

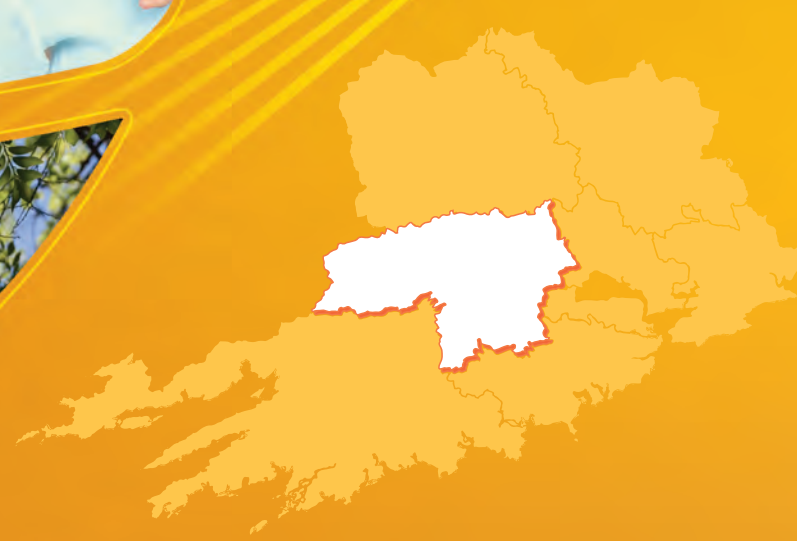


**Cork
County Council**
Comhairle Contae Chorcaí

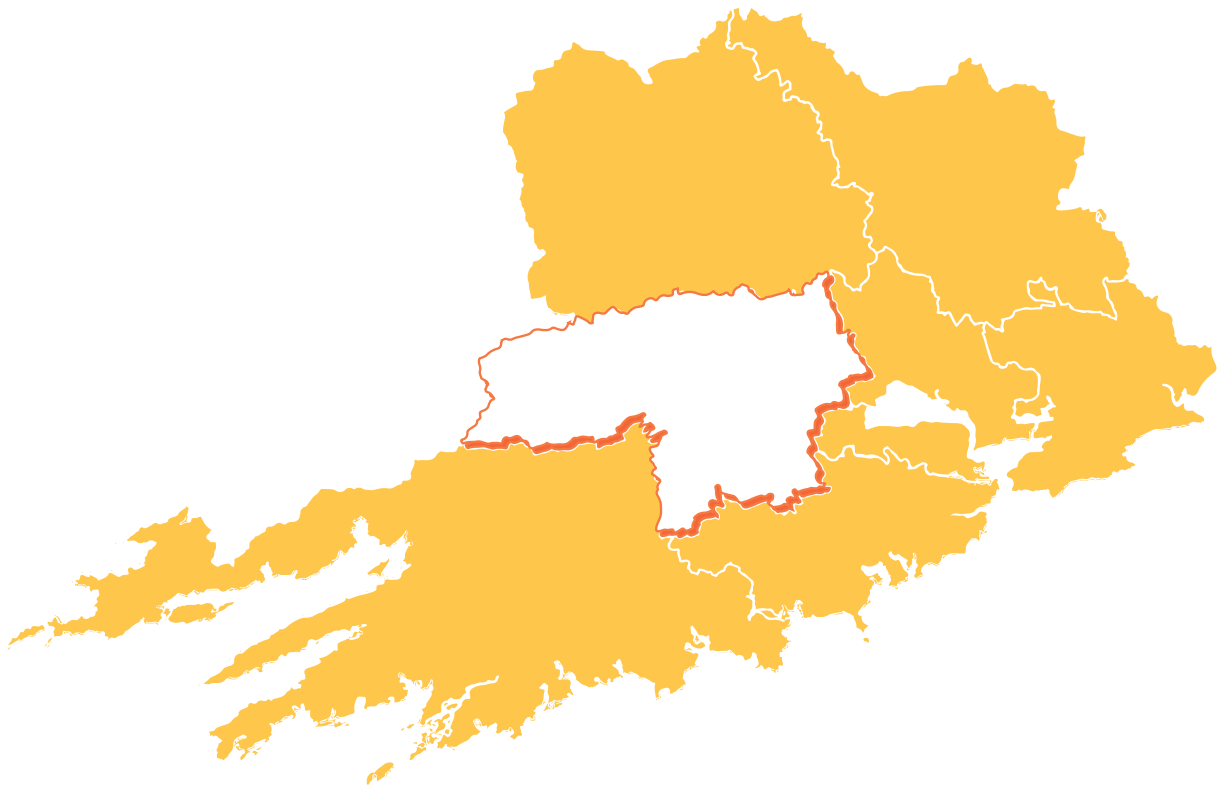


Blarney Macroom Municipal District

Local Area Plan Review



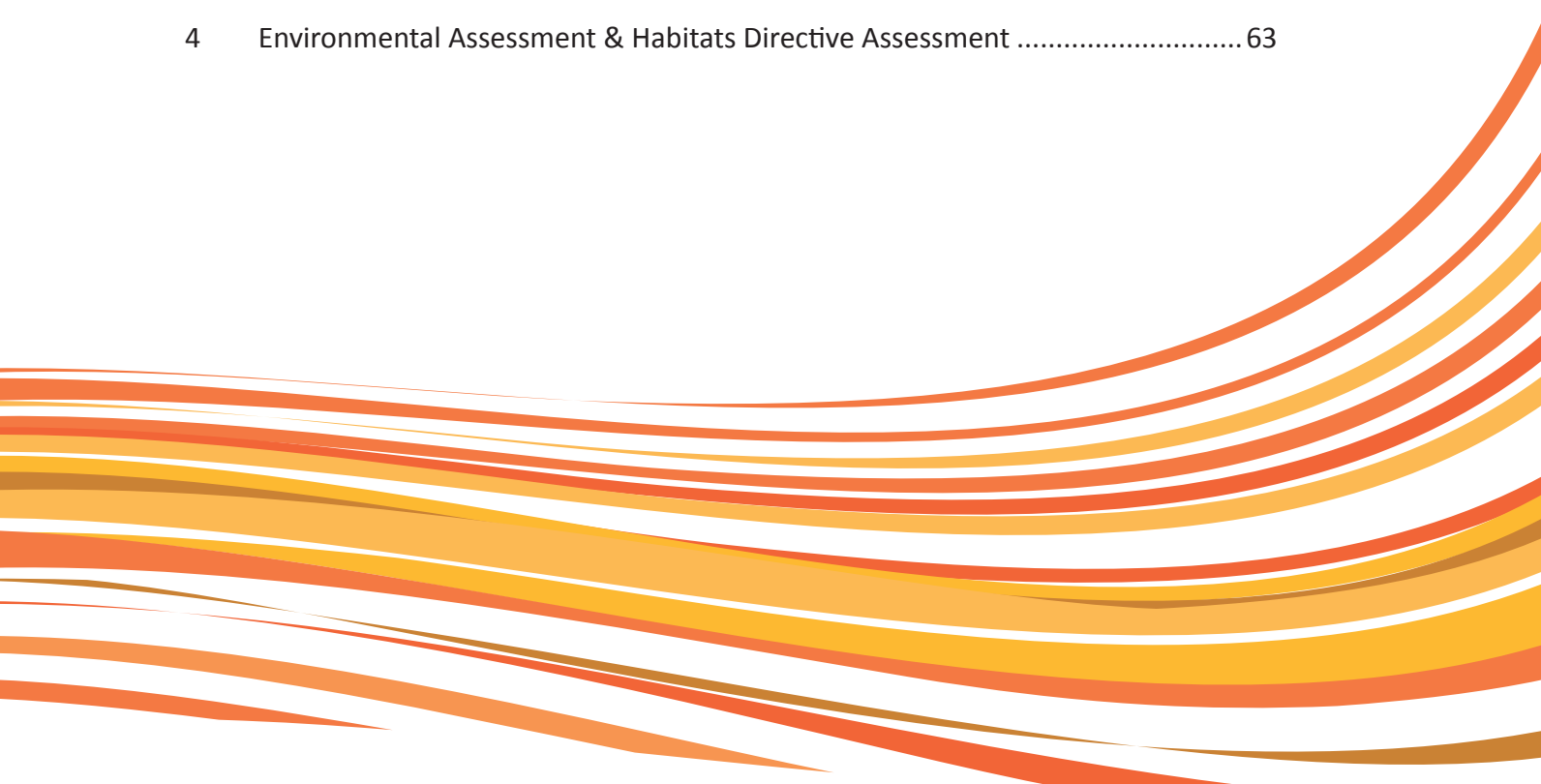
Public Consultation Document
14th December 2015



Blarney Macroom Municipal District

Table of Contents

Section	Page
1 Introduction.....	1
2 Planning Strategy.....	11
3 Main Settlements	27
3.1 Blarney.....	31
3.2 Macroom	45
4 Environmental Assessment & Habitats Directive Assessment	63





Section 1

Introduction

Table of Contents		Page
1.1	The Purpose of this Document	3
1.2	Structure of Document	5
1.3	Other Issues Affecting the Preparation of the New Local Area Plan	5
1.4	Process of Making a Local Area Plan	7
1.5	How to make a submission	8





1.1 The Purpose of this Document

- 1.1.1 Cork County Council sets out its land use planning strategy for the development of the towns and villages of the county in a series of Electoral Area Local Area Plans. The most recent Local Area Plans were adopted in 2011. The Plans have a six year life and the Council is now commencing the process of reviewing the plans so that new plans will be in place by August 2017.
- 1.1.2 Following the re-organisation of local government in 2014 and the abolition of the town Councils, the electoral structure of the County is based on eight Municipal Districts, see Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1. A new Local Area Plan will be prepared for each of the eight Municipal Districts in the County. The plans will set out the detail of the planning strategy and land use zoning as appropriate for each town and village in each Municipal District. **The main purpose of this document is to provide a basis for consultation with the public on those aspects of the current LAP that are considered likely to change in the new draft plan to be prepared in 2016.**
- 1.1.3 Macroom Town Council was abolished in 2014. Currently the Macroom Town Development Plan 2009 remains in force pending the making of the next Cork County Development Plan in 2020. Government has indicated that it intends to introduce legislation which would allow the Town Development Plans to be superseded by a Local Area Plan, and on this basis, it is proposed to include the former Town Council administrative areas within the Local Area Plan review. **Parties with an interest in lands within the former Town Councils administrative areas should consider the need to make a submission to the County Council as part of this consultative process.**

Municipal District		Population 2011	Main Towns	No of villages
1	Ballincollig - Carrigaline	71,946	Ballincollig, Carrigaline, Passage West/ Monkstown/ Glenbrook, Cork City South Environs, Ringaskiddy	5
2	Bandon- Kinsale	42,454	Bandon, Kinsale	34
3	Blarney-Macroom	43,398	Blarney, Macroom	53
4	Cobh	53,544	Carrigtwohill, Cobh, Glanmire, Little Island, Cork City North Environs. (Monard is proposed new town and a designated Strategic Development Zone)	24
5	East Cork	42,399	Midleton, Youghal	30
6	Fermoy	42,226	Charleville, Fermoy, Mitchelstown	29
7	Kanturk -Mallow	47,305	Buttevant, Kanturk, Mallow, Millstreet, Newmarket	46
8	West Cork	56,530	Bantry, Castletownbere, Clonakilty, Dunmanway, Schull, Skibbereen.	67 & 7 Inhabited Islands

- 1.1.4 This document relates to the Blarney-Macroom Municipal District Local Area Plan and highlights the main areas of change proposed by the Council in the next Local Area Plan, relative to the Local Area Plan adopted in 2011, and the Macroom Town Development Plan 2009. The document focuses on identifying the critical planning issues and choices now faced taking account of the amount of growth envisaged in each area, the available land supply, availability of the infrastructure required to facilitate development and the need to protect and conserve the environment.



Figure 1.1 Cork Municipal Districts

- 1.1.5 The publication of this document marks the commencement of the public consultation process in relation to matters that should be addressed in the preparation of the new plan. This document has been prepared in order to promote and generate interaction and feedback. It is intended that it will act as a tool to stimulate, guide and encourage debate and discussion on the current issues impacting upon the community, to flag important factors, and to encourage and assist the public in making submissions / observations to the Planning Authority in respect of the proposed Local Area Plan. The Council is inviting feedback and suggestions in relation to the issues raised in the document and in relation to any other matters not specifically mentioned, which the public / stakeholders consider relevant to the future planning strategy for the area.

- 1.1.6 Any formal submissions received by the Council during the consultation process will be considered in the preparation of the formal Draft Local Area Plan. This Plan is expected to be published for public consultation in November 2016, at which point people will have a further opportunity to comment and make submissions on the specific proposals contained in the Draft Plan. A more detailed timeline of the plan making process is set out in Table 1.2.

1.2 Structure of Document

- 1.2.1 This document is set out in four sections. Section One provides an introduction to the process of preparing the new Local Area Plan and sets out the scope of this document.
- 1.2.2 Section Two of this report provides an overview of the Municipal District and outlines the strategy for the future development of the Municipal District, its towns and villages, in line with the Core Strategy set out in the County Development Plan 2014.
- 1.2.3 Section Three deals in detail with the Main Towns of the Municipal District and outlines the main issues which need to be considered in the formulation of the new Local Area Plan. Where changes to the zoning of land are being considered by the Planning Authority this is highlighted for each town. Where the potential need for changes to the zoning of land has been identified by the Planning Authority this is highlighted for each town. **It is important to note that this is not a definitive list of changes and as the review process continues other changes may arise.** It is intended that the new plan will provide more detailed guidance on some issues such as the development of the town centre and proposals in this regard are also discussed in Section 3.
- 1.2.4 Section Four of the report deals with issues in relation to the need for SEA and HDA of the new plan.


1.3 Other Issues Affecting the Preparation of the New Local Area Plan

- 1.3.1 **Flood Risk Management:** the Government issued Guidelines to Planning Authorities on the “The Planning System & Flood Risk Management” in 2009 and the subsequent Local Area Plans made by the County Council in 2011 were subjected to Flood Risk Assessment broadly in accordance with the guidelines. The County Council used information from the following sources to carry out that assessment:
- Draft River Lee Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study (Lee CFRAMS) (OPW)
 - Floodmaps.ie (OPW); and
 - Flood Hazard Mapping for fluvial and tidal area commissioned by Cork County Council from Consultants JBA Associates.
- 1.3.2 Since 2011, OPW have commissioned new detailed CFRAMS studies for several locations in the County and, once complete, will be used by the County Council to supersede the JBA Associates Flood Hazard Mapping used by the County Council in the making of the 2011 LAP’s, in the locations where the information is available. Although these new CFRAMS studies are at an advanced stage, their final outputs were not available when this document was prepared. Therefore, in this document, references to flood risk are based on the flood risk data used in the preparation of the 2011 Local Area Plans. It is anticipated that the new CFRAMS studies will be available to inform the preparation of the draft plans themselves in 2016.
- 1.3.3 Because the 2011 Local Area Plans were subjected to a detailed flood risk assessment in line with the Government’s guidelines to planning authorities, the majority of zonings in those plans are not affected by significant flood risks and can therefore be considered for inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plans in 2016, if appropriate. However, a small number of zonings from the 2011 Local Area Plans and some of zonings originating in Town Council Development Plans carry a residual element of flood risk. Where possible, it is intended to draw attention to those zonings in this document so that the justification for their inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan in 2016 can be re-assessed.

- 1.3.4 **Habitats Directive Assessment:** Similarly, because the 2011 Local Area Plans were subjected to a detailed Habitats Directive assessment in line with the Government's guidelines to planning authorities, zonings in those plans are unlikely to be considered as posing risks to the integrity of Natura 2000 sites through their inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan in 2016. However, some of zonings originating in Town Council Development Plans were not subjected to Appropriate Assessment when those plans were made. Where possible, it is intended to draw attention to those zonings in this document so that the justification for their inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan in 2016 can be re-assessed.
- 1.3.5 **Approaches to Zoning:** Many existing town development plans use 'established' zoning categories to define the appropriate use in existing areas of development e.g. 'established residential' to denote existing residential areas. In the Local Area Plans adopted in 2011 the use of 'established' zoning categories was discontinued in favour of an 'Existing Built Up Area' classification. In preparing the new local area plans this approach will be applied to the developed areas within the former town council administrative areas.
- 1.3.6 **Approach to Housing Density:** Housing Density policy is set by the County Development Plan 2014. Lands for development in this Municipal District would generally fall within a mixture of Medium Density A category within the range of 20-50 dwellings per hectare and Medium B category within the range of 12-25 dwellings per hectare. Lower standards of public open space provision may be considered where larger private gardens are provided. In addition a broad housing mix will normally be required including detached/ serviced sites unless otherwise specified by the Local Area Plan. On some town centre sites high density development may be appropriate which is defined as a minimum of 35 units. Such densities normally require the development of apartments in order to deliver on the density standard.
- 1.3.7 The market for higher density housing is greatest in the areas closest to the City where it is considered appropriate to provide a range of house types and sizes and opportunities for infill developments in order to meet the demands generated by the existing population and its age structure to encourage more balanced communities across the area.
- 1.3.8 It is important to broaden the range of housing units to provide accommodation for the changing needs of the area's population. Nationally, demographics highlight that we need to plan for a higher proportion of suitable accommodation for the elderly which needs to include both sheltered housing and assisted living accommodation. It is important that policy considers the specific locational needs of this type of housing as reduced mobility means that town centre locations close to services should be a priority.

1.4 Process of Making a Local Area Plan

1.4.1 The legal process for making a local area plan is set out in Section 20 of the Local Government Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The main stages of the process of making a Local Area Plan are summarised in Table 1.2.

Stage	Actions	Timeframe
Preliminary Stage This is the stage we are at now. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Briefing of Elected Members at Development Committee. ➤ Presentation of Consultation Documents to Members at Municipal District Committees. ➤ Publish Consultation Documents and hold public consultation events. ➤ Invite submissions and observations from the public and interested bodies. ➤ Present report on Submissions Received to Municipal District Committees / Development Committee. 	September 2015 to March 2016
Draft Local Area Plan Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Formulate Draft Plans. ➤ Members consider Draft Plans. ➤ Commence Formal Public Consultation on Draft Plans. ➤ Invite submissions and observations from the public and interested bodies. ➤ Issue of Chief Executives Report to Members. ➤ Consider report on Submissions Received at Municipal District Committees / Development Committee/Full Council. 	April 2016 to March 2017
Draft Local Area Plan Amendment Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consider need to Amend plans ➤ Publication of Amendments as appropriate ➤ Commence Formal Public Consultation on Amendments ➤ Invite submissions and observations from the public and interested bodies ➤ Issue of Chief Executives Report to Members. ➤ Consideration of Issues by members and Adoption of Local Area Plans 	April 2017 to July 2017 Adopted Monday 24th July 2017.

1.4.2 Throughout the preparation / review of this electoral area plan, the Acts state that the Elected Members of the Council are restricted to considering only the following matters:

- The proper planning and sustainable development of the area;
- The statutory obligations of any local authority in the area; and
- Any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or of any Minister of the Government.

1.5 How to make a submission

1.5.1 The Blarney-Macroom Municipal District Preliminary Consultation Document is available from the Council website at www.corkcoco.ie. If required, a hard copy of the document may be inspected between the hours of 9.30 a.m. and 4.00p.m, from **Monday 14th December, 2015 to 4.00p.m on Monday 25th January, 2016** at the following locations:

- Planning Department, Floor 1, County Hall, Cork.
- Planning Department, Norton House, Skibbereen, Co. Cork.
- Cork County Council Offices, Mallow
- Public Libraries – Please check libraries regarding opening times and availability.

1.5.2 CD copies of the documents may be requested by phone (Tel: 021-4285900) or collected from the Planning Department, Floor 1, County Hall between the hours of 9.30am and 4.00pm during the above period.

1.5.3 Submissions or observations regarding the Preliminary Consultation document are hereby invited from members of the public, children, or groups or associations representing the interests of children and other interested parties during the period *Monday 14th December, 2015 to 4.00p.m on Monday 25th January, 2016*.

1.5.4 Submissions may be made in either of the following two ways:

On-line via www.corkcoco.ie following the instructions provided

OR

In written form to the Senior Planner, Planning Policy Unit, Cork County Council, Floor 13, County Hall, Cork, T12R2NC.

All such submissions lodged within the above period and prior to the close of business at 4.00pm on Monday 25th January, 2016, will be taken into consideration in the preparation of the Blarney-Macroom Municipal District Draft Local Area Plan.

The Council regrets that for technical reasons, submissions by email cannot be accepted.

Section 2

Planning Strategy

Table of Contents		Page
2.1	Local Area Plan Context	13
2.2	County Development Plan Strategy for Blarney-Macroon Municipal District	13
2.3	The Blarney-Macroon Municipal District	14
2.4	Growth Strategy	16
2.5	Water Services infrastructure	17
2.6	Summary of the proposed Development Strategy for Villages	22
2.7	Strategic Land Reserve	22
2.8	Employment within the Municipal District	23
2.9	Strategic Infrastructure Requirements	24



2.1 Local Area Plan Context

- 2.1.1 It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Acts that Local Area Plans must be consistent with the objectives of the development plan for their County. In County Cork, the County Development Plan 2014 sets out the overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County including population targets for each of the main towns and the amount of new housing required to meet the needs of the population, and is consistent with national targets issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Regional Planning Guidelines for the South West Region. The Plan also sets out county-wide objectives for the housing, social and community, economy and employment, town centres and retail, energy and digital economy, transportation and mobility, water services, heritage, green infrastructure and the environment and zoning and land use.
- 2.1.2 The new Local Area Plans will be informed by the current plans adopted in 2011 and by changes in national planning policy, legislation, government guidelines etc. which has taken place in the interim and by changes in local circumstances, needs etc.
- 2.1.3 In considering the future development of this Municipal District proposals must be consistent with the Core Strategy for the County as set out in, Chapter 2 and Appendix B in Volume 1 of the Cork County Development Plan 2014, which details the population growth targets for each municipal District, the expected growth in households and the corresponding amount of new housing required within the settlement network and rural areas to meet the growth target.

2.2 County Development Plan Strategy for Blarney-Macroom Municipal District

- 2.2.1 This Municipal District straddles three strategic planning areas, for which the County Development Plan 2014 sets out differing objectives. The majority of the Municipal District including the Main Town of Macroom is located within the Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Area with some western areas located within the West Cork Strategic Planning Area and the eastern portion of the Municipal District including the Main Town of Blarney located within the County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area which includes Cork City suburban areas and Metropolitan Towns within the county administrative area.
- 2.2.2 In relation to this Municipal District the County Development Plan objectives seek to:
- a) Recognise the importance of the role to be played by Metropolitan Cork in the development of the Cork "Gateway" as a key part of the Atlantic Gateways Initiative and, in tandem with the development of Cork City, to promote its development as an integrated planning unit to function as a single market area for homes and jobs where there is equality of access for all, through an integrated transport system, to the educational and cultural facilities worthy of a modern and vibrant European City;
 - b) Maintain the principles of the Metropolitan Cork Greenbelt to protect the setting of the City and the Metropolitan Towns and to provide easy access to the countryside and facilities for sports and recreation;
 - c) Maximise new development, for both jobs and housing, in the Metropolitan Towns served by the Blarney – Midleton/ Cobh rail route (including the proposed new settlement at Monard) and to enhance the capacity of these towns to provide services and facilities to meet the needs of their population;
 - d) Provide an enhanced public transport network linking the City, its environs, the Metropolitan Towns and the major centres of employment;
 - e) In the Cork Gateway, development to provide the homes and jobs that are necessary to serve the planned population will be prioritised in the following locations, Carrigaline (Shannonpark), Midleton (Waterrock), Carrigtwohill (North of the Railway), Ballincollig (Maglin), North Environs (Ballyvolane), Glanmire (Dunkettle), Blarney (Stoneview), Monard and Cobh;

- f) Establish an appropriate balance in the spatial distribution of future population growth, in line with this Core Strategy, so that Bandon, Fermoy, Macroom and Youghal can accelerate their rate of growth and achieve a critical mass of population to enable them to maximise their potential to attract new investment in employment, services and public transport;
- g) Strengthen and protect the rural communities of the area by encouraging sustainable growth in population, protecting agricultural infrastructure and productivity so that agriculture remains the principal rural land use and focusing other employment development in the main towns and key villages;
- h) Prioritise the adequate provision of water services and transport infrastructure to meet current needs and future population targets while protecting the areas environment;
- i) Facilitate the development of villages and rural areas so that the rate of future population growth compliments the strategy to achieve a critical mass of population in the towns and provide protection for those areas recognised as under pressure from urban development;
- j) Recognise the need to encourage the diversification of the rural economy by promoting a stronger tourism and leisure economy both through the protection of the areas natural and built heritage and by encouraging appropriate new forms of employment development.

2.3 The Blarney-Macroom Municipal District

2.3.1 The Blarney-Macroom Municipal District is located to the north west of Cork City and in 2011 the population of the area stood at 43,398. This population is spread across a network of settlements including 2 Main Towns, 53 smaller settlements and the open countryside, as detailed in Table 2.1. Outside the main towns the district is largely rural / agricultural in character with over 65% of the population of the Municipal District living in the open countryside i.e. not within a settlement.

2.3.2 Macroom is the largest town within the Municipal District with a population of 3,879 in 2011. Blarney is the only other major settlement located within the Municipal District with a population of 2,437 in the last Census.

	Settlements	Estimated Population 2011	%
Towns(3)	Blarney (2,437), Macroom (3,879)	6,316	15%
Key Villages (6)	Ballingeary, Ballymakeery/ Ballyvourney, Coachford, Grenagh, Kilmurphy/ Ovens, Tower	8,872*	20%
Villages (14)	Aherla, Aghabullogue, Cloghdub, Clondrohid, Crookstown, Crossbarry, Dripsey, Inchigeelagh, Kilnamatyra, Kilmurphy, Model Village (Dripsey), Newcestown, Rylane/ Seiscne, Stuake/ Donoughmore		
Village Nuclei (27)	Ballinacurra/Brinny, Ballinagree, Bealnamorive, Berrings, Canovee, Carrigadrohid/ Killinardrish, Carriganimmy, Cloghroe, Coolea, Courtbrack, Farnanes, Farnivane, Firmount, Fornaght, Kilbarry, Knockavilla/ Old Chapel Cross, Lissarda, Lower Dripsey, Matehy, Murragh, New Tipperary, Reananerree, Rusheen, Toon Bridge, Tooms, Upper Dripsey, Upton		
Other Locations (7)	Bealnablath, Farran/ Farran Lower, Gougane Barra, Gurranses, Iniscarra, Srelane Cross, Waterloo		
Rural Areas		28,210*	65%
Total Population		43,398	
* Village and Rural Populations are estimated figures			

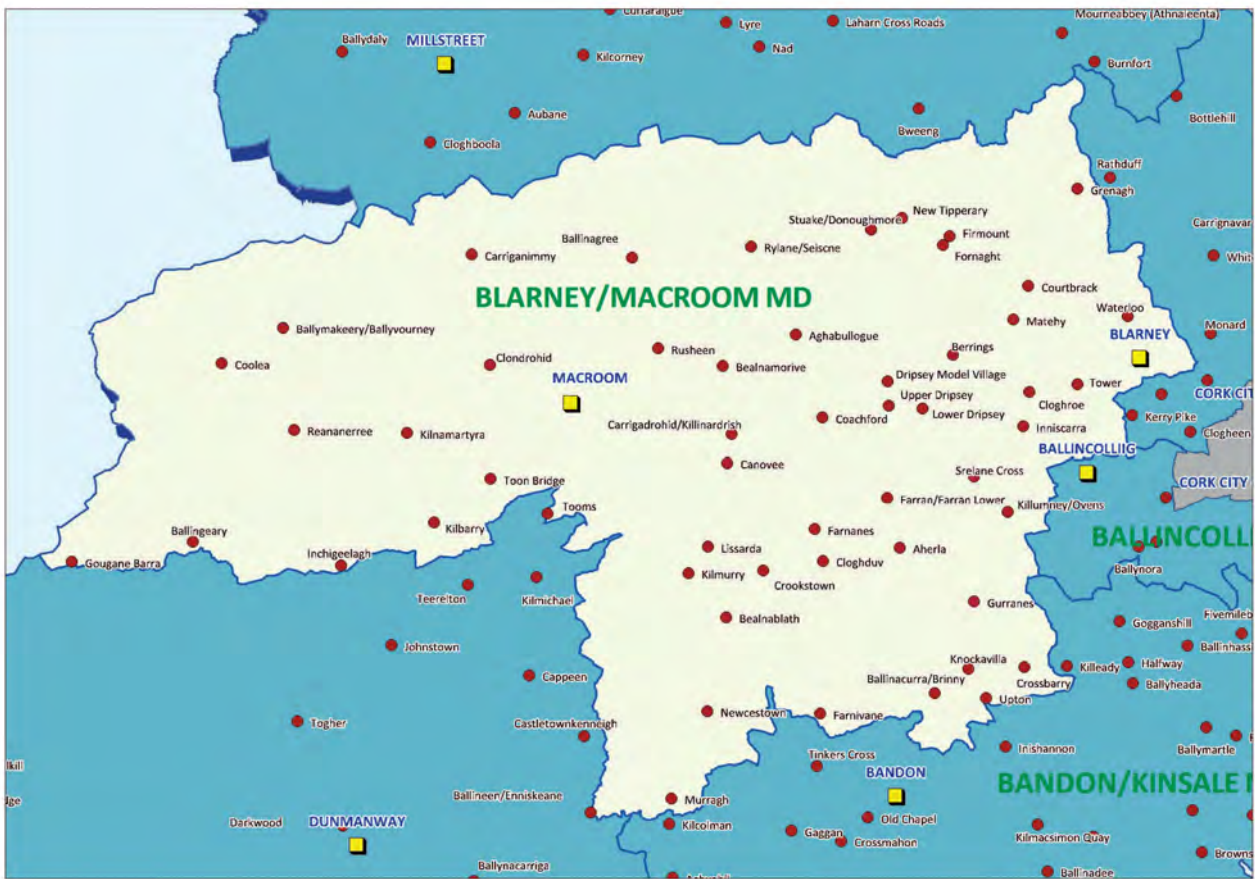


Figure 2.1 Blarney-Macroom Municipal District Settlements

2.4 Growth Strategy

- 2.4.1 Within the Blarney Macroom Municipal District the CDP provides for growth in population of 6,575 persons. The number of households is expected to grow by 5,236 leading to a net requirement for 6,022 new houses within the Municipal District. The County Development Plan indicates that 126ha of residentially zoned land is required.
- 2.4.2 The population growth target will require the provision of 6,022 new housing units, with at least 3,034 units allocated to the 2 Main Towns of Blarney (2,566) and Macroom (571). Housing growth is also planned for the villages of 1,526 units.
- 2.4.3 Table 2.2, shows that, the County Development Plan 2014 identifies a net requirement within the towns of the Municipal District for 3,034 new dwelling units and capacity, in terms of the current provision of zoned lands, to accommodate 3,976. Currently the overall land supply makes provision for headroom of 24% in terms of the amount of housing units required.

Table 2.2: Blarney-Macroom Municipal District						
	Housing Requirement				Housing Supply	
	Census 2011	Population Target	New Units Required	Net Estimated Requirement (ha)	Estimated Net Residential area zoned in LAP / TCP (ha)	Estimated Housing Yield (LAPs and TCPs)
Blarney	2,437	7,533	2,566	103	92	2,792
Macroom	3,879	4,536	571	23	60.90	1,184
Total Main Towns	6,316	12,069	3,034	126	152.90	3,976
Villages	8,872	12,070	2,105	–	–	1,526
Rural	28,210	25,833	741	–	–	–
Total Villages and Rural	37,082	37,904	2,846	–	–	1,526
Total Municipal District	43,398	49,973	5,880	126	152.90	5,502
Current Estimated Strategic Land Reserve (LAPs and TCPs) for this Municipal District is 26.9Ha						
<i>Source: Cork County Development Plan 2014- Volume One. Appendix B, Table B 6</i>						

2.5 Water Services infrastructure

- 2.5.1 Water services of all the infrastructure requirements needed to facilitate new development is the most critical, as in the absence of it, little development can take place.
- 2.5.2 Since January 2014 Irish Water is responsible for the operation of public water services (drinking water and wastewater) including management and maintenance of existing water services assets. Those intending to carry out development must now obtain consent to connect to Irish Water Infrastructure for new development. Irish Water also has responsibility for planning for future infrastructure needs and for the delivery of new infrastructure and future decisions in relation to investment in new water services infrastructure will be made by Irish Water. Developers must also satisfy themselves that Irish Water will make adequate services available in order to meet the needs of any development they propose.
- 2.5.3 The Cork County Development Plan, 2014 and the new Municipal District Local Area Plans are important documents that Irish Water should take into account in formulating its plans and programmes. As part of the review of the Local Area Plans it is proposed to prepare a companion document outlining the Water Services Infrastructural Investment needs in each Municipal District.

Approach to Water Services Provision

- 2.5.4 Within this Municipal District as illustrated in Table 2.4, the water services infrastructure needed to deliver the 2011 housing targets in the Main towns is not fully in place. Also in many of the villages (see Table 2.4) the water services infrastructure needed to deliver the 2011 housing requirements is often not in place.
- 2.5.5 In general the Councils approach to this, which is summarised in Table 2.3, is that where Irish Water already have water services infrastructure in a town or village then **Irish Water will need to upgrade that infrastructure as necessary to meet the demands of current and future customers in the settlement.**

	Normally Expected level of Water Services	Policy Approach
Towns Key Villages	Public Drinking Water and Waste Water Treatment	Adequate water services infrastructure to be provided.
Villages	Public Drinking Water	Adequate drinking water services to be provided.
	Public Waste Water Treatment	Adequate waste water treatment facilities to be provided for villages which already have some element of public infrastructure. For smaller villages where services are not available or expected, development will be limited to a small number of individual houses with their own treatment plant.
Village Nuclei	Public Drinking Water	Where already present, adequate drinking water services to be maintained. In the absence of public drinking water, individual dwellings may be permitted on the basis of private wells subject to normal planning and public health criteria.
	Public Waste Water Treatment	In these smaller settlements within no public services, it is proposed to limit development to a small number of individual houses with their own treatment plant.

- 2.5.6 Therefore, while the current water services infrastructure may not immediately deliver the scale of growth envisaged by the 2011 LAP, **the proposal generally is to retain the scale of growth with the expectation that the infrastructure will be delivered over time by Irish Water.** Settlements in this category are denoted by the letter “R” in the final column of Table 2.4.
- 2.5.7 **In some areas where water services infrastructure is not available, nor likely to be available, it may be necessary to adjust the scale of growth and limit development within such settlements to individual houses.** Settlements in this category are denoted by the letter “A” in the final column of Table 2.4. Within this Municipal District the Villages of Aherla, Crossbarry, Kilmurry, Newcestown and Stuake/ Donoughmore and the Village Nuclei of Berrings, Courtbrack, Firmount, Fornaght and Upper Dripsey are the only settlements that fall into this category.
- 2.5.8 **In some settlements, typically village nuclei, the scale of growth set out in 2011 is already quite low in recognition of the lack of water services infrastructure and therefore it may be possible to retain this.**

- 2.5.9 In relation to the Villages, the County Development 2014 indicates that, in the villages of this Municipal District, provision has been made for 1,642 units. An analysis of water services capacity in the villages indicates that without further investment in Water Services, it may be only possible to deliver 501 units.
- 2.5.10 Within the village network, it is suggested that the new LAP should generally maintain the scale of growth established for the 2011 Local Area Plans in order to respect the scale and character of the villages and because there are significant deficits in water services infrastructure. Ample land is available within the development boundaries of the villages to accommodate the expected level of growth and at this stage of the process it is not intended to alter the development boundaries of any of the villages. The main factor constraining development in the villages is likely to be inadequate water services infrastructure.
- 2.5.11 However within this Municipal District there does not appear to be enough land available within the main towns to accommodate development which cannot take place within the villages due to lack of infrastructure. Therefore consideration may need to be given to identifying additional land in the main towns.
- 2.5.12 The Settlement network of this Municipal District also includes 6 'Other Locations'. County Development Plan Strategy recognises "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. No changes are proposed to the strategy for 'Other Locations' as part of the review of the Local Area Plans.

Table 2.4: Blarney-Macroon Municipal District – Suggested Scale of Development

Name	Existing Number of Houses Q1 2015 (Geo directory)	Outstanding Planning Permissions Q1 2015 (No. of houses)	Scale of Development (CDP 2014 and LAPs 2011)	Drinking Water Status	Waste-Water Status	Suggested Scale of Development
Main Towns (2)		-				
Blarney	-	-	2,566			Target as per CDP 2014
Macroon	-	-	468			Target as per CDP 2014
Total Main Towns			3,034			
Key Villages (6)						
Ballingeary	96	16	60			R
Ballymakeery/ Ballyvourney	260	12	45			R
Coachford	181	102	116			R
Grenagh	217	-	150			R
Kilumney/ Ovens	476	241	251			R
Tower	1161	120	182			R
Total Key Villages			804			
Villages (14)						
Aherla	142	-	50		None	A
Aghabullogue	24	-	19			R
Cloghduv	116	200	80			R
Clondrohid	72	-	20			R
Crookstown	92	27	40			R
Crossbary	116	19	75		None	A
Inchigeelagh	93	-	60			R
Kilnamatyra	49	3	20			R
Kilmurry	54	46	15		None	A
Model Village (Dripsey)	141	-	30			R
Newcestown	24	-	15		None	A
Rylane/ Seiscne	70	28	40			R
Stuake/ Donoughmore	11	6	20		None	A
Total Villages			484			
Village Nuclei (26)						
Ballincurra/ Brinny	11	-	5	None	None	R
Ballinagree	18	1	15			R
Bealnamorive	7	-	5	None	None	R
Berrings	32	-	16	Private GWSS	None	A
Canovee	-	-	3		None	R

Table 2.4: Blarney-Macroom Municipal District – Suggested Scale of Development

Name	Existing Number of Houses Q1 2015 (Geo directory)	Outstanding Planning Permissions Q1 2015 (No. of houses)	Scale of Development (CDP 2014 and LAPs 2011)	Drinking Water Status	Waste-Water Status	Suggested Scale of Development
Carrigadrohid/ Killinardish	24	-	5		None	R
Carriganimmy	12	-	5	None	None	R
Cloghroe	36	-	10			R
Coolea	-	-	5			R
Courtbrack	43	28	66	Private GWSS	None	A
Farnanes	20	1	5	None	None	R
Farnivane	6	-	5	None	None	R
Firmount	8	7	6		None	A
Fornaght	10	-	9		None	A
Kilbarry	2	5	3	None	None	R
Knockavilla/ Old Chapel Cross	-	-	5	None	None	R
Lissarda	14	-	5	None	None	R
Lower Dripsey	4	-	5		None	R
Matehy	4	1	4	None	None	R
Murragh	18	1	3		None	R
New Tipperary	12	-	5		None	R
Reenanerree	10	1	5	None	None	R
Rusheen	10	-	5	None	None	R
Toon Bridge	19	1	5	None	None	R
Tooms	8	-	5	None	None	R
Upper Dripsey	36	3	25		None	A
Upton	7	-	3		None	R
Total Village Nuclei			238			
Overall Total			4,560			
Water Services Key	Irish Water Services in place with broadly adequate existing water services capacity.					
	Irish Water Services in place with limited or no spare water services capacity.					
	None – no existing Irish Water Services.					
Suggested Approach Key	R = It is intended to broadly retain the overall scale of growth as set out in the current Local Area Plan 2011.					
	A = The overall scale of growth as set out in the current Local Area Plan 2011 will need to be adjusted to reflect available water services capacity. Development will be limited to a small number of individual houses with their own treatment plant.					

2.6 Summary of the proposed Development Strategy for Villages

- 2.6.1 In relation to the villages of this Municipal District the suggested approach for the new local area plans is as follows:
- a) Maintain growth at the level already provided for in the current 2011 Local Area Plans (LAPs). The main factor constraining development in the villages is likely to be inadequate water services infrastructure and for this reason, the scale of growth provided for in some settlements may need to be adjusted downwards to reflect this.
 - b) It is not intended to alter the development boundaries of any of the villages.
 - c) **Key Villages:** In some key villages the current water services infrastructure cannot immediately accommodate the scale of growth envisaged by the 2011 Local Area Plan and further investment will be required by Irish Water. However, it is proposed to retain the scale of growth envisaged for Key Villages at the level established by the 2011 Local Area Plan **with the expectation that the infrastructure will be delivered over time by Irish Water.**
 - d) **Villages:** There are 14 villages in this Municipal District and all are served by public water. Waste water treatment infrastructure is not available in 5 of the villages (see Table 2.4), and is not expected to be provided. Consideration should be given to adjusting the scale of growth to a level appropriate to the provision of individual houses with their own treatment plant. In this context the scale of growth envisaged for Aherla, Crossbarry, Kilmurry, Newcestown and Stuake/ Donoughmore may need to be adjusted.
 - e) **Village Nuclei:** Village nuclei are the smallest settlements in the network and the CDP 2014 indicates that they are only intended to cater for individual dwellings (i.e. not housing estates). There are 26 village nuclei in this Municipal District only 3 have (Irish Water) waste water treatment infrastructure. The scale of growth envisaged by the 2011 LAP is largely quite modest and therefore adjustments will only need to be made in the 5 settlements of Berrings, Courtbrack, Firmount, Fornaght and Upper Dripsey, where targets are not achievable.

2.7 Strategic Land Reserve

- 2.7.1 Part of this Municipal District in particular the main town of Blarney is located within 'Metropolitan Cork', which (together with Cork City) is considered to be 'a single market in terms of housing and jobs'. Here, it is important that the adequacy of the supply of land for housing is considered at a Strategic Planning Area level rather than at an individual main settlement level because of the local physical and infrastructure limitations that apply to different towns.
- 2.7.2 The purpose of maintaining a 'Strategic Land Reserve' is to provide choice in the housing market. In addition, it also provides a contingency in the event that, some of the larger sites in Metropolitan Cork are either not delivered or delayed and also to a lesser extent, where smaller settlements and rural areas do not deliver the housing units required, perhaps because of limitations in water services, but also in road and transportation infrastructure.
- 2.7.3 Core Strategy Table 2.2 of the Cork County Development Plan 2014 currently shows that there is 37% headroom of residentially zoned land across the County as a whole. However the headroom in the County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area is only 14% (153ha). This level of reserve (or 'headroom') is considered too low for the likely needs of the nation's second city and its Metropolitan Region. If the reserve remains at this level, then it is considered that, in future, this could restrain the supply of housing in the critical metropolitan area leading to unnecessary house price inflation and unplanned pressure for housing in other parts of the county. Taken together, these two issues could limit the competitiveness of Cork's recovery and the contribution that the City and its Metropolitan region makes to national recovery.
- 2.7.4 The Development Plan Guidelines, issued to planning authorities by Government in 2007, state that in order to ensure continuity of supply of zoned and serviced residential land Planning Authorities should

ensure that at the time they make a development plan, enough land will be available to meet residential needs for at least the next 9 years i.e. 150% of the amount of land required over the lifetime of the plan. The Guidelines also require Local Authorities to consider the provision of adequate zoned land in excess of the targets for each of their settlements (i.e. headroom).

2.7.5 Therefore in order to address this short fall in the County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area the County Development Plan states that **it is intended to identify additional residential land to add to the current strategic land reserve in the County Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area and this may include proposals in within this Municipal District.**

2.7.6 These additional lands have yet to be identified but will be considered as part of the preparation of the Draft Local Area Plans for the relevant Municipal Districts, and may include additional lands within the Ballincollig-Carrigaline Municipal District. At this stage, no firm locations have been identified but those which adjoin the main towns (or planned extensions to them), have access to Irish Water services (with capacity for future development) and can provide access to established public transport corridors will be considered for inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan to be issued in 2016.

2.8 Employment within the Municipal District

2.8.1 Analysis of Census 2011 data for the Municipal District provides information in relation to the jobs that are located within the Municipal District and on the place of employment for the people who live within the Municipal District. Each "place of work" represents a single job and there were 9,887 'places of work' / jobs in the District in 2011. This includes 1,721 home workers. Excluding home workers there are 8,166 "Places of Work"/ jobs in the District.

2.8.2 Jobs located within the Municipal District fall into the following key categories:

- 20.4% - Wholesale, Retail, Transportation and Storage, Accommodation and food service activities;
- 21.8% Education, Human health and Social Work Activities.
- 16.1% Manufacturing, mining /quarrying, Electricity/Gas /Water Supply / waste management.
- 9.7% Agriculture, forestry or fishing.
- 13.2% Information / Communication, Financial, professional administration etc.

2.8.3 Census data also provides information in relation to the number of people within the District who are working, where they work and how they travel to work etc. Key findings of the analysis include the following:

- The total number of employees (people at work) who live within the District is 17,940. This includes home, mobile and 'uncodeable' workers and corresponds to 41.3% of the population of the District.
- Of the 17,940 employees living in the District,
 - 5,656 or 31.5% work within the Municipal District (including 1,721 home workers).
 - 4,695 or 26.1% work within Cork City.
 - 3,817 or 21.2% work within the county metropolitan area(includes some of the MD)
 - 3,043 or 16.9% work within the Greater Cork Ring (includes some of the MD)
 - 219 or 1.2% work within the North Cork area
 - 904 or 5% work within the West Cork area (includes some of the MD)
 - 455 or 2.5% work outside Cork County.

- A total of 69.7% of employees who live within the District travel to work by car (as a driver). A further 8.8% drive a van, lorry or other vehicle while approximately 3.1% travel as a passenger in a car.
- In terms of sustainable modes of transport for employees who live within the District only 4.5% travel to work on foot, 0.4% by bicycle and 1% by bus.

2.8.4 Blarney is the largest centre of employment within the area. The 2011 Census recorded a daytime working population within Blarney town of 2,109 people. In Macroom the figure was 330. This would indicate that of the 9,887 jobs within the Municipal district only 2,439 of them are located within the two main towns. Apart from farm based jobs a wide dispersal of employment opportunities outside of the main towns will make it more difficult for people to access employment opportunities and increase reliance on private car transport to access employment.

2.8.5 The supply of employment land within the Municipal District is set out in Table 2.5 which summarises the current employment land supply within the 2011 Local Area Plans. Macroom would appear to have a limited amount of business land currently zoned and available. The new Local Area Plans should seek to ensure that lands identified for employment use can be readily developed and address any barriers to development. There may be a requirement for some adjustment to the supply of employment land within the main towns and any suggested changes are highlighted under the respective town headings in Section Three.

Table 2.5: Employment Land Supply		
Location	Business Land (Ha)	Industrial Land (Ha)
Blarney	20.8	0
Macroom Environs*	12.22	16.8
Total	33.02	16.8

*Excludes lands within former Macroom Town Council Area.

2.9 Strategic Infrastructure Requirements

Table 2.6 Strategic Infrastructure for the Blarney-Macroom Municipal District	
	Strategic Infrastructure
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M22 Cork – Killarney Route • M20 Cork – Limerick Motorway Route
Blarney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N20 Junction Upgrade to facilitate Stoneview • Railway station; • Water infrastructure upgrades; • WWTP upgrade;
Macroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Reservoir • WWTP upgrades

Section 3

Main Settlements

Table of Contents

3.1 Introduction

Page

29



3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 There are two main towns in the Blarney Macroom Municipal District – Blarney and Macroom.

3.1.2 This Section outlines some of the key issues in relation to each of the main towns which the new Local Area Plan will address. The section also identifies the focuses on the main areas where changes are being considered relative to the plan which was adopted in the Local Area Plan, 2011 and the Macroom Town Council Plan, 2009 and the issues which the Council would like to engage with the people / stakeholders on. The main issues are

- Where will people live– issues around the location for lands for new housing development?
- Where can people work – the availability of land for new employment uses?
- Are there sufficient community facilities and public spaces?
- How can the town centre be strengthened – location of new shops and services.
- Are the public spaces of the town attractive? Is the public realm of high quality?
- How to deal with congestion and improve accessibility/mobility within the town?
- What are the water services needs of the town and how can they be delivered?

Section 3.1

Blarney

Table of Contents		Page
3.1.1	The Vision for Blarney	33
3.1.2	Residential Land Supply	34
3.1.3	Employment Land Supply	37
3.1.4	Town Centre/ Retail	39
3.1.5	Community Facilities /Green Infrastructure	41
3.1.6	Transport and Mobility	41
3.1.7	Water Services	42
3.1.8	Surface Water	42
3.1.9	Suggested Changes to be considered in preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan	43



3.1.1 The Vision for Blarney

- 3.1.1.1 In the Cork County Development Plan 2014 Blarney is defined as one of nine “Metropolitan Towns” within the Cork Gateway. The strategic aims of large metropolitan towns like Blarney are to accommodate critical population growth and act as service and employment centres within the Cork Gateway, providing high levels of community facilities and amenities with infrastructure capacity and high quality and integrated public transport facilities.
- 3.1.1.2 Within this context the preparation of the new Plan for Blarney offers the opportunity to take stock in terms of our vision of what kind of town Blarney can be, the lessons learned over recent years and the land use framework that should be put in place to help us progress towards achieving that vision. The existing Local Area Plan for Blarney sets out the following vision for the town:

“That it will continue to function as one of the principle tourist attractions in the region whilst developing as Metropolitan town with good access to the Cork Suburban Rail Network. The aim will be to secure the implementation of the major mixed use development proposed in Stoneview, to co-ordinate with the re-opening of the railway station”

Preparation of a new plan offers the opportunity to refine or update these goals as necessary.

3.1.2 Residential Land Supply

- 3.1.2.1 In the Cork County Development Plan 2014, Blarney has been allocated a population target of 7533, representing growth of just over 5,096 people on Census 2011 figures (2,537). In order to accommodate this level of population growth, an additional 2,556 housing units will be required. The current land supply is 92ha which is estimated to deliver 2,792 units.
- 3.1.2.2 Blarney has been selected for this level of growth because the potential to link growth to the delivery of suburban rail services on the rail route north of Cork City as proposed by CASP Update.
- 3.1.2.3 A masterplan was prepared and agreed for the Stoneview development to the north of the settlement. Planning permission which was granted for the first phase including the provision of a railway station has now lapsed. The Stoneview Masterplan makes provision for a new residential neighbourhood with a maximum of 2,500 new dwellings, associated community facilities, a neighbourhood centre, schools, hospital, employment uses, park and ride facility and new train station. Significant road and utilities infrastructure will need to be put in place to support the development at Stoneview.
- 3.1.2.4 Uncertainty has been introduced by the delay in progressing the M20. There is no longer any imminent prospect of the M20 being delivered but the need to provide housing is now an even more urgent priority for the Council.
- 3.1.2.5 The LAP review will consider how best to facilitate the delivery of the Stoneview lands on the basis of modifications to the existing road network and linking this to provision of infrastructure so that housing and rail services can be delivered in the lifetime of the new plan.
- 3.1.2.6 Table 3.1.1 details the current residential zonings in Blarney. These have been categorised in terms of the likely time frame within which infrastructure will be available in order to facilitate development. Given certain constraints with water supply in supplying new locations such as the X-01 lands on the periphery, it is not envisaged that any significant development can be accommodated within the 0-2 year time frame. Figure 3.1.1 illustrates the existing residential supply and areas of change suggested on foot of initial analysis.

Table 3.1.1: Residential Land Supply Blarney			
Site Ref.	Area (Ha)	Comment	Suggested Approach
Infrastructure available to facilitate development within 0-2 year timeframe			
Developable within 2-6 years subject to additional infrastructure provision			
R-01	3.6	Undeveloped. Access to the site difficult, - road access possibly through existing estates. Future road proposals relating to M20 and development X01 (Stoneview) site may impact on this site.	Modify/Expand Zoning
R-02	4.2	Undeveloped. No direct access to the public road network	Retain Zoning
R-03	7.6	Undeveloped. Access only possible through existing housing estate roads which are not in charge.	Retain Zoning
X-01	76.5	Undeveloped. Planning Permission was previously granted for 825 houses (expired). There are significant roads, water and sewer infrastructure issues to be resolved.	Prepare Framework Master Plan
Total	91.9		
Infrastructure requirements suggest delivery more than 6 years			
X-01	(76.5)	Planning Permission was previously granted for 825 houses (expired). There are significant roads, water and sewer infrastructure issues to be resolved.	Prepare Framework Master Plan
Overall Total	91.9		

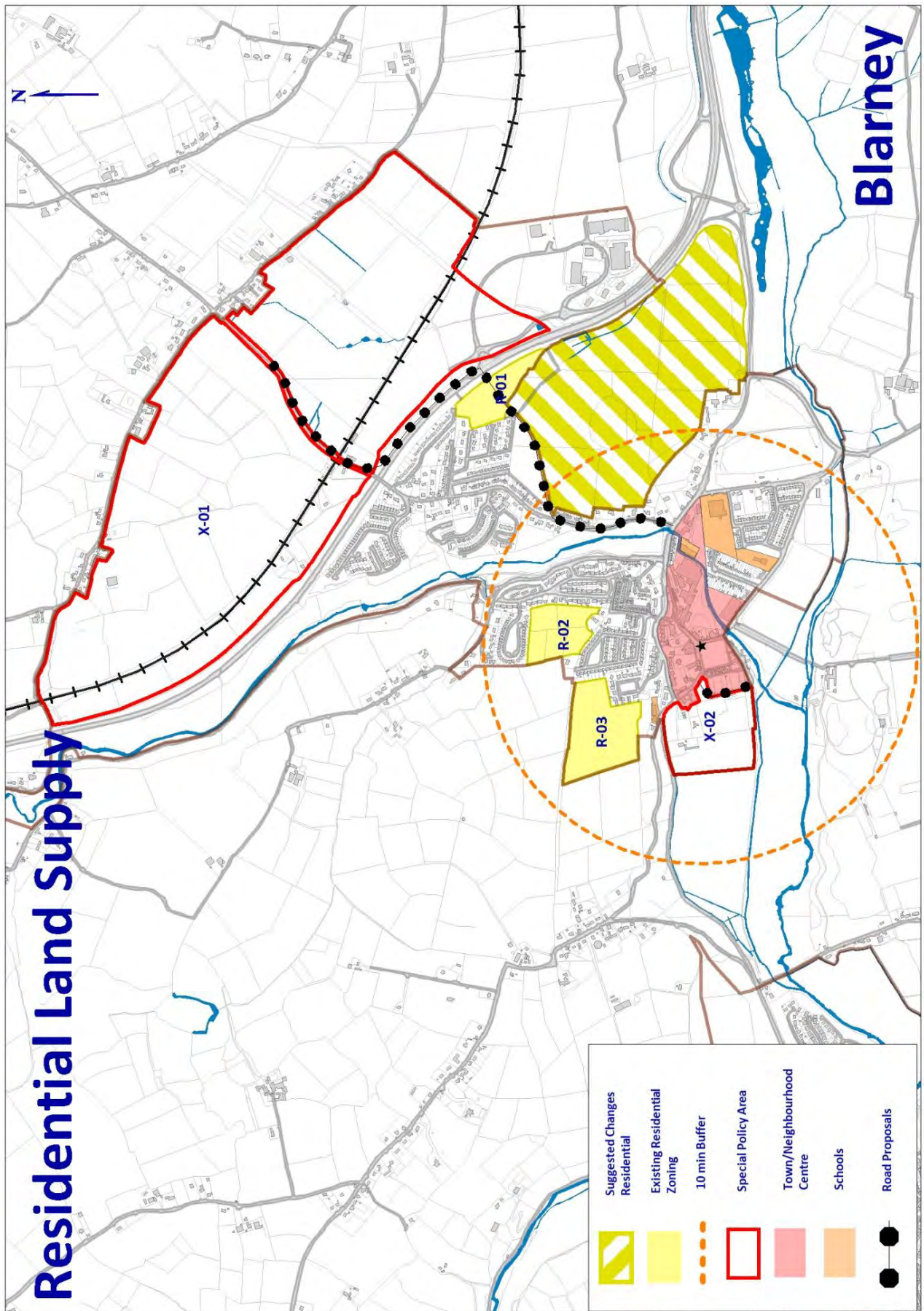


Figure 3.1.1 Residential Land Supply

3.1.3 Employment Land Supply

- 3.1.3.1 Blarney is a small employment centre within Metropolitan Cork. Results from the 2011 Census show a daytime working population (resident and non-resident of Blarney) of 577 persons, with commerce and trade being the largest industry.
- 3.1.3.2 In 2011 there were 1,171 persons living in Blarney in the labour force and of these 84% or 982 persons were at work, although 67% (664) were working outside the area.
- 3.1.3.3 In addition to the established employment uses within the town, the Blarney Business Park, located, 1km's to the north east of Blarney provides for employment in the form of logistics and the National Car Test Service. A substantial part of the land area of the park is currently undeveloped. There are three vacant car showrooms, two of which have permission for conversion or have been sold.
- 3.1.3.4 Previous plans for Blarney have zoned one area for employment / industrial use. Table 3.1.2 sets out the current situation in relation to the land zoned for employment uses.

Site Ref	Site Area (ha)	Comment	Suggested Approach
B-01	20.8	Partly developed. Business Development- with strong pedestrian connectivity to the proposed station at Stoneview.	Retain zoning.

- 3.1.3.5 The Cork County Development Plan 2014 has recognised the important employment function of Blarney can play in the employment hierarchy particularly with a growing population and the delivery of suburban rail services. The current land supply, the quantum of available land required; the location of that supply and the types of uses to be permitted in these locations will need to be carefully considered if Blarney is to enhance its employment offer.
- 3.1.3.6 The existing Business Park which currently largely vacant needs to be further developed prior to any future Business zonings been considered in Blarney. Consideration could then be given to a possible expansion of the current Business Park. Figure 3.1.2 illustrates the location of existing and future employment within the settlement.

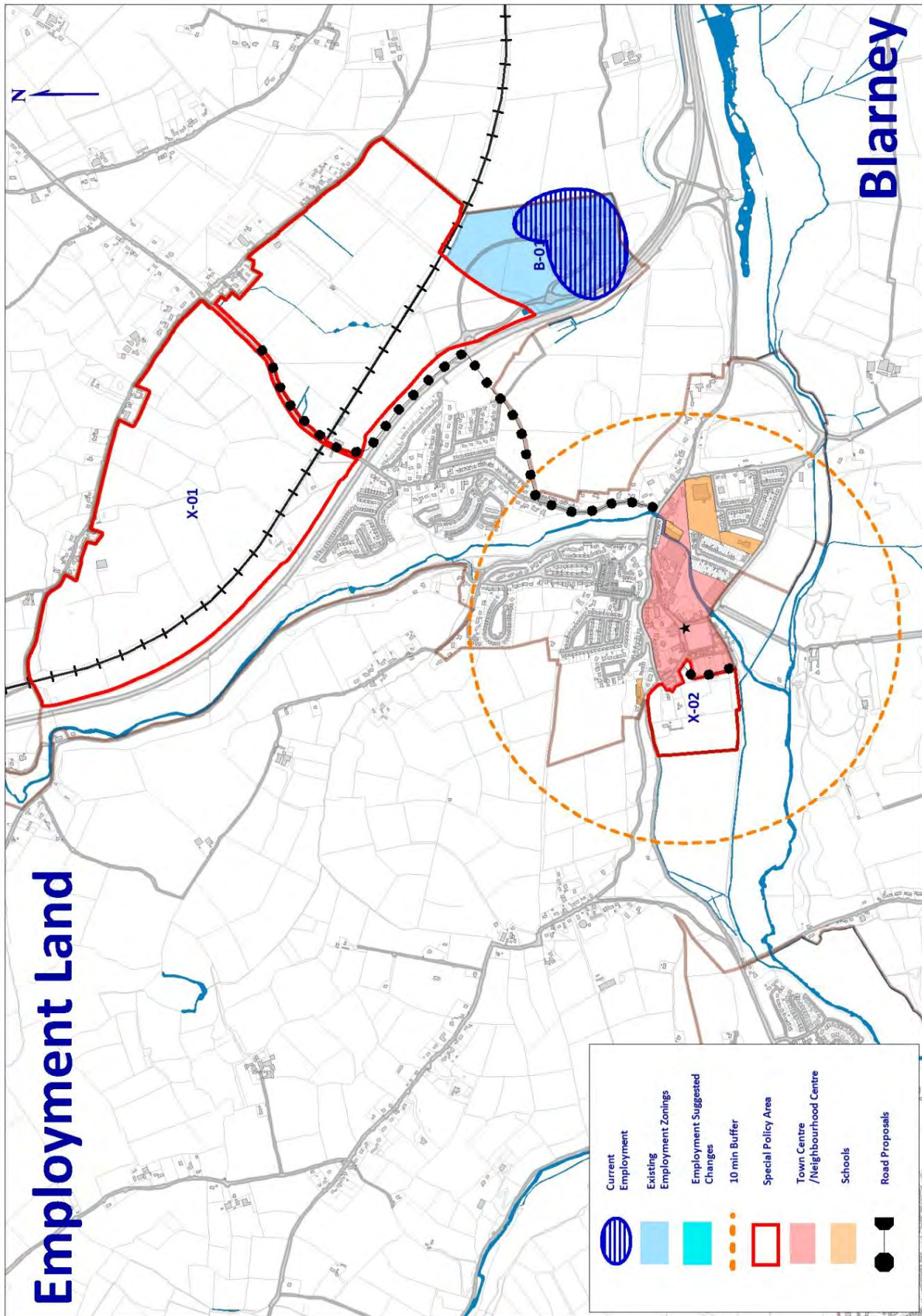


Figure 3.1.2 Employment Land Supply

3.1.4 Town Centre/Retail

Overview of Blarney Town Centre

- 3.1.4.1 Given the significant population growth target for Blarney, it is envisaged that additional retail floorspace will be required and the principle location for this will be within the main focus of future population growth at Stoneview, which will allow the existing town centre to focus more on its tourism offer.
- 3.1.4.2 In order to enhance the vitality of the existing town centre more high quality / destination retailers, which generate additional footfall, need to be attracted into the heart of the town centre. Such uses generally seek more modern premises with larger floor plates and a high quality public realm. There are opportunities available within the core of the town and within other town centre zonings where new modern facilities can be provided, either through utilising existing vacant units or through the sympathetic refurbishment or replacement of existing premises. The new Plan could identify these and support the sequential development of the town centre.
- 3.1.4.3 No changes to the current Town Centre zonings are suggested. The present T-01 zoning is adequate and there are opportunity sites within the T-01 off Millstream Row (to the rear of Woollen Mills complex) which could be redeveloped for town centre expansion. The current X-02 site adjoining the town centre to the west could also provide an opportunity for the provision of high quality tourist related retail uses.
- 3.1.4.4 The retail core in Blarney is small and limited to the area round the town park/square and a small number of adjoining streets, St Ann's Road and Millstream Row. It encompasses the Blarney Woollen Mills complex which houses a hotel, bar and department store.
- 3.1.4.5 There is a small retail/services complex in the east of the town centre located in the Ashdale house and Ringwood House Centres. The two filling stations at the eastern entrance to the town also contain convenience stores.

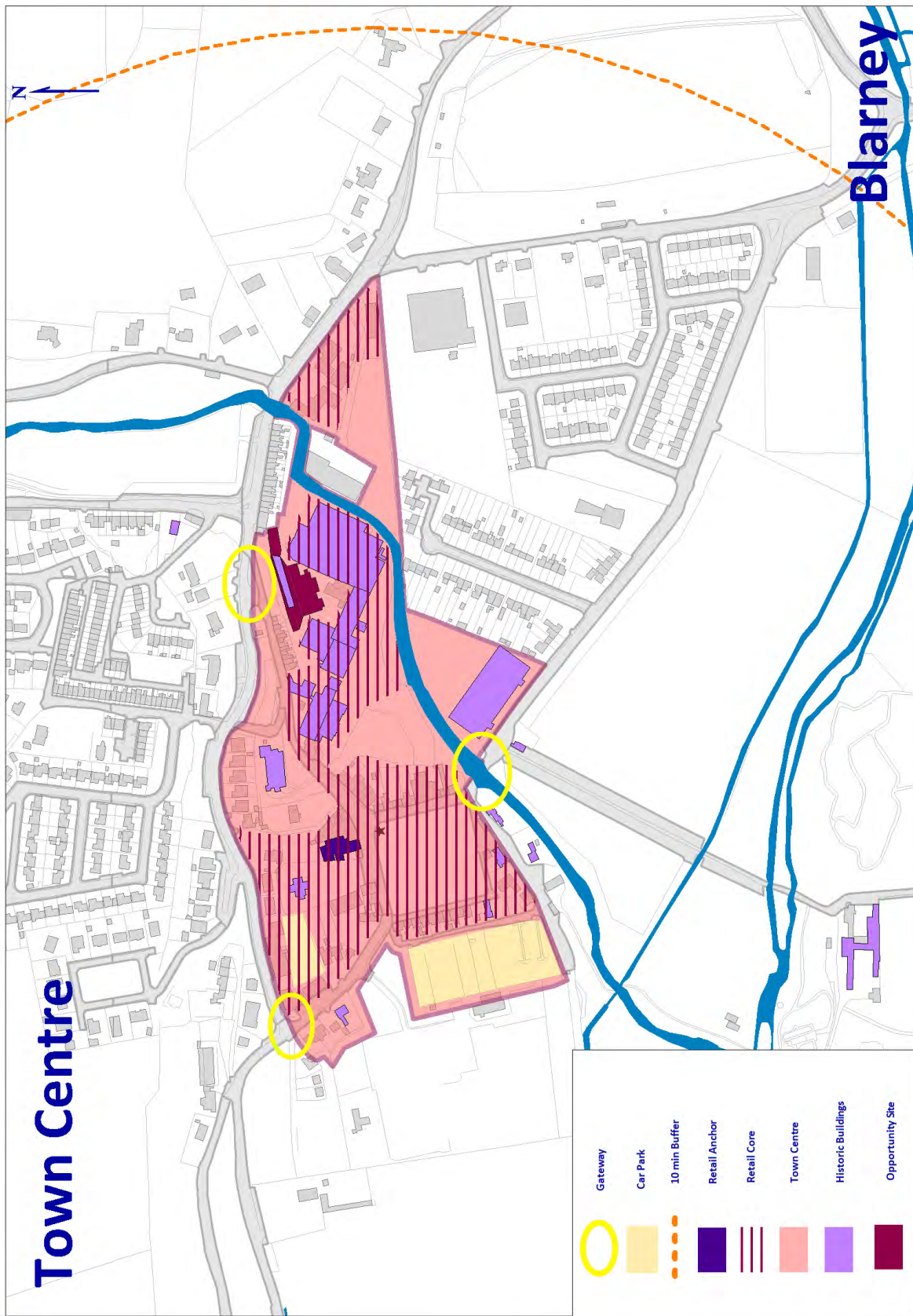


Figure 3.1.3 Town Centre

3.1.5 Community Facilities /Green Infrastructure

- 3.1.5.1 The scale of growth predicted for Blarney in this plan will place significant new demands on social and community infrastructure (schools, recreational facilities, health care etc.) It is important that new community infrastructure is delivered in a timely fashion as the town grows so that it continues to perform as an attractive convenient town offering a good quality of life. In this context significant investment will be required in community infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing population.
- 3.1.5.2 Community facilities are located throughout the town including a library, garda station and numerous places of worship. Healthcare facilities including the community hospital are all located on the periphery of the town and can be difficult to access, especially for the elderly or those without access to a car.
- 3.1.5.3 Education facilities are largely focussed to the east, south and west of the town centre close to established residential areas. Given the concentration of future residential growth to the north east of the town, the provision of additional educational facilities in this area will need to be considered.
- 3.1.5.4 The town has a limited supply of active and passive open spaces. There may be opportunities to consider expanding the range of active and passive open spaces as part of this review.
- 3.1.5.5 Blarney is widely regarded as one of Ireland's most picturesque towns. One of the principal features of the town centre is the well preserved village square maintained by Blarney Castle Estate. The castle, built nearly 600 years ago, is situated in over a thousand acres of woodland and is one of the principal tourist attractions in the country.
- 3.1.5.6 The future development of the town offers opportunities to develop an integrated open space strategy which can perform a number of functions including passive and active amenity areas, wildlife corridors and carbon filters to offset impacts of increased development and traffic within the town. There is a need to identify areas of local biodiversity importance within the plan area so these can form part of the open space network.

3.1.6 Transport and Mobility

- 3.1.6.1 The N20 Cork – Limerick National Primary Route connects Blarney to Cork. There are full intersections at both Killeens and Blarney and a partial intersection has been constructed but not brought into use at Blarney Business Park. To the west, the R617 connects Blarney to Tower.
- 3.1.6.2 The Blarney/Kilbarry Special Local Area Plan prepared in 2005 identified the former Railway goods yard, located on the southern side of the railway immediately southeast of the bridge carrying Station Road over the line as the site for the proposed station. The development of the station is tied into the development of the new residential neighbourhood at Stoneview. One of the conditions of the Stoneview planning permission required that the railway station shall be provided ready for operation before the first occupation of any residential unit.
- 3.1.6.3 There are up to twenty bus services in each direction linking Blarney and Cork each weekday. There is no regular interval or "clock face" pattern to the service resulting in gaps between departures of up to 1 hour 40 minutes at certain times of the day. Most services are not routed to follow the N20, instead following minor roads serving locations such as Killeens and Harrington's Gate. A typical journey from Blarney town centre to Cork (about 9.5 km) is timetabled to take 30 minutes. Most of the services to and from Cork either originate from or continue to other destinations including Cloghroe, Newcastel, Tower, Stuake, and Waterloo. There is no bus station and no bus priority lanes in Blarney at present.
- 3.1.6.4 Census 2011 highlighted that 72.9% of residents travelled to work by car, with the average journey time recorded as 24 minutes and 17.7% of workers faced a commuting time in excess of 30 minutes. 23 persons commuted using public transport (bus or rail).

3.1.7 Water Services

Water Supply:

- 3.1.7.1 Water supply is available. However further upgrading of water supply scheme including new water mains and new high level reservoir required in order to provide a water supply for proposed development in Stoneview (X-01)

Wastewater

- 3.1.7.2 The Blarney WWTP treats effluent from Blarney, Tower, Cloghroe (part of Tower Settlement) and Kerry Pike. Remedial work on sewer infiltration issues has been carried out. Foul sewer available -extensions required to service some locations e.g. Stoneview; WWTP capacity available.

3.1.8 Surface Water

- 3.1.8.1 There is a requirement to provide storm water sewers to serve most of the development sites in to town. All new development should include attenuation measures in accordance with Sustainable Urban Drainage systems.

Flooding

- 3.1.8.2 Parts of Blarney have been identified as being at risk of flooding. The areas at risk follow the path of the River Shournagh, that runs to the south of the town and. Those areas most directly affected include the X-02 site to the south west of Blarney and lands to the south east of the development boundary.

3.1.9 Suggested Changes to be considered in preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan

3.1.9.1 The following is a list of possible suggested changes to be considered in the preparation of the Blarney Town Section of the Draft Local Area Plan. This is not an exhaustive list and additional items can be added as the local area plan review process progresses.

Table 3.1.3 Suggested Approach	
Topic	Proposed Approach
Residential Land Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing residential zonings. Consider identifying additional housing land including the lands stretching east from Station Road towards the N20 and south to the R617.
Employment Land Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing Employment zonings.
Town Centre/Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how to strengthen the retail core of the town while protecting its attractive environment. Suggest providing modern retail floorspace in parallel with population growth within the Stoneview site. Consider focusing the retail offer in the existing town centre around the provision of high end tourism related developments. Consider identifying suitable sites within the existing "town centre" area to allow expansion of the existing town centre's retail and tourism function.
Community Facilities/Green Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities to expand the range of active and passive open spaces. Consider what community facilities are required and where should these facilities be located. Consider if there is a requirement to provide additional healthcare facilities such as a primary care centre in the area. Consider what additional educational facilities are required to be provided in parallel with population growth.
Transport and Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New junction required onto the N20 to improve accessibility. Consider opportunities to enhance walking/cycling facilities within the town. Prioritise the reopening of the railway station as part of the Stoneview Masterplan site. Consider how to improve connectivity between the Masterplan site and the town centre. Consider how to improve pedestrian/cycling connectivity between Blarney and Tower. Prioritise the development of the M20.
Water Services Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased capacity in water services infrastructure (water & wastewater) required to serve Stoneview (X-01 site).
Flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take account of the latest flood study.

Section 3.2

Macroom

Table of Contents		Page
3.2.1	The Vision for Macroom	47
3.2.2	Residential Land Supply	48
3.2.3	Employment Land Supply	53
3.2.4	Town Centre /Retail	56
3.2.5	Community Facilities /Green Infrastructure	58
3.2.6	Water Services	59
3.2.7	Surface Water	59
3.2.8	Lands outside Town Council Development Plan Boundary	59
3.2.9	Suggested Changes to the Current Local Area Plan	60

3.2.1 The Vision for Macroom

- 3.2.1.1 Macroom is the largest settlement within the Blarney-Macroom Municipal District and it is an important centre of population and employment in the south west region. Macroom is located on the N22 national primary route between Cork and Kerry and is located approximately midway between Killarney and Cork City. The town does not have a bypass and this creates major congestion and delays at peak periods due to high volumes of traffic passing through the main street.
- 3.2.1.2 The town has an attractive setting and the River Sullane flows through the town. Macroom has a wide floodplain and flooding is a risk in the town, occasionally the river has burst its banks particularly at the western end of the town.
- 3.2.1.3 The current Macroom Town Council Development Plan, 2009, remains in force covering the functional area of the former Macroom Town Council. It is proposed to incorporate the provisions of the Town Council Plan within this Local Area Plan.
- 3.2.1.4 The County Development Plan identifies Macroom as one of six Ring Towns in the network of settlements. The strategic aim for a Ring Town is to provide a better balance of development throughout the Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Area, and fulfil 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. This means the town is prioritised as a centre of growth within the Greater Cork Ring Strategic Planning Area with a corresponding priority in terms of infrastructural investment.
- 3.2.1.5 The existing Town Plan sets out the following vision for the town:
- “The town has been identified as a Ring Town and therefore an important growth/ development centre playing a pivotal role in linking South West Cork with North West Cork. The towns continued role as an employment and service centre for the North-West region is important in providing a population and employment balance to Cork City. Growth within the town should be encouraged, aligned with the improvement of transportation links, services and other linkages. New employment and commercial opportunities need to be explored which will allow the town to grow in a sustainable manner to avoid it becoming a dormitory town for Metropolitan Cork.
- 3.2.1.6 A compact growth model is recommended in terms of future development in Macroom. The aim of this model is to encourage densification rather than allow continuous edge of town expansion. There should be restriction on expansion on the outskirts of the town in preference to a more compact urban form which would support public transport and pedestrian/ cycling movements. There will also be a focus on urban renewal and regeneration which will see development being redirected from the outskirts to undeveloped areas of the town centre...Large pockets of undeveloped land exist in the town centre providing enormous development potential and the opportunity to create a more balanced structure to the town’s development.”

3.2.2 Residential Land Supply

- 3.2.2.1 Macroon has been allocated a population target of 4,536 representing growth of 657 persons on Census 2011 figures (3,879). In order to accommodate this level of population growth, an additional 468 housing units will be required. A net housing land requirement of 23ha has been identified to provide this amount of housing. Previous plans for Macroon (LAP and TCP) have made provision for an estimated net residential land supply of 60.9 ha with the capacity to provide approximately 1,184 units. There appears therefore to be an oversupply of residential land in Macroon Town. The new local area plan for Macroon will need to consider which land is best suited to support the orderly and sustainable development of the town and whether phasing/prioritisation will need to be considered.
- 3.2.2.2 The town experienced significant housing growth, particularly to the west prior to 2007. Residential land supply in Macroon is located to the north and south of the Sullane River while there is also a significant supply of infill sites zoned for residential use in the town centre. All of the residential zonings provide for Low and Medium density residential development with some sites considered suitable for individual sites. Some of the residential zoned lands in the town have been identified as being at risk of flooding and are therefore no longer considered suitable for residential use. The plan will need to identify the priority locations for new residential development and the infrastructure required to deliver it.
- 3.2.2.3 Table 3.2.1 details the residential zonings currently in Macroon. The Core Strategy states that the priority for Macroon Town is to ensure a more sustainable pattern of residential growth which helps consolidate the town around its existing core and brings unfinished estates to a satisfactory level of completion. The current Town Plan uses a phasing arrangement. Residential lands identified for inclusion within Phase 1 comprise 24 hectares as shown in the Table X. In addition there is a further 5.4ha zoned for town centre development which is expected to yield some residential development. The remainder of the land supply (31ha) is in Phase 2.
- 3.2.2.4 There are currently 32 different sites identified for residential development in Macroon Town and Environs. It is intended when preparing the draft plan to carry out a more detailed analysis of each of the sites identified in Table 3.2.1. The Phasing arrangement set out in Table 3.2.1 reflects the current approach in the Town Plan. It is intended to review this approach as part of the preparation of the draft local area plan.

Table 3.2.1: Current Residential Zoning/ Land Supply in Macroom

Site Ref.	Area (Ha)	Comment	Suggested Approach
Phasing of Residential Land – Phase 1 Variation to Macroom Town Plan 2009			
Town Council Lands			
L-1	1.7	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Change Zoning Objective and incorporate into existing built up area.
L-2	0.3	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
L-3	0.3	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
L-4	0.3	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
L-5	1.4	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
L-6	1.3	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
L-7	1.6	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
L-8	0.4	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
L-9	0.6	Undeveloped. Site subject to flooding, Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Remove Zoning Objective and change to Open Space/ Existing Built-Up Area.
M-1	3.8	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-2	0.6	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-3	5.9	No change. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-4	1.7	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.

Table 3.2.1: Current Residential Zoning/ Land Supply in Macroom

Site Ref.	Area (Ha)	Comment	Suggested Approach
Phasing of Residential Land – Phase 1 Variation to Macroom Town Plan 2009			
Town Council Lands			
		Water Capacity Constraints	
M-5	1.6	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-6	0.6	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-7	1.6	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
Total Phase 1	24		
TC-1	3.5	2014: no significant permissions	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
TC-2	1.9	2014: no significant permissions	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-8	1.6	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-9	0.8	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-10	1.3	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-11	1.6	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-12	6.5	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-13	4.8	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-14	3.1	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-15	1.5	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
M-16	2.2	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.

Table 3.2.1: Current Residential Zoning/ Land Supply in Macroom

Site Ref.	Area (Ha)	Comment	Suggested Approach
Phasing of Residential Land – Phase 1 Variation to Macroom Town Plan 2009			
Town Council Lands			
M-17	3.3	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
L-10	1.4	Undeveloped. Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints Site is at risk of flooding.	Remove Zoning Objective and change to Open Space/ Existing Built-Up Area.
LT-1	2.7	Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Review Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
Total Phase 2	31		
Macroom EA LAP 2011			
County Council Sites			
R-01	2.4	Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Retain Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
R-02	3.5	Water Supply and Waste Water Capacity Constraints	Retain Zoning Objective and Boundaries.
Overall Total	60.9		

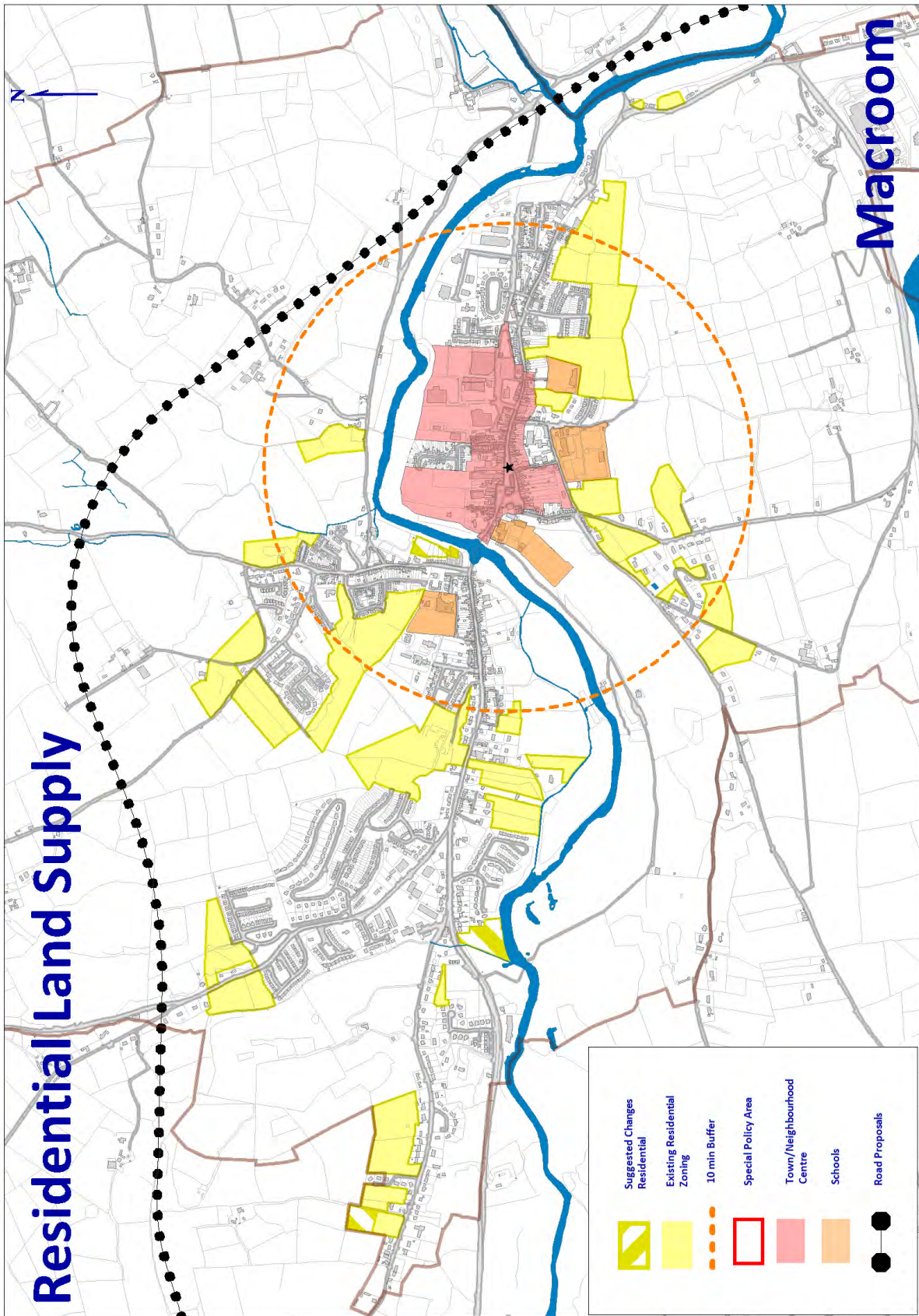


Figure 3.2.1 Residential Land Supply

3.2.3 Employment Land Supply

- 3.2.3.1 Under the employment hierarchy in the 2014 County Development Plan Macroon is identified as a third tier employment location after the Cork Gateway (including Mallow Hub) and Clonakilty. The employment objectives within “Other Towns” are to “focus on local catchment employment in the town”. Part of the strategy for these towns is to provide an accompanying infrastructure programme to service land supply identified for future employment development focused on medium to small business/industry. Results from the 2011 Census show a daytime working population resident and non-resident in Macroon of 1,506 persons, with commerce and trade being the largest industry. The retail sector in the town also provides good employment.
- 3.2.3.2 In 2011 there were 1,824 persons living in Macroon in the labour force and of these, 81.5% per cent /1,487 persons were at work although nearly half of them (695) worked outside the area. Of the 1,191 persons aged 15 years and over who were outside the labour force, 24.3 per cent were students, 23.3 per cent were looking after the home/family and 35.7 per cent were retired. The census shows that the unemployment rate in 2011 for this area was 18.5 per cent compared with a national average rate of 19.0 per cent.
- 3.2.3.3 The 2011 Local Area Plan set out to ensure that there would be sufficient industrial/business land available to meet the demand for development if the need arose during the lifetime of the plan. The plan identified three sites for business use (B-01, B-02 and B-03) and one site for industrial use (I-01). Three of the sites are located to the south east of the town centre and one is located to the north west of the town centre. The 2009 Development Plan for the town also identified a number of sites for industrial and business use which are scattered throughout the town which are undeveloped and available for employment uses subject to the required infrastructure services being available.
- 3.2.3.4 The Macroon Environmental Industrial Park which is located on the old Eircom site in the town has been a successful model for employment in the town and is dedicated to helping start up and growing businesses in the Lee Valley region. The success of this park should be built upon and more lands made available for similar industries.
- 3.2.3.5 A review of the scale, location and appropriateness of Macroon’s employment land supply will be necessary as part of the preparation of the new local area plan. Part of the site zoned B-01 has been identified as being at risk of flooding. There are also existing constraints in relation to the provision of water services which may mean a large amount of zoned land is unserviceable in the short-medium term. Figure 3.2.2 illustrates the location of existing employment lands within the Macroon Town Plan and the Environs (as per the existing Macroon LAP 2011). Suggested changes are highlighted for consideration as part of this preliminary consultation process.

Table 3.2.2 Macroom Employment Land Supply

Site Ref	Current Status	Comment	Suggested Approach
B-01 (Environs)	Business	Undeveloped. Part of site is within area of flood risk.	Retain Zoning
B-02 (Environs)	Business	Undeveloped	Retain Zoning
B-03 (Environs)	Business	Undeveloped	Retain Zoning
I-01 (Environs)	Industry	Undeveloped. Site is located from rural area, detached from the development boundary of the town.	Consideration should be given to the future status of this site & finding a more suitable area close to/adjoining the existing built-up area.
I-02 (Town Council)	Industry	Substantially developed.	Consideration should be given to returning the site to the "Existing built-up area".
I-03 (Town Council)	Industry	Undeveloped.	Retain Zoning
I-04 (Town Council)	Industry	Partially developed.	Retain Zoning
I-05 (Town Council)	Industry	Partially developed.	Retain Zoning
I-06 (Town Council)	Industry	Partially developed.	Retain Zoning

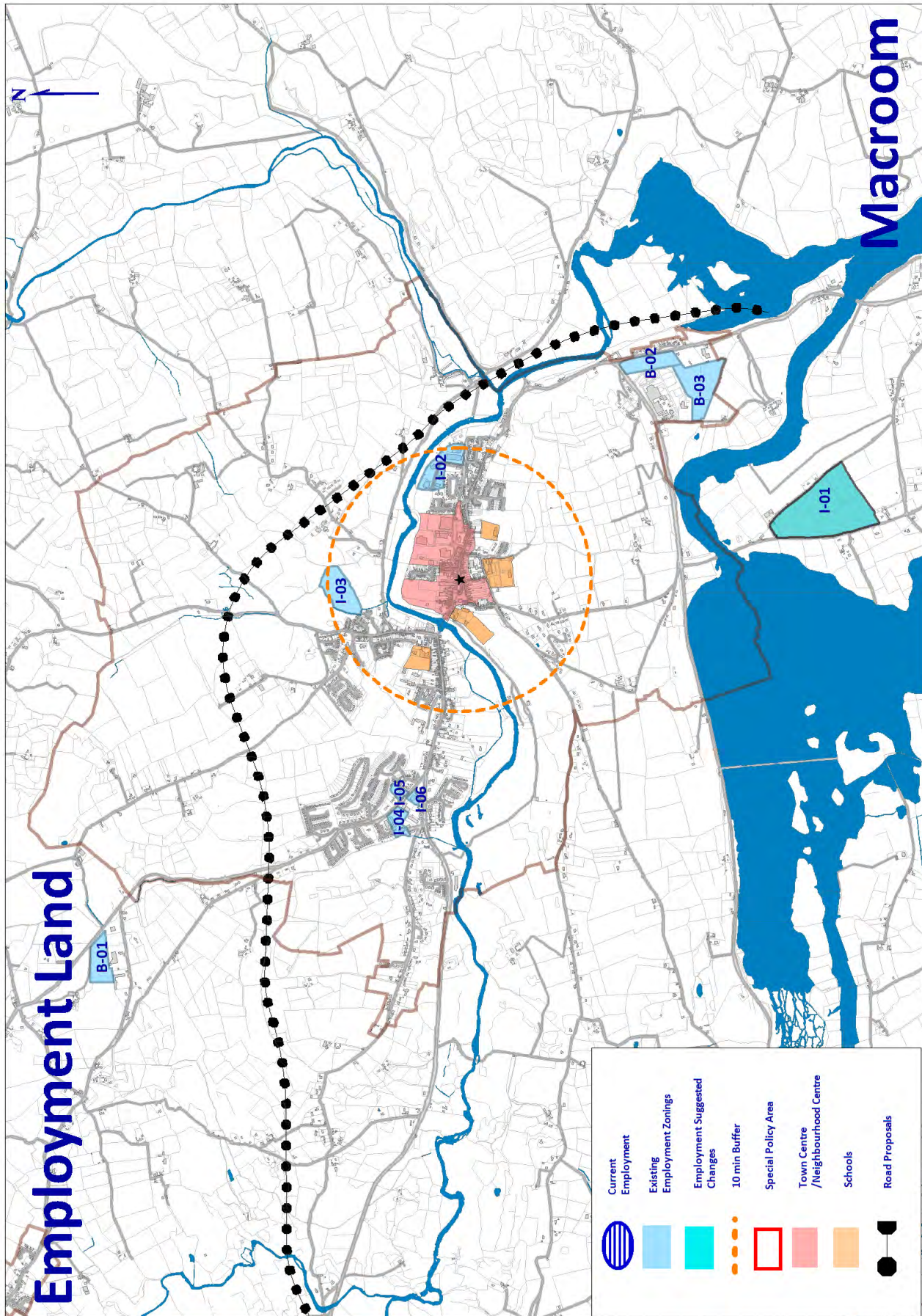


Figure 3.2.2 Employment land Supply

3.2.4 Town Centre/Retail

- 3.2.4.1 Macroon Town serves a local urban population and extensive rural catchment. As a Ring Town the objective for retail in Macroon Town Centre as set out in the 2014 Cork County Development Plan is to support the vitality and viability of the town and to ensure that it provides an appropriate range of retail and non retail functions to serve the needs of the community and respective catchment areas. There is a need to encourage future expansion and regeneration of Macroon Town Centre in line with anticipated future population growth.
- 3.2.4.2 Macroon has a mix of both convenience and comparison shopping with the retail focal point split between the Market Square and the newly developed Fair Green/Mart Site where there is extensive free car parking. Convenience shopping in the town has improved with the opening of Dunnes Stores and Lidl at the Mart Site however the Town Plan recognised that there is a shortfall in higher order comparison shopping. The peripheral areas of the town to the west of the Market Square and to the east of the Mart Site have high levels of vacancy. Figure 3.2.2 has defined the retail core of the town.
- 3.2.4.3 The Macroon Town Centre Vacancy Survey which was carried out in April 2013 identifies a number of opportunity sites in the town which include individual sites, a derelict property directly abutting the town council offices and the Mart site and adjoining lands. Overall vacancy in the town centre is approximately 17% as identified in the Vacancy Survey. When categorised into streets with a more primary and secondary function there was little relative difference in vacancy levels between primary (11.6%) and secondary streets (16%).
- 3.2.4.4 The Macroon Town Plan zoned an extensive area of land “town centre” including vast areas of “backlands” west of the River for “town centre expansion”. Current analysis suggests that there are adequate lands already available north and south of the existing retail core to facilitate an appropriate scale of town centre expansion which can reinforce the existing retail core. Consideration should therefore be given to reducing the extent of the “town centre” and redefining lands west of the Bridge to “existing built-up area” or “residential”.
- 3.2.4.5 The quality of the shopping environment in the town with regard to pedestrian safety and car parking are adversely affected by traffic congestion. Traffic pollution is a major issue for Macroon and it affects the overall attractiveness and ambience of the town centre. The Town Centre Vacancy Survey also found that in general the condition of footpaths along the street is quite good however the width of the footpaths is an issue along some streets leading to the town centre where the environment is less pleasant for the pedestrian. The pavements are also cluttered in places where lampposts, litter bins and street signage may conflict particularly along the narrow parts of Main Street and Castle Street. Providing additional street furniture and widening footpaths, where required, would rebalance the town centre in favour of the pedestrian. The town plan identified a number of town centre opportunity sites and included a Concept Plan for the Mart Area of the town.

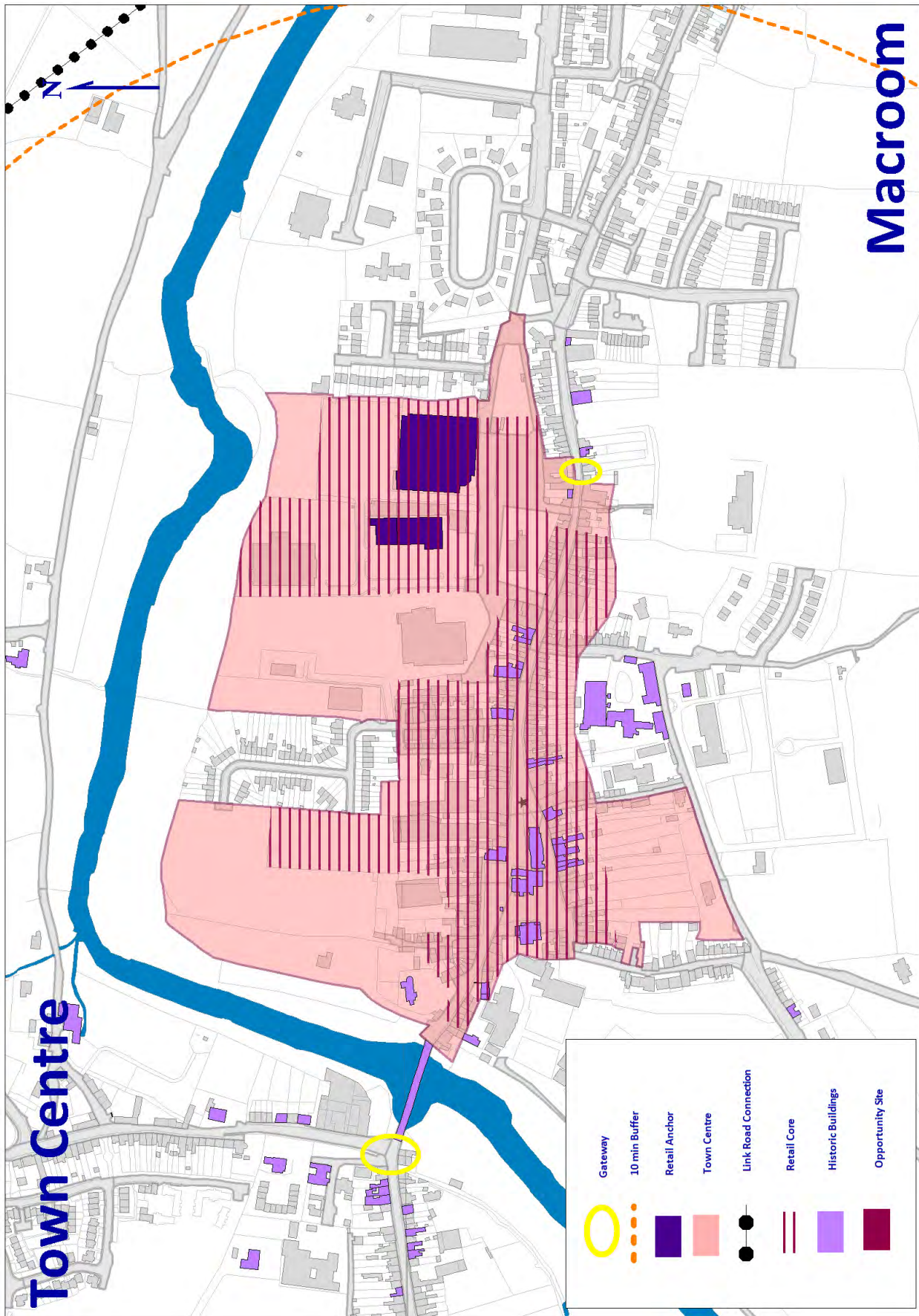


Figure 3.2.3 Town Centre

3.2.5 Community Facilities /Green Infrastructure

- 3.2.5.1 There are two primary and three secondary schools located in Macroom Town. These include St. Coleman's Boys National School; St. Josephs Primary School, Bishop MacEgan Vocational College, De La Salle Secondary School and St. Mary's Secondary School. Any deficit in school places will most likely be accommodated by an increase in the size of the existing schools in the town.
- 3.2.5.2 There are a wide range of community facilities located throughout the town including Garda Station, Courthouse, fire station, church, graveyard, playground, health centre and hospital service. Macroom Community Hospital provides beds for continuing care, respite care, community support/convalescent and palliative care.
- 3.2.5.3 Macroom is well served by open space and sports facilities however the steep topography of the lands surrounding the town does not suit active open space uses. The most suitable lands in Macroom for open space uses are those in the Castle Demesne and along the River Sullane corridor. Within the Demesne lands there is a Town Park, an 18 hole golf course, a Pitch and Putt course, G.A.A grounds and a number of other playing fields.
- 3.2.5.4 The town plan recognised the need for lands which could be used to facilitate the development of public playgrounds at locations adjacent to new public areas particularly around Gurteenroe and Masseytown.
- 3.2.5.5 The new Local Area Plan can seek to improve the overall environment of Macroom town by protecting and enhancing the local character of the town, its buildings and streetscapes, protecting its main heritage buildings and features, open spaces and ensuring that the development of the town does not have any adverse impacts on the River Sullane which flows through the town or on the scenic setting of the Castle Demesne.
- 3.2.5.6 The Castle Demesne does not have adequate pedestrian permeability and the entrance at Sullane Bridge is not a pedestrian friendly access nor is the access through the Castle which passes by the Community Centre and a school. The Town Plan promotes the creation of enhanced connections within the Demesne lands particularly between the north and south with a proposed pedestrian bridge making the park more permeable.
- 3.2.5.7 The Town Plan sets out a number of Public Realm proposals with Concept Plans for the Mart Site, the Market Square and the River Quarter. These proposals should be taken on board as part of the Local Area Plan Review.
- 3.2.5.8 Improvements to the public realm of the town can greatly improve the overall attractiveness of the town centre, enhancing business confidence in the town and the overall public perception of Macroom as a place to visit.

3.2.6 Water Services

Drinking Water

- 3.2.6.1 WMacroom receives its drinking water from the Macroom WS which is sourced from the River Sullane. At present Macroom WS is at its limit.
- 3.2.6.2 The existing Macroom WS does not have the capacity and infrastructure to provide an adequate water supply to accommodate proposed development in Macroom and also to provide a supply to the higher areas. Availability of adequate reservoir storage is also an issue. Upgrading of Macroom WS including, watermains, and new high level reservoir is required to accommodate proposed development in Macroom.
- 3.2.6.3 At present there is no Irish Water Scheme to upgrade Macroom WS.

Wastewater

- 3.2.6.4 Wastewater in Macroom is conveyed via a largely combined sewer system and pump stations to the Macroom Waste Water Treatment Plant (capacity 5,200 p.e.). There are sewer infrastructure (network/pump station) issues including capacity issues. Upgrading of sewer infrastructure is required and sewer extensions are also required in order to accommodate proposed growth in Macroom.
- 3.2.6.5 Macroom WWTP is at its limit. Upgrading of Macroom WWTP to provide adequate capacity is required to accommodate proposed development in Macroom. At present there is no Irish Water Scheme to upgrade Macroom WWTP or sewers infrastructure.

3.2.7 Surface Water

- 3.2.7.1 Storm water disposal is generally to the local river network.

Flooding

- 3.2.7.2 Parts of Macroom have been identified as being at risk of flooding and the areas at risk follow the path of the Sullane River through the town and its hinterland.

3.2.8 Lands outside Town Council Development Plan Boundary

- 3.2.8.1 There are extensive lands outside the existing built up area/Town Council Development Plan boundary which appear to be designated for "agricultural" use/"existing residential outside development plan boundary" in the current Town Council Development Plan. These lands are located within the former Town Councils functional area but outside the Town Councils Development Plan boundary. Therefore the issue arises as to what is the best planning policy response to dealing with these lands in the new draft local area plan. These lands could be incorporated within the current Town Greenbelt as set out in the current Macroom Electoral Area Local Area Plan, 2011. Some of these lands adjoining the current town development plan boundary could play a role in meeting any additional housing/employment land requirements identified under this review. Some areas may merit incorporation within the new town development plan boundary which will emerge from the local area plan review.

3.2.9 Suggested Changes to be considered in preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan

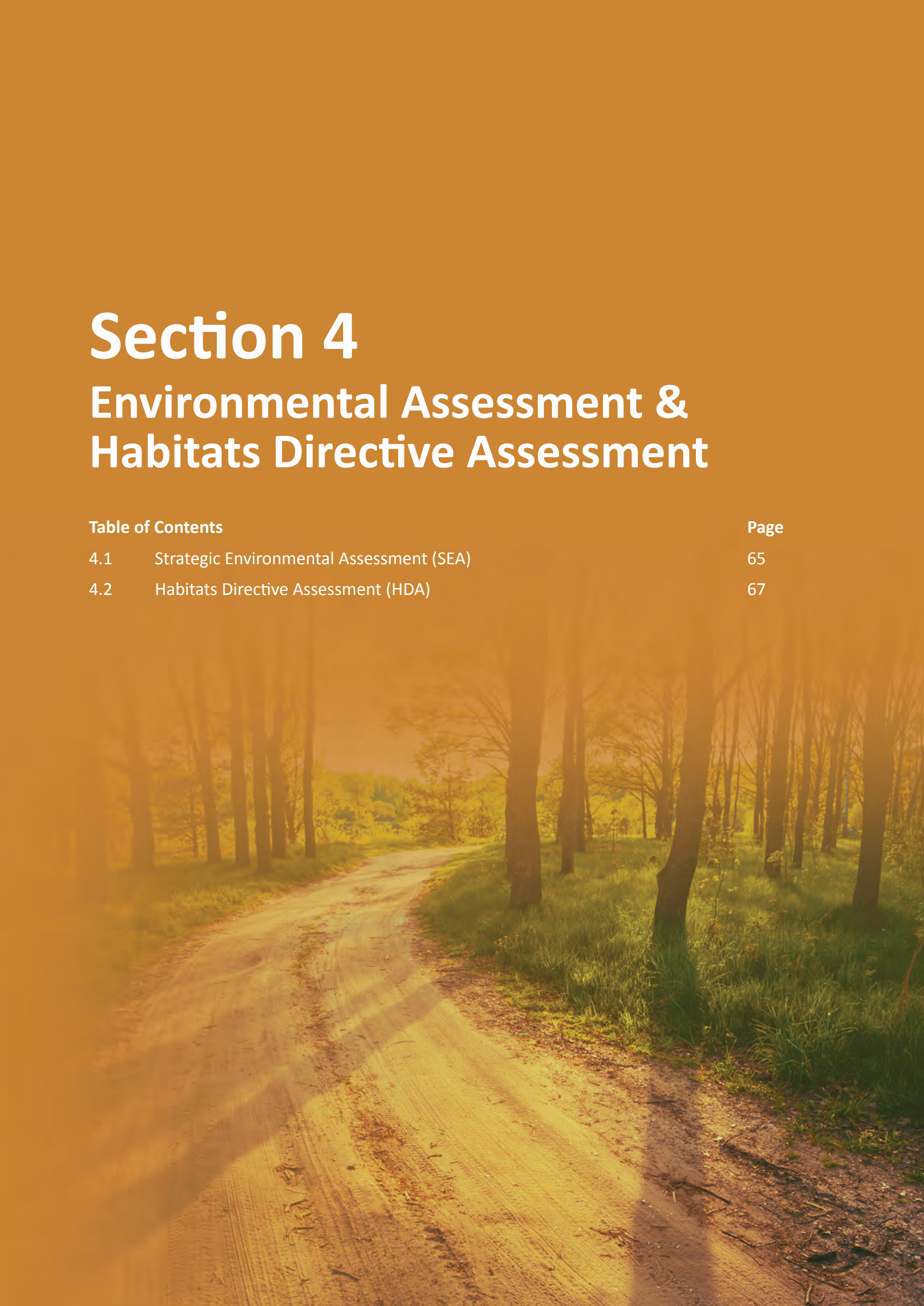
3.2.9.1 Table 3.2.3 contains a list of possible suggested changes to be considered in the preparation of the Macroom Town Section of the Draft Local Area Plan. This is not an exhaustive list and additional items can be added as the local area plan review process progresses.

Table 3.2.3 Suggested Changes	
Topic	Suggested Approach
Overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider amalgamating agriculturally zoned land within the former Town Councils functional area but outside the town development plan boundary into the Macroom Town Greenbelt. Some lands may be required to meet any additional housing/employment land requirements identified under this review.
Residential Land Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing residential zonings. Consider redefining a number of residential zoning objectives into a single residential and/or existing built-up area land-use category. Remove lands zoned L-9 & L-10 due to location of sites within flood risk zones.
Employment Land Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggest retain existing employment lands and re-classify sites in town council area. Consider removing I-01 site to the south of the town which is detached from the development boundary of Macroom and consider possible alternative sites located within or adjoining the existing built-up area.
Town Centre/Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider adjusting the extent of the town centre zoning & suggest new land use policy approach for lands west of the Bridge (formerly town centre expansion area) for possibly residential or existing built up area use. Define the Retail Core within the revised town centre.
Community Facilities/Green Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider need for lands which could be used to facilitate the development of public playgrounds at locations adjacent to new public areas particularly around Gurteenroe and Masseytown.
Transport and Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The delivery of the M22 is a priority to address congestion within the town centre.
Water Services Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrades are required to the water and wastewater infrastructure in the town which are currently at capacity to facilitate future growth.
Flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take account of the latest flood study.

Section 4

Environmental Assessment & Habitats Directive Assessment

Table of Contents		Page
4.1	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	65
4.2	Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA)	67



4.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 4.1.1 Environmental assessment is a procedure that ensures that the environmental implications of decisions are taken into account before the decisions are made. Strategic Environmental Assessment, or SEA, is the term which has been given to the environmental assessment of plans, and other strategic actions. SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan, or other strategic action, in order to insure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.
- 4.1.2 Under Article 14 B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011, a full Strategic Environmental Assessment is mandatory for the preparation of Local Area Plans for an area with a population in excess of 5,000 persons.
- 4.1.3 Also as part of the review of the current Local Area Plans and in order to meet the needs of the Strategic Environmental Assessment process and the requirements of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government / Office of Public Works Guidelines, "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management" (2009), Cork County Council will carry out a county wide Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) to inform the preparation of the next draft local area plans.

The SEA Process

- 4.1.4 The current Local Area Plans adopted in 2011 were subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. This Preliminary Consultation stage of the LAP review process is concerned with identifying those areas of the existing plans where changes may need to be considered. Those changes will then be fully considered and assessed, including Strategic Environmental Assessment, as part of the next stage of the process, which relates to the preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan. The SEA process will be carried out alongside the preparation of the Local Area Plan so that the findings of the SEA will be integrated into the Plan thus minimising the potential for significant negative environmental effects arising from implementation of the plan.
- 4.1.5 As highlighted in this Preliminary Consultation Document, it is envisaged that the majority of the zonings and policies contained in the current 2011 Local Area Plans, which have already been subject to the SEA process, will continue into the new Draft Plans. It is envisaged that the scale of growth for the villages, as provided for in the current plans, and the development boundaries of the villages, will be carried forward, other than where the scale of growth needs to be adjusted to take account of the lack of water services infrastructure. It is envisaged that this approach will generally have a positive or neutral environmental impact as it will not result in an increase in zoned land or development potential.
- 4.1.6 Where the need for changes to a zoning has been identified in Section 3, it is generally related to the reduction or omission of a zoning or a rezoning to a less intensive land use category such as open space, in response to an environmental/ heritage/ flooding constraint. Such changes will have a positive environmental impact.
- 4.1.7 Within the Metropolitan Cork Strategic Planning Area the need to identify additional development land to form part of a Strategic Land Reserve has been identified. These additional lands have yet to be identified. When they are identified their suitability for development will be assessed in the normal way as part of the SEA process for the Draft Plan.
- 4.1.8 An outline of the SEA process is given in Table 4.1.

SEA Methodology

4.1.9 The methodology for the SEA is outlined in the table below.

Table 4.1: SEA Methodology	
Stage	Action
Screening	The purpose of screening is to determine if SEA is necessary. This stage is not required as a full SEA is mandatory for the preparation of a Local Area Plan for an area with a population in excess of 5,000.
Scoping	The purpose of scoping is to determine what environmental issues need to be considered. In advance of the preparation of the Draft Plan and the SEA Environmental report, a scoping report will be prepared outlining the environmental issues that will need to be considered during the preparation of the Environmental report. The Scoping Report will form a basis for consultation with the statutory environmental authorities..
Consultation with Environmental Authorities	The scoping report will be sent to the environmental authorities for their comment.
Prepare Environmental Report	An Environmental report will be prepared examining the effects on the environment of implementing the objectives and policies contained within the Draft Local Area Plan. The Environmental Report is submitted to the Elected Members at the same time as the Draft Plan. The preparation of the Environmental Report is a parallel but separate process to that of producing the Local Area Plan.
SEA of Proposed Amendments	An environmental assessment will be undertaken of proposed amendments to determine their likely environmental impact
SEA Statement	At the end of the process, a statement will be issued by the Council summarising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan, • how the environmental report and the submissions and observations made to the planning authority on the Proposed Plan and Environmental Report have been taken into account during the preparation of the plan. • the reasons for choosing the plan, as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with, and • the measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan.
Monitoring of Local Area Plan	Monitoring significant environmental effects over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan

4.2 Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA)

- 4.2.1 Habitats Directive Assessment is an iterative process which is intended to run parallel to and inform the plan making process. It involves analysis and review of the plan as it develops during each stage of plan making, to ensure that its implementation will not impact on sites designated for nature conservation, nor on the habitats or species for which they are designated. Within this process, regard is had to the potential for the plan to contribute to impacts which on their own may be acceptable, but which could be significant when considered in combination with the impacts arising from the implementation of other plans or policies.
- 4.2.2 The process may result in the development of new policy areas and/or the modification or removal of certain elements of the plan. The results of this analysis and review are presented in reports which are produced for each stage of the plan making process.
- 4.2.3 The current Local Area Plans adopted in 2011 were subject to Habitats Directive Assessment. This Preliminary Consultation stage of the LAP review process is concerned with identifying those areas of the existing plans where changes may need to be considered. Those changes will then be fully considered and assessed, including Habitats Directive Assessment, as part of the next stage of the process, which relates to the preparation of the Draft Local Area Plan. The HDA process will be carried out alongside the preparation of the Local Area Plan and the SEA Environmental Report so that the findings of the HDA will influence the preparation of the Draft Plan, thus minimising the potential for significant adverse effects arising from implementation of the plan.
- 4.2.4 As the 2011 Local Area Plans were subjected to a detailed Habitats Directive assessment in line with the Government's guidelines to planning authorities, zonings in those plans are unlikely to be considered as posing risks to the integrity of Natura 2000 sites through their inclusion in the new Draft Local Area Plan in 2016. However, some of zonings originating in Town Council Development Plans were not subjected to Appropriate Assessment when those plans were made. Where possible, these zonings have been flagged in Section 3 of this document and will be further considered as part of the preparation of the new Draft Plan. Such changes will have a positive environmental impact as it will ensure that zonings with the potential for significant adverse impacts on designated sites are reconsidered and revised as appropriate.

