

OPR Ref: MA-052-22

16th March 2023

Development Plan Submissions,
Strategic and Economic Development,
City Hall,
Anglesea Street,
Cork,
T12 T997.

## Re: Material Alterations to Proposed Variation No. 1 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028

A chara,

Thank you for your authority's work in preparing the Material Alterations to the proposed Variation No. 1 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028 (the proposed Variation).

The Office acknowledges the significant task undertaken by Cork City Council in preparing and publishing the material alterations to the proposed Variation, and the environmental report. The presentation of the amendments in a clear and concise manner is commended and has allowed all parties to access and understand the proposed amendments.

As your authority is aware, a key function of the Office of the Planning Regulator (the Office) is the strategic evaluation and assessment of statutory plans to ensure consistency with legislative and policy requirements relating to planning. The Office has evaluated and assessed the material alterations to the proposed Variation under the provisions of sections 31AM(1) and (2) of the *Planning and Development Act 2000*, as amended, (the Act) and within the context of the Office's earlier recommendation.

As outlined in the Office's submission to the proposed Variation, the Office generally welcomed the proposed variation to the Development Plan, which incorporated revised maximum parking standards, and will be important in terms of supporting more sustainable transport options. The Office acknowledged that this was particularly important in terms of the implementation of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy and the significant public investment under the National Development Plan for the metropolitan area.

The Office had concerns in relation to the actual standards proposed across the range of residential and non-residential uses, particularly for the settlements within proposed car parking zone 3 and zone 4. These settlements included the Urban Towns and outer suburbs where very high levels of population and housing growth are proposed, and also are identified for significant public transportation infrastructure upgrade. It was within this context, and having regard to policy objectives NPF (NPO 13) and RSES (RPO 151 and RPO 152), that the Office's submission to the proposed Variation No. 1 included Recommendation 1 (Car Parking Zones).

## Consistency with national and regional policy

The Office welcomes the changes proposed as material amendments to the proposed variation, in particular the amendments to Table 4.6 'Parking Zones', to achieve an integrated approach to land use transport planning, consistent with the requirements of the RSES, the Cork MASP and the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), and to maximise the potential for infrastructure funding and to achieve the National Strategic Outcome for Sustainable Mobility.

The Office particularly welcomes the inclusion of Wilton, Mahon, Douglas, and Blackpool from city suburbs, and Ballincollig Town Centre, into Zone 2, and the inclusion Urban Towns of Ballincollig (excluding the town centre) Blarney, Glanmire, Tower into Zone 3.

The changes proposed will help achieve sustainable, integrated land use and transport planning for the future development of the city which will be influential in achieving NSO 4 Sustainable Mobility and the integrated approach to land use and transport planning promoted under the RSES (RPO 151 and RPO 152) and Cork MASP (Policy Objective 8), including the 15 minute City Concept.

Moreover the commitment, as amended, under section 4.105 and paragraph 11.238 respectively, is welcomed which states that the standards will be reviewed one year following the adoption of Variation No 1, and then as part of the 2-year Development Plan Progress Report and annually thereafter. The Office acknowledges that the ongoing review will be informed as measures and interventions proposed in CMATS come on stream.

The overall approach to transport and mobility which will focus action on the delivery of active and sustainable modes, in support of the 15 minute city concept and is welcomed. The Office considers that without the amendments to the proposed variation it would provide for excessive car parking provision and would also undermine the implementation of sustainable settlement and transport strategies, as climate change mitigation, under section 10(2)(n) of the Act.

The Office generally considers the proposed material alterations to be the proposed variation to be reasonable and evidence-based, to enable the planning authority to better plan for and implement sustainable settlement and transport strategies under section 10(2)(n) and to monitor the implementation of same through the use of mode share as a critical indicator.

## **Summary**

Arising from the foregoing evaluation and assessment of proposed material alterations to Variation No. 1 of the Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028, the Office concludes that no recommendations or observations are warranted since the material alterations will provide policy support to achieve transport objectives that is anticipated to have benefits for sustainable transport and environment / climate change.

Accordingly, the Office broadly supports the proposed material alterations and urges your authority to finalise same, and has no specific recommendations to make under the provisions of section 31AM(3)(a) of the Act.

Your authority is required to notify this Office within 5 working days of the making of the plan and send a copy of the variation to the Plan as made, in accordance with section 31AM(6) of the Act.

Please feel free to contact the staff of the Office in the context of your authority's responses to the above, which we would be happy to facilitate. Contact can be initiated through the undersigned or at <a href="mailto:plans@opr.ie">plans@opr.ie</a>.

Is mise le meas,

Anne Marie O'Connor

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluations

**4** | Page