

Adopted Variation No. 2 of the Cork County Development Plan 2014, as amended

Variation No.2 (Retail Outlet Centres)

Amend Paragraph 7.10.5 Retail Outlet Centres (previously amended as part of Variation No. 1 of the County Development Plan 2014) to provide strategic planning policy support for the provision of a Retail Outlet Centre in the N25 Corridor sub catchment of the County Metropolitan Strategic Planning Area and include new paragraph 7.10.6 'Innovation in the County's Retail Offer

27th January 2020

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1. Introduction

This Variation was adopted by Full Council on **Monday 27th January 2020**.

Text removed is shown with ~~STRIKETHROUGH~~ and Text included is shown as **RED** and **Bold**.

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2. Adopted Text of Variation No. 2

Amend Paragraph 7.10.5 Retail Outlet Centres (previously amended as part of Variation No. 1 of the County Development Plan 2014)

Outlet Centres

In relation to Retail Outlet Centres the Councils vision is to;

“Facilitate an innovative competitive comparison retail outlet centre serving a regional catchment that is sustainably located, which provides synergies with tourism attractions and existing urban centres, avails of existing and planned public transport, does not give rise to traffic congestion, and does not have any adverse effects upon the vitality and viability of existing retailing centres.”

Section 4.11.4 of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) describes outlet centres as ‘groups of stores retailing end-of-season or discontinued items at discounted prices and are typically located in out-of-centre locations.’ Furthermore, the Retail Planning Guidelines highlight the following characteristics of outlet centres:

‘The success of these outlet centres depends on attracting customers from a wide catchment area, and from the tourism sector. When they are located out-of-town on greenfield sites, they can divert a significant amount of expenditure on comparison shopping goods away from established city/town centres and tourist centres even some distance away. Nonetheless, outlet centres within or immediately adjacent to a city or town centre can generate commercial synergies with the established retail outlets, thereby raising the profile of the centre and enhancing aggregate turnover on retail goods and leisure activities.’

‘It should be recognised, however, that outlet centres are unlikely to succeed commercially in close proximity to the main urban centres in Ireland because retailers do not normally choose to trade at a large discount in direct competition with their high street outlets. However, experience shows that this constraint is unlikely to arise with smaller or secondary town centres, especially those in areas which attract large numbers of tourists.’

Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)

Hence, having regard to the specific niche market that outlet centres operate within, applicants need to demonstrate that the products sold will not be in competition with those currently on sale in typical city/town centre locations. In addition, applicants can benefit from proposing a location that attracts large numbers of tourists.

Furthermore, potential locations of outlet centres should be such that they complement existing retail offerings / established tourist areas, and having regard to the foregoing, locations within Metropolitan Cork emerge as the most appropriate location to create those economic synergies.

Any proposal for an outlet centre must demonstrate that the proposal meets the following criteria:

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- will accommodate predominantly the retailing of end-of-season or discontinued items;
- demonstrate that the products sold will not be in competition with those currently on sale in typical city/town centre locations;
- demonstrate ability to reinforce existing tourism sector;
- the provisions of the Cork County Development Plan and Metropolitan Cork Joint Retail Strategy;
- the sequential test set out in chapter 4 of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities;
- is in accordance with the Planning Guidelines on Spatial Planning and National Roads in that the proposal can demonstrate that the development will not adversely affect the efficiency of the national road network and key junctions and interchanges and that it can be demonstrated that traffic volumes can be accommodated within the design assumptions for such roads, taking account of the opportunities for encouraging a modal shift towards more sustainable travel modes;
- will be served by existing or planned public transport services;
- will make adequate provision for private car use;
- will be accompanied by a traffic impact assessment, demonstrating compliance with the above criteria; and,
- will take account of the vitality/viability criteria in respect of city/town centres set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) and avoid the incorporation of uses and activities, as part of the development, which are more appropriate to city and town centre location.

~~Cork County Council will undertake a detailed evidence based assessment to confirm the need for such developments and which will identify potential suitable locations.~~

In 2019 Cork County Council appointed consultants to carry out a Study on the Requirement for a Retail Outlet Centre in the Cork Metropolitan Area. On the basis of the study's findings Cork County Council is satisfied that there is scope and retail potential capacity to accommodate a quantum of additional comparison retail floor space within the Cork Metropolitan Area and region up to 2023 of between 90,000 and 100,000 sq.m. of net retail comparison floor area. Therefore there is capacity to accommodate a Retail Outlet Centre in the Cork Metropolitan Area.

There are a variety of different Retail Outlet Centre formats and the success, and indeed impact of a Retail Outlet Centre is dependent upon the precise format chosen or proposed. The Council are satisfied such a proposal should not have an adverse impact upon the vitality and viability of other retail centres in Metropolitan Cork or the existing retail network/hierarchy as set out in Table 7.1. The Study indicates that the cumulative retail impact of a retail outlet centre on Cork City Centre, the District Centres and the Metropolitan Towns would be 1% or less.

Metropolitan towns in particular generally offer middle order comparison retailing which is generally not in direct competition with the type of goods on offer in the typical Retail Outlet Centre format which seeks to attract customers from a wide catchment area and from the tourism sector. Furthermore there is a requirement on applicants to demonstrate that products sold will not be in competition with those currently on sale in typical city/town centre locations.

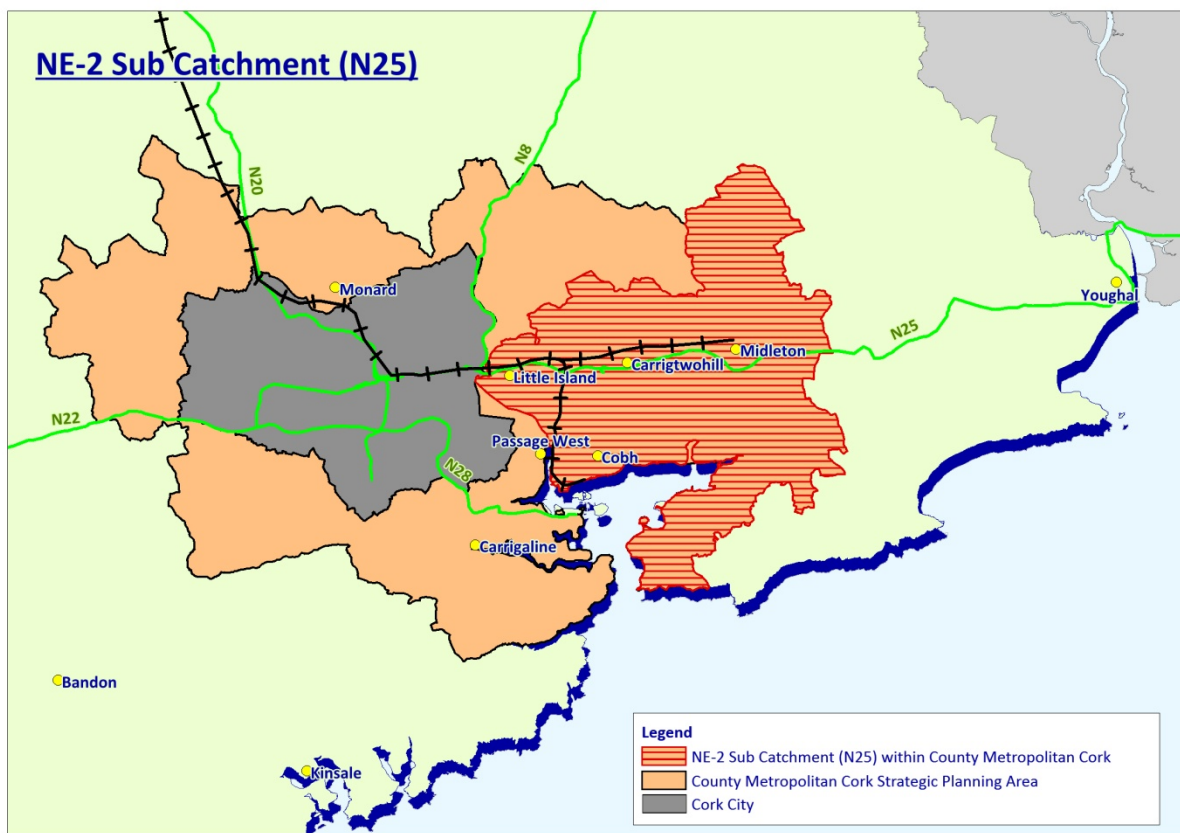
The provision of such a Retail Outlet Centre can be a significant benefit to the metropolitan economy and an important contributor to the life, vitality and attractiveness of Metropolitan Cork as well as an important asset to the wider southern region.

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Having assessed a number of potential locations within a number of sub catchments against a range of considerations including retail impact, tourism synergy, traffic, access and public transport it was concluded that the most appropriate location for a Retail Outlet Centre in Metropolitan Cork is the NE-2 sub catchment (N25).

**County Development Plan Objective
TCR 10-2: Retail Outlet Centre**

Support the provision of a Retail Outlet Centre in the NE-2 sub catchment (N25) of the County Metropolitan Strategic Planning Area



Other Categories of Retail Development

Guidance in relation to other specific categories of retail development e.g. factory shops, retailing in small towns, rural areas and motor fuel stations where not specifically dealt with in this Plan shall be as outlined in the Retail Planning Guidelines.

Insert new Section 7.10.6 Innovation in the County's Retail Offer as follows;

Innovation in the County's Retail Offer

To ensure that the county sustains and enhances its attraction and competitiveness as a retail destination, it must be proactive and responsive in respect of innovation in retailing and new retail market trends. Retailing is a key part of Cork County's tourism offer and, as such, is important to the county's economy as a whole. Encouraging and facilitating innovation, be that in trading format, location or product, will assist the county to build on the success that has been established to date and, consequently its retail profile and attraction.

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