragraph 1.4.24, notes that *"An important element to encompass placemaking in Carrigaline is to open up safe attractive and pedestrian friendly accesses from and through the town centre to the waterfront to reflect the natural beauty of the town's setting which would enhance the town's offer as a place to live, work and enjoy"*.

According to paragraph 1.4.36, *"The River Owenabue is an intrinsic feature to the character of Carrigaline. Facilitation for greater access to the Owenboy River Corridor and Estuary Area, and provision of opportunities for water-based recreation such as kayaking, fishing etc, and enhancement of community facilities in the town, will be supported and developed while also providing for the protection of coastal/wetland habitats, the avoidance of disturbance to birds and the protection of the Cork Harbour SPA"*.

The key policies and objectives of Volume Four are set out below:

- **CL-GO-04 - Transport and Public Realm** - Secure public transport improvements including increased frequencies and examine the possibility of introducing a localised bus service within the town. Support and implement the provisions of the Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan.

- **CL-GO-08 Walking and Cycling Connectivity** - Further expand the network of designated walking and cycling routes to provide safe, convenient, and pleasant routes between the town's main residential areas, schools, and the town centre.

- **CL-T-01 – Town Centre** - This area denotes the built existing footprint of the town centre and any proposals for development within this core area should comply with the overall uses acceptable in town centre areas.

The western inner relief road was completed in September 2022 and the delivery of this road offers opportunities to deliver an updated public realm for the town including the introduction of new public spaces. These should be designed to accommodate a number of community functions including a market space, festival space, meeting place, seating area etc. The desirable location of these future public spaces is:

- The site of the existing car park adjoining the Main Street and River.
- Within the town centre expansion area west of the Main Street and should form part of a wider public realm strategy for the town.

Community uses which will be considered appropriate for this site include youth facilities, theatre, cinema, town hall/multi-purpose building and town square. Within the site there will be opportunity for regeneration and town centre expansion. The road scheme will give priority to pedestrians and cyclists and will provide permeability to the rest of the town including the open space area directly adjacent to the site (CL-GR-02).

- **CL-U-06 - Utilities and Infrastructure** - Pedestrian walkway along riverbank to Ballea road. Future development of this walkway will need to take account of environmental, biodiversity and landscape sensitivities, providing for an appropriate set back from the edge of the river and designing/developing it in accordance with IFI Guidelines – Planning for Watercourses in Urban Areas.

Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan

The Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan (CTPREP) is set out within Volume 4 – South Cork of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028 and was commissioned by Cork County Council, to deliver a robust transportation strategy along with public realm improvements to facilitate future sustainable development of Carrigaline. A key element of the CTREP, is “*to provide an attractive urban environment celebrating the assets of the town and providing space for people to meet, sit, talk, enjoy being outdoors and for businesses to flourish*”.

Planning Considerations

The following considerations are key in the determination of the proposed scheme.

Principle of Development

The principle of the proposed development is entirely supported by national, regional, and local planning policy. In terms of the NPF, the proposed development is consistent with the National Strategic Outcomes and National Policy Objectives set out above. Further, at regional level, the proposed development is also consistent with the policy objectives of the Southern Region RSES and Cork Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan.

At local policy level, the proposed development is in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028, including policies GI 14-2, GI 14-4, GI 14-5, GI 14-6, and TM12-2-1. The proposed development is consistent with the land use zoning objective set under policy objective CL-T-01 (Town Centre) in providing a public space adjoining the main street and river. The proposed development also facilitates the proposed pedestrian walkway set out under policy CL-U-06 (Utilities and Infrastructure).

The principle of the proposed development accords with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and should be supported.

Environmental Assessment

EIA Screening

A full and complete Environmental Impact Assessment Screening has been prepared by Atkins, which concludes that given the scale, nature and location of the proposal, the screening of the proposal as a sub-threshold development, the preparation of an EIAR is not required for the proposed development. For further information, please refer to the submitted EIAR Screening authored by Atkins.

AA Screening

A full Stage 1 appropriate assessment (AA) screening has been undertaken by Atkins to determine the requirement for a Stage 2 appropriate assessment. Following the screening assessment, it is concluded that the proposed works will not, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, give rise to any impacts on a Natura 2000 site. For further information please refer to the AA Screening prepared by Atkins.

A full AA screening assessment has also been carried out by Cork County Council which also concludes that beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the proposed works, individually or in combination with other plans/projects are not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (Natura 2000 site).

Cultural Heritage

A Cultural Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Tobar Archaeological Services and concludes that the proposed development site does not contain any recorded monuments, protected structures or items listed in the NIAH and the impact on archaeological sites or features is low-negligible. For further information please refer to the Cultural Heritage Assessment prepared by Tobar Archaeological Services.

Flood Risk

A Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out by Atkins, which includes a Stage 1 assessment of the risk of flooding and subsequently a stage 2 assessment, given the potential for the site to be flooded by a tidal flood event on the Owenabue River. The proposed development is classified as a “water compatible use” and is therefore not subject to a justification test. The Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Atkins recommends the final design consider the standards of drainage design and that ground levels are maintained. For further information please refer to the Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Atkins.

Conclusion

This planning statement has been prepared to support the proposed Part 8 planning application for planning consent being made on behalf of Cork County Council. The proposed development will develop the Carrigaline Village Public Realm and Waterfront River Park project along the north side of the Owenboy River between Main Street (R611) and Bothar Guidel (R612) including existing car park in Carrigaline, Co. Cork.

The proposed development is entirely consistent with National, Regional and Local Planning Policy and should be supported. Furthermore, the proposed development has been designed to a high standard, incorporating green and blue infrastructure elements, and is supported by technical reports, which confirm the acceptability of the proposed development.

The proposed development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and should be fully supported.