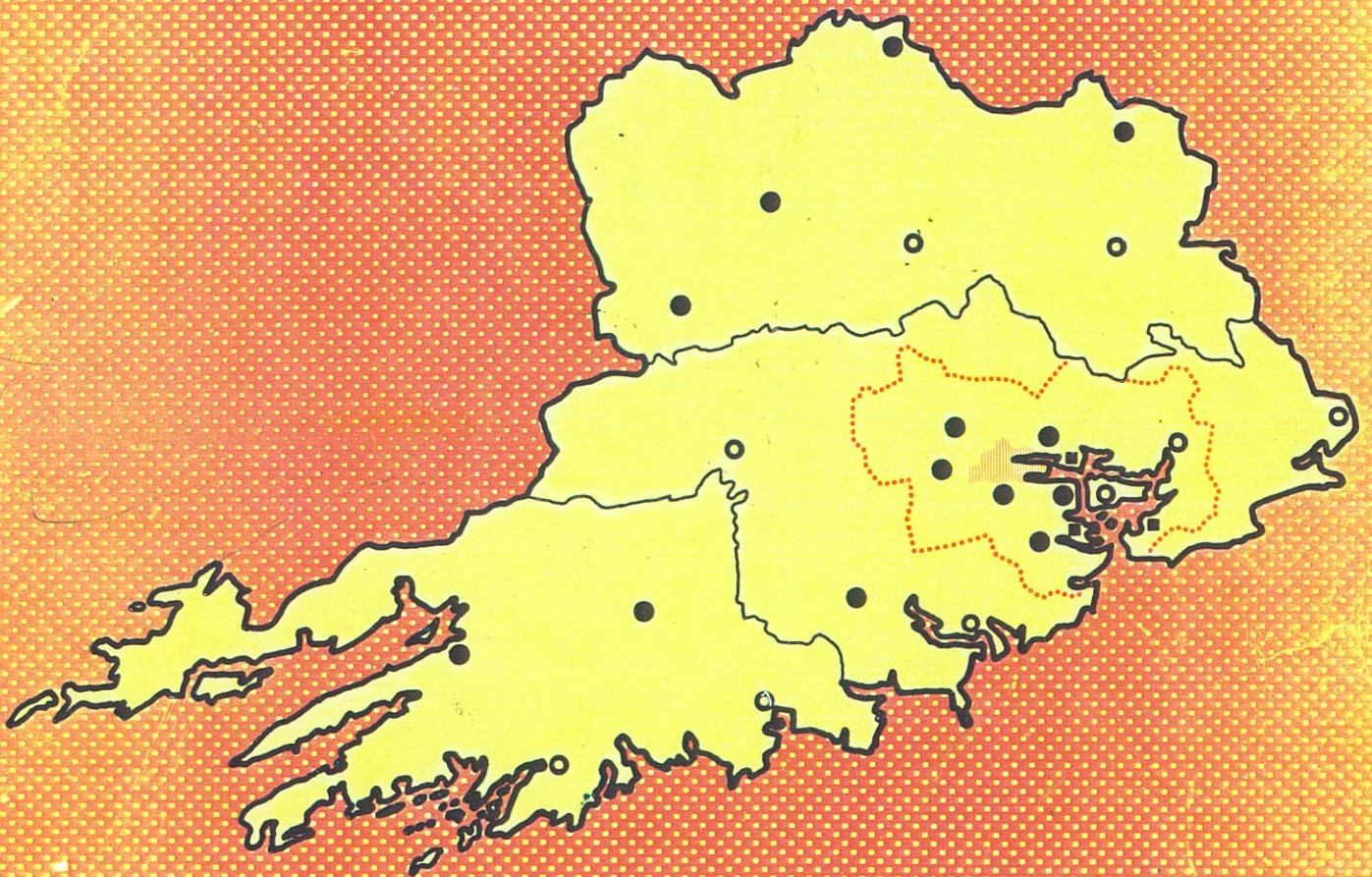


Plean Forbartha Chontae Chorcaí **CORK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN**



COUNTY - AT - LARGE

CORK COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae Chorcaí **1986**

CORK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

COUNTY-AT-LARGE

JUNE, 1986

INTRODUCTION

This document has been compiled as a companion volume which will accompany each divisional report for the Northern, Southern and Western administrative areas of Cork County. It contains analysis of the regional and countywide context for development policies, which are contained in each divisional statement, bearing in mind the short and medium term strategic aims of the Council. Proposals for County-at-large issues are outlined here and find expression in the detail of the divisional reports, coastal policies and town and village plans.

The Government's recent announcement that greater powers would be devolved to planning authorities in the spheres of industrial promotion and tourism development is supportive of measures taken to date and planned for the future by Cork County Council. This Plan attempts to define the manner in which the Council will achieve improvements in the County's economy in both of these sectors.

In regard to controls and standards that have County-at-large application, details are given as to the nature of these and, where relevant, reference made to separately published guidelines which form part of the County Plan.

The Plan forms the statutory basis for the Council's development programme and control policies over the next five years. Periodic reviews will be undertaken to ensure the necessary level of adjustment and flexibility to achieve these objectives.

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Chapter I : Regional Context

- 1.0. Cork County, Cork City and Kerry County constitute the South-West Region for purposes of regional planning, industrial promotion (by the I.D.A.) and tourism development (by Cork/Kerry Tourism). The R.D.O. is carrying out a study of the Region. This plan will be an input to the Regional Study.
- 1.1. The principal issues of common concern to all planning authorities in the region are the regional distribution of population, job creation and the utilisation of resources, tourism and transportation policy. Due to its size and varied socio-economic and topographical structure, the County in some respects could be termed a region itself with shared concerns in the central (SOUTH-CORK) division appropriate to the urban/industrial complex of the Cork City and harbour (L.U.T.S.) area. Conversely, the more remote divisions in the WEST and NORTH have more in common with Counties Kerry and Limerick/Tipperary/Waterford respectively in relation to certain of these issues.
- 1.2. Integral to the County's development is a rationale for regional economic growth, which respects and builds on these different aspects of the County's resources while providing a satisfactory strategy for the resolution of common urban and rural problems in both the central (L.U.T.S.) area and the outlying divisions.
- 1.3. The Council has co-operated with the I.D.A., Cork/Kerry Tourism and the neighbouring counties of Kerry and Waterford in the promotion of industrial and tourist development for the region. Further initiatives in the natural resources sector, particularly agricultural, aquaculture/fishing and forestry are required if the region's resources are to be exploited fully. Tourism, in this the premier tourist region of the country, rates highly in the Council's priorities and is addressed in detail in the Divisional Plans.
- 1.4. Within the national/regional framework of economic policy, the Council considers that further Government support is desirable in the maintenance and expansion of population distribution within the region. The over-dominant growth of the Dublin region is clearly militating against an equitable regional distribution of population and investment as well as exacerbating the problems of the metropolitan core.
- 1.5. Comparative statistics for 1971-1981 show the population growth characteristics of the East (Dublin) Region vis-a-vis the other planning regions in the State (see Table I). It is evident that the S.W. Region has not maintained its 1981 share of state population and in comparison with the East, Mid-West and South-East has 'performed' badly. Given the strategic importance of the L.U.T.S. area within the region and state, the South-West should be capable of maintaining a larger share of national population.

TABLE 1: Regional population change 1971-1981 (000's)

<u>Region</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>Increase</u> <u>1971-1981</u>	<u>Projected</u> <u>Increase*</u>	<u>Actual Increase</u> <u>as % of projected increase</u>
East	1,062.1	1,290.2	228.1	165.9	138%
South West	495.7	525.2	59.6	72.7	82%
South East	328.7	374.6	46.0	51.2	90%
North East	174.0	193.6	19.6	27.2	72%
Mid West	269.8	308.2	38.4	42.1	91%
Donegal	108.3	121.9	13.6	16.9	80%
Midlands	232.4	259.9	27.4	36.3	76%
West	258.7	286.8	28.0	40.4	69%
North West	78.6	83.1	4.4	12.3	36%
TOTAL	2,978.2	3,493.4	-	-	-

- 1.6 Within the South-West Region, on the basis of the region's 1981 share of total population, the 'performance' of Cork County, Cork City and Kerry shows that the most significant population increases over the period 1971-1981 have been located in the County part of the L.U.T.S. area and in East Kerry, with the remoter parts of both counties faring least well (See Table 2).

Table 2: % Change in Population 1971-1981

L.U.T.S. Area (County Part)	+58%	NB	1 = Killarney, Tralee, Listowel
South Cork	+35%		
L.U.T.S. (including City)	+21%		2 = Caherciveen, Dingle, Kenmare
East Kerry ¹	+13%		
North Cork	+6%		
Cork City	+6%		
West Cork	+2%		
West Kerry ²	-3%		

- 1.7 Clearly, therefore, a policy of regional population distribution within the national context should include measures to stabilise areas of population decline within the South-West Region and encourage growth in those areas with the capacity to sustain it.

- 1.8 Like the other major population centres, the L.U.T.S. area has fared badly in the current economic recession. County Kerry also exhibits similar characteristics. Decline in the agricultural workforce and in the building and construction industry is a notable feature of the decline profile in the rural areas. In the L.U.T.S. area the demise of 'traditional' industrial employment and the building and construction work force is a key factor.
- 1.9 Special measures to counter the recession in the L.U.T.S. area are being actively pursued by the planning authorities, semi-state agencies, and other bodies. Co-ordination of actions by Cork and Kerry Counties in relation to tourism, transportation investment and natural resources will help to alleviate the problems faced by the region.
- 1.10 Inter-regional contacts between the South-West, and South-East and Mid-West Regions may be necessary to resolve common problems facing both or to exploit common opportunities. Dialogue between Cork County and the neighbouring counties of Waterford Tipperary (South) and Limerick may be pursued on an independent basis, as hitherto, as the need arises.

Chapter 2 : Population

Population Changes at the County Level

- 2.0 After a period of population decline which lasted until 1966, the population of Cork County has steadily increased to a current estimate of 276,100.

Table 3 : Population Change and Rates of Growth for County Cork 1966-1984

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Average Annual Growth Rate</u>
1966	217,557	
1971	224,238	1966-1971 +0.6%
1979	257,851	1971-1979 +1.9%
1981	266,121	1979-1981 +1.6%
1984 Estimate	276,100	1981-1984 +1.2% Estimate

- 2.1 Analysis of the changes in birth, death and migration rates over the 1966-1981 period confirms that the population increase over these years is jointly attributable to net migration into the County and natural increase factors (i.e. higher birth rates and lower death rates). Fig. 1 graphically indicates these conclusions.
- 2.2 The 1979 County Development Plan projected a much lower figure for 1984, nearly 30,000 lower than the current estimate. This large discrepancy is due in part to the inadequate base from which the projections were made i.e. the 1971 Census, and the unprecedented annual rate of growth that occurred in the 1970's i.e. 1.9% per annum as against the projected 0.8% per annum.

Population Changes within the County

- 2.3 The effect of the underestimation of the County's population can be seen throughout the County in Table 4. The table compares estimates made in the previous plan for 1976 and 1991 with the 1979 and 1981 Census and the current estimates (1984) for sub areas of the County. In nearly all cases, current estimates are higher than the earlier 1991 projections and the predicted decline in the population of large areas of west and north Cork has not occurred.
- 2.4 The City Environs and Harbour Area (L.U.T.S. area) has experienced the most rapid population increase of any area in the County, and it's current population is roughly in line with the overall L.U.T.S. target.

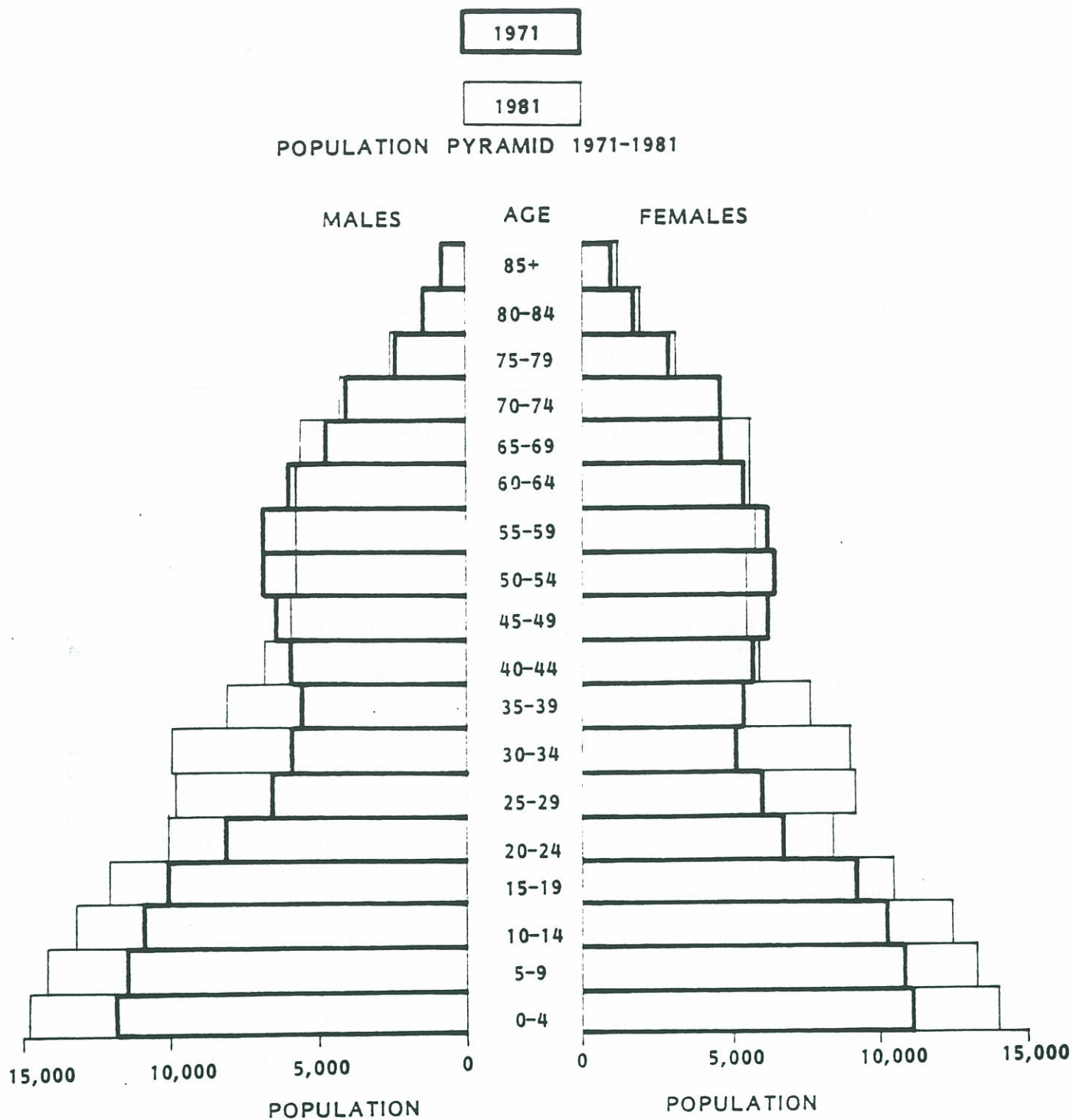


FIG. 1

CHANGES IN THE POPULATION STRUCTURE FOR COUNTY CORK 1971 - 1981

TABLE 4 : Population trends for County Cork - A comparison of estimates and trends in the previous plan (1979) with the current plan (1984)

Sub Areas	1971	1976 ²	Population (000's)			1991 ¹
			1979	1981	1984 ²	
Kinsale	6.2	6.3	6.8	7.1	7.4	6.9
Bandon, Clonakilty	24.2	23.6	25.8	26.1	26.2	20.6
Bantry, Dunmanway	35.4	34.4	35.8	35.8	35.6	28.6
Schull, Skibbereen						
Macroom	17.6	17.3	18.7	19.1	19.5	17.3
Kanturk, Millstreet	23.9	22.8	23.8	23.7	23.8	16.9
Mallow, Rathluirc	26.7	26.9	29.1	29.4	30.0	28.1
Mitchelstown, Fermoy	22.2	22.1	24.2	24.6	24.6	21.3
Youghal	13.4	13.7	14.4	14.7	15.0	15.2
Total Rural Area	169.6	167.1	180.6	183.9	182.1	152.9
City Environs and Harbour Area	54.7	65.7	77.2	85.5	94.0	109.7
TOTAL COUNTY	224.3	232.8	257.8	266.1	276.1	262.6

N.B. ¹ The 1976 estimate and 1991 projection are those contained in the 1979 County Development Plan (Table 1).

² The 1984 estimate reflects current estimates and trends.

Population Trends for towns, villages and rural areas

2.5 While satisfaction can be expressed over the reversal of population decline in County Cork at the aggregate level, the local distribution of that population does give rise for concern. Between 1971-1979 approximately 26% of the population growth in the County occurred in rural areas (rural being defined as any area/village with a population of less than 200 people). Between 1979-1981 this share had increased to 48% (See Table 5).

Table 5 : Population growth in County Cork 1971-1981 by Settlement Size.

Settlement Size	1971	1979	1981	Change in each category % of total change in the period	
				1971-1979	1979-1981
1,000 plus	73,167	96,148	99,971	68%	46%
200-999	15,425	17,477	17,930	6%	6%
199 (plus rural area)	135,646	144,226	148,214	26%	48%
Total	224,238	257,851	266,121	100%	100%

- 2.6 The same trends were reflected right across the County over the same period. For instance in North Cork the rural share increased 14% to 50%, in South Cork from 22% to 30% and in West Cork from an absolute decline to a 60% share.
- 2.7 Conversely, whilst some towns (especially those in the L.U.T.S. area) have recently shown vigorous growth others have declined in population over the 1979-1981 period, notably Fermoy, Kanturk, Millstreet and Mitchelstown in North Cork and Bantry, Castletownbere, Clonakilty and Dunmanway in West Cork.
- 2.8 In the L.U.T.S. area, population growth in the areas to the south and west of Cork City has been faster than proposed in the strategic study, with areas to the north and east of the City failing to achieve planned targets. As in the rest of County Cork, growth in the rural area has been prolific (See Table 6). Plans to redress the situation are in hand.

Table 6 : Actual growth 1976-1984 as a % of that targeted in L.U.T.S. for the period 1976-1991

Tramore Valley	101%
Cobh	18%
Midleton	12%
Ballincollig	135%
Carrigaline	52%
Passage West	33%
Glanmire Riverstown	24%
Blarney	34%
Rural Area	96%

N.B. A percentage of 53% would be expected if a town or area were exactly on target.

1984-1989 Projections

- 2.9 In the light of the foregoing analysis of past trends and previous projections, it has been necessary to revise projections for the whole County. Fig. 2 shows the current projections for the plan period. The main change from the previous plan is that all areas are projected to either increase in population or to remain roughly at the present level.
- 2.10 With regard to individual towns, Table 7 gives projections for the next five years. Significant growth is projected for many towns, with little change in the rural population. The target allocations for the L.U.T.S. area have also been revised.
- 2.11 It is likely that the projection for the County as a whole and the sub area projections will be realised whatever housing or settlement policies are to be adopted by the Council. Only a major shift in migration trends will effect these projections. However, fundamental to the realisation of the projections for the towns and villages is the implementation of a range of positive measures to encourage development within these settlements which by their very nature act as a focus for community activity. Failure to implement such policies will result in many towns declining in population over the next five years.
- 2.12 The spatial, economic and social implications of these trends are further commented on in the definition of the Council's housing and settlement policies for the duration of this plan.

Table 7 : Population Projections for the Main Towns of County Cork 1984-1989

	1981 Population	1984 Estimate	1989 Projected Population	Projected Change 1984-1989
<u>NORTH CORK</u>				
Charleville	2,874	3,070	3,495	+14%
Fermoy	4,888	4,810	5,380	+12%
Kanturk	1,976	1,990	1,990	-
Mallow	7,482	7,555	8,175	+8%
Millstreet	1,435	1,395	1,425	+2%
Mitchelstown	3,106	3,040	3,200	+5%
Rural Area	52,356	52,840	51,935	-2%
Total	74,117	74,700	75,600	+1%
<u>SOUTH CORK</u>				
(a) <u>L.U.T.S. Area</u>				
Tramore Valley	13,448	15,060	20,500	+36%
Cobh	8,439	8,820	9,500	+8%
Midleton	6,243	6,600	7,500	+14%
Ballincollig	7,231	9,755	13,500	+38%
Carrigaline	4,147	5,815	7,800	+34%
Passage West	3,584	4,100	4,700	+15%
Glanmire/Riverstown	2,458	2,920	4,100	+40%
Blarney	2,770	3,140	3,880	+24%
Rural Area	37,171	37,790	37,090	-2%
Total	85,491	94,000	108,570	+15%
(b) <u>Non-L.U.T.S. Area</u>				
Youghal	6,145	6,305	6,600	+5%
Bandon	4,630	4,730	5,300	+12%
Macroom	2,495	2,610	2,800	+7%
Kinsale	2,401	2,575	2,800	+9%
Rural Area	41,795	42,380	42,130	-1%
Total	57,466	58,600	59,630	+2%
<u>WEST CORK</u>				
Ballineen/Enniskean	548	550	565	+3%
Bantry	2,862	2,720	2,880	+6%
Castletownbere	860	850	870	+2%
Clonakilty	2,698	2,630	2,830	+8%
Dunmanway	1,493	1,260	1,420	+4%
Skibbereen	2,130	2,140	2,260	+6%
Schull	502	555	570	+3%
Rural Area	37,934	37,995	36,805	-3%
Total	49,027	48,800	48,200	-1%

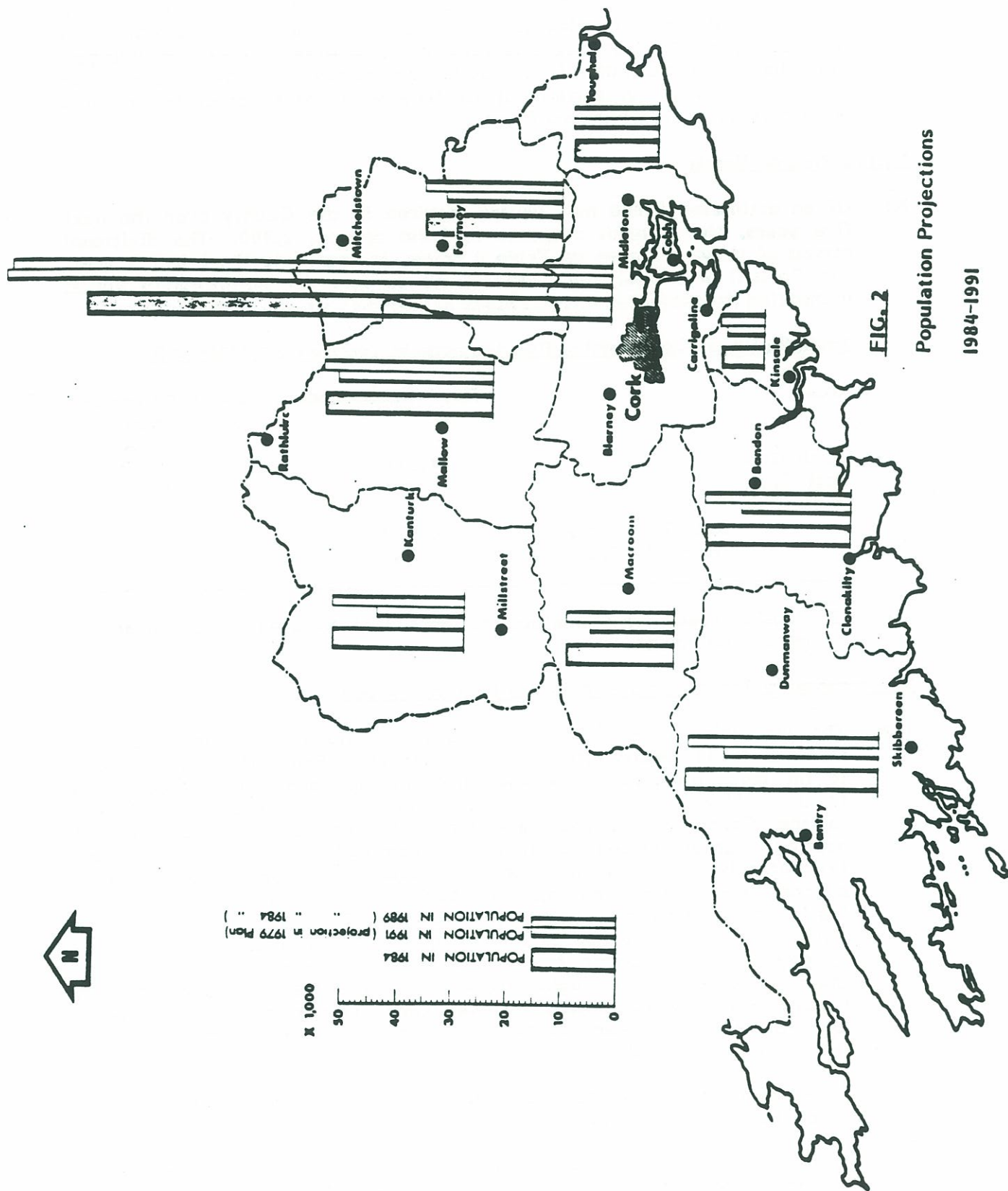


FIG. 2

Population Projections

1984-1991

CORK COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

CHAPTER 3 : HOUSING

Housing & Settlement Policy to date

- 3.0 Over the period 1975-1982, the Council has built 3,235 houses in the County as a whole. As would be expected, a significant proportion, 60%, of these were located in the South Cork division, where the new satellite towns of the L.U.T.S. area are based. The Council has also built houses in a wide range of towns and villages throughout the County as well as catering for essential rural needs. For the duration of this plan, the Council is committed to a policy of maintenance and renewal of selected towns and villages, which have an important role in stabilising population decline and promoting economic growth. A settlement strategy with these objectives in mind is articulated in the Divisional Plans.

Future Housing Needs

- 3.1 Of an estimated 11,000 new houses required in the County over the next five years, the Council proposes to build approx. 2,200. The divisional spread of these is shown on Table 8 below. In regard to the L.U.T.S. area, the Council will seek the Corporation's support for co-ordinated action in meeting the projected housing needs in keeping with the strategic plan.

Table 8 : House Construction Requirements in County Cork 1984-1990

Area	Total Requirements	Local Authority Requirements ¹
North Cork	1,946	389
West Cork	921	184
South Cork		
L.U.T.S. Area	6,450	1,290
Non-L.U.T.S. Area	1,635	327

NB Housing needs for towns outside the L.U.T.S. area are based on growth potential.

The Increasing Trend towards building in Rural Areas

- 3.2 The increasing growth of rural and ribbon house building in County Cork is well documented at this stage². Primarily, this is due to the price differential between sites in the countryside as compared to the villages and towns, including higher contributions and charges to the Council. An ancillary factor is the lack of sites on the housing market allied to their shortcomings i.e. small sites and lack of privacy. In many cases, the price advantage seems shortlived as the owner faces the costs of boring a well and constructing a septic tank, driveway, boundary walls and footpaths. Some of these items can be constructed as and when the houseowner has the money to pay. In the longer term, however, increased costs accrue as the rural dweller pays higher travel costs than his village counterpart to avail of schools, shops, medical care, church and entertainment accompanied by longer journeys to work when not forming part of the farming community.

¹ Assuming the ratio between public and private construction is that of the State (1981) i.e. 20%.

² In 1983, single private houses constituted 41% of all new housing (incl. conversion/renewals) built; this compared with 23% in 1976.

The Consequences to the Community

- 3.3 The direct consequences to the community include higher costs for phone, post and electricity services. A decline in the physical fabric and the environment of smaller towns and villages also occurs. Indirect consequences could include a reduction in employment opportunities due to land sterilisation. Since the local authority house building programme concentrates primarily on settlements rather than on rural areas, while the private market is concentrating on the rural areas, the undesirable trend is perpetuated of increasing social polarisation of the housing market particularly in smaller towns and villages. In addition, uncontrolled development in scenic rural areas of the County could have an adverse affect both on the quality of life in these areas and potential revenue from tourism.

The Consequences to the Local Authority

- 3.4 The direct consequences include the ongoing costs of maintaining county roads and pressure to provide uneconomic services in rural areas, especially where the density of development has led to sanitation problems. Whilst it could be argued that the annual block grant from the Department of the Environment for small sewerage schemes (i.e. those costing less than £50,000) covers such expenditure, only a number of schemes on the list can be implemented each year as compared with the need. Furthermore, uneconomic remedial works are far less cost effective than schemes aimed at encouraging orderly new development, and at best only keep pace with rural development pressures rather than reducing them.

The Local Authority's response to date

- 3.5 As suitable sites are generally unavailable to meet public requirements in the villages and towns, it is consequently difficult for the local authority to consistently refuse a large proportion of planning applications for rural houses. The Council has intervened in terms of providing sites for sale in certain areas. However, the policy has been largely unsuccessful due to the fact that the sites have generally been quite small and formed part of mixed (private/public) schemes. The Department of the Environment subsidy regulations are singularly unhelpful in this regard, since subsidies are only available for very small sites.
- 3.6 In the current draft plan the concepts of 'priority villages' and development boundaries have been introduced. A number of villages with a particular capacity to either accommodate hinterland development pressures or sustain economic growth have been designated 'priority villages'. The selection respects the characteristics of each division and also provides for an equitable geographical distribution across the County. It is proposed that investment policies, especially in relation to infrastructural up-grading should "be geared" towards these settlements for the plan period.
- 3.7 The development boundary concept was introduced to build up the villages in the County, to consolidate the form of settlements, to curtail incipient ribbon development on the outskirts of settlements and to reduce development pressures in areas where additional development would almost certainly have created the need for the Council to extend services at an uneconomic cost. However, there remains a need in areas outside the development boundaries of priority villages and scheduled towns to control the density of development on unserviced or partially serviced lands. Accordingly, it is proposed that the Council will encourage the development of rural clusters of houses as an alternative to roadside development i.e. 3-5 dwellings off a single access road, with suitable septic tank arrangements.

Zonal Provisions

- 3.8 It has been manifestly clear, for sometime past, that excessive zoning for new land uses in the main urban areas has not produced the desired results. In some instances, it has led to problems of phasing infrastructural provision to development needs in an orderly manner. Furthermore, it is evident that extensive zoning has not had a significant impact on the level of ribbon building, which has continued at an increasing rate outside the zoned areas. Accordingly, the Council has revised the land allocation for various uses, while still allowing for a reasonable level of flexibility in relation to locational choice within these urban centres. Where longer-term growth demands are likely, although difficult at this stage to quantify or predict with certainty, the Council will endeavour to protect the development potential of lands deemed suitable for such. Development of these lands, however, is not contemplated within the next five years.

Provision of Services

- 3.9 The Council proposes to establish a revolving fund with a substantial initial capital outlay, to extend watermain/sewers in areas where a genuine commitment to development by landowners is apparent. The emphasis will be on schemes where recoupment of contributions back into the fund would be the quickest. Where the Council has no funds available to extend services, but demand for housing sites is clearly apparent, the Council will encourage landowners to extend services themselves.
- 3.10 Where a landowner is willing to enter into an agreement with the Council to sell private sites at an agreed price, the Council will itself consider the extension of services on the basis of agreed development charges. Alternatively, the Council will give consideration to taking over some sites in lieu of these charges.
- 3.11 An increasing proportion of central government funding for small sewerage schemes should be used to extend/provide services in small towns or villages where the existence of a sewer would act as a strong incentive to development. The draft proposals in the new County Plan clearly imply this in the reference to priority towns and villages contained in each divisional statement.

An Increased Development Role for the Council

- 3.12 The Council could acquire land in the villages and small towns for resale as private sites. To overcome earlier objections to such schemes, it will be necessary to acquire land in attractive locations. Analysis of current development costs confirm that the Council could acquire and resell serviced sites of a suitable size at a competitive market price. Estimates were based on a small scheme of 8 sites with a single access road (See Fig. 3). In certain cases it may be possible to sell roadside sites at a considerable reduction on this price. It is proposed that pilot schemes be carried out in each of the three administrative areas to fully assess the potential benefits of this scheme.
- 3.13 To date, the Council has undertaken a limited number of "joint venture" housing schemes. It is proposed that smaller schemes of the order of 2-5 detached dwellings be considered in the villages and smaller towns, as well as larger schemes in the bigger County towns. The smaller schemes, if effected, should also give rise to employment opportunities for local builders. As some research indicates that the "one-off" private house sector is more interested in the villages than in the larger towns, a pilot scheme, aimed at assessing the market potential, will be considered.

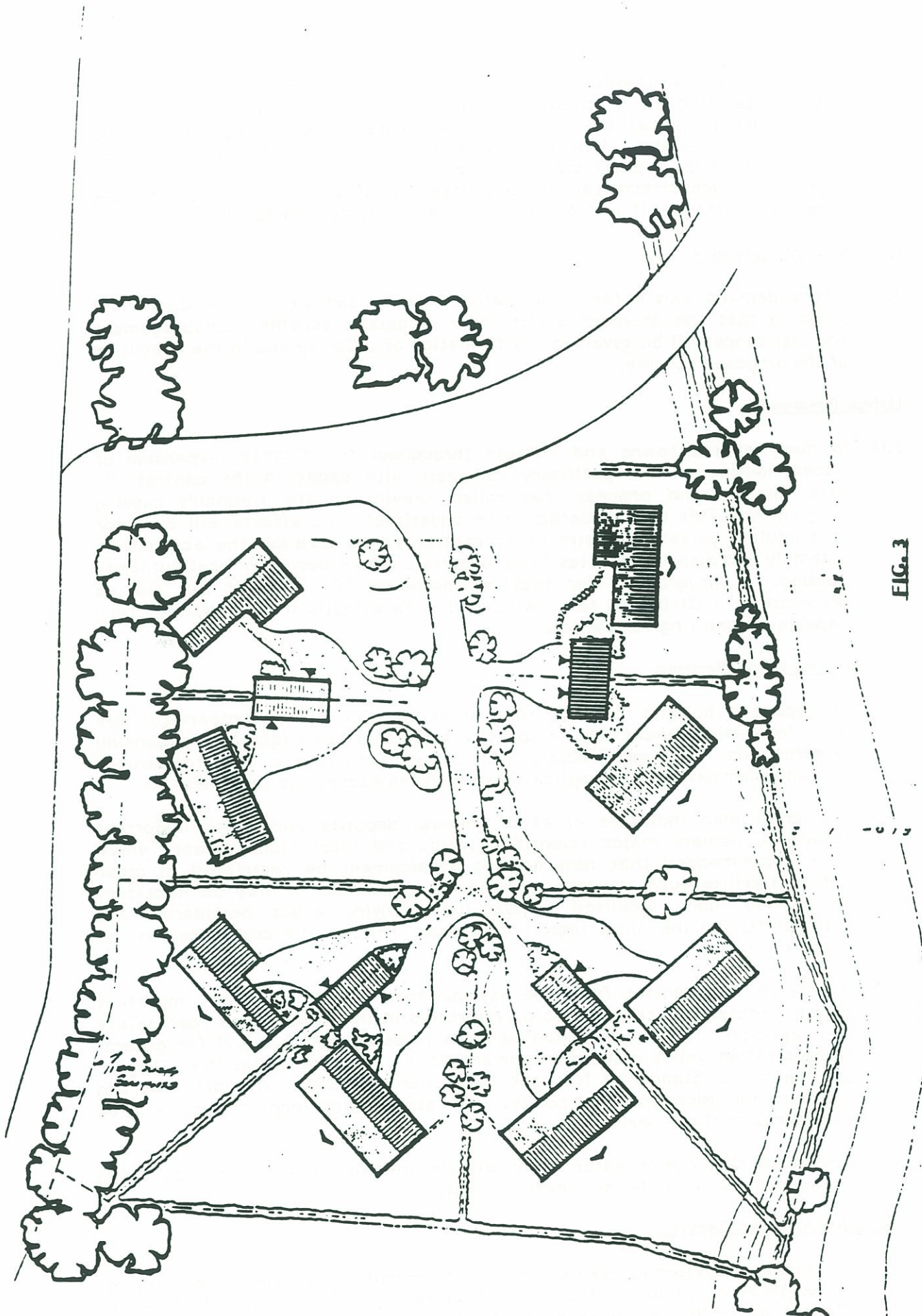


FIG. 3

TYPICAL LAYOUT FOR A CLUSTER-TYPE DEVELOPMENT
 (Courtesy of An Foras Forbartha)

PLANNING DEPARTMENT, CORK COUNTY COUNCIL.

- 3.14 The Council has an implicit role in encouraging development in residentially zoned areas in both the scheduled towns and the priority villages, by means of providing technical assistance to landowners in designing road layouts, service provision etc. Where residential zones are in multiple ownership, the Council has a particularly important co-ordinating function in this regard. In such circumstances, consideration will be given to the provision of design assistance, if warranted and subject to staff availability.

Co-Operative Housing

- 3.15 Where demand exists for co-operative housing and where the Council is satisfied that the prospect exists for a successful scheme, encouragement and assistance will be given in the formation of a Co-Op and in the execution of the proposed scheme.

Urban Renewal

- 3.16 In many of the towns and villages throughout the County, expansion of ribbon housing on the periphery contrasts with decay in the centres. To date, the renewal process has relied heavily on the Council's housing programme. This is considered to be undesirable and efforts will be made to stimulate private investment in central areas, through the acquisition, assembly and disposal of sites for appropriate uses other than local authority housing. A programme for tackling the worst 'black spots' will also be prepared on a Divisional basis with a view to establishing a revolving fund capable of renewing such areas.

Controls on Rural Housing

- 3.17 In respect of housing in scenic rural areas, the Council has prepared simple guidelines which should help prospective applicants to anticipate the planning requirements for single houses. This should facilitate a less contentious and smoother passage for applications which are acceptable in principle.
- 3.18 The draft plan indicates areas of mineral deposits and other important resources, namely major scientific, scenic and recreational areas, where it is recommended that new housing development be restricted in order not to sterilise such important resources. However, it may be necessary to provide more localised details (i.e. showing exact boundaries and constraints) for the more important areas. This will be considered as the need arises.
- 3.19 Access to development from the national road system and from important regional routes will continue to be restricted in the interests of road safety and capacity. Reference should be made to paragraphs 5.5-5.21 for general transportation policy considerations and to the divisional plans (i.e. Chapter on Controls & Standards) for exact definition of those routes affected and relevant exclusions to the policy. On other roads, applications will be considered on their merits.
- 3.20 Inadequate drainage or water supply will also influence the Council's decisions in regard to proposed housing development.

Council's Advisory Service

- 3.21 The public is advised to use the Council's pre-application consultancy services either through the local planning or engineering offices, particularly where difficulties could be reasonably anticipated in regard to the foregoing. In an effort to further assist the public, it is proposed to produce a simple advisory note outlining the steps that should be taken by an applicant seeking planning permission.

Planning Contributions & Levies

- 3.22 As previously, contributions will be required towards the cost of services, roads/parking and amenity open spaces provided by the Council and facilitating the proposed development.

Accommodating Itinerants

- 3.23 The Council has endeavoured to provide for the 'travelling people' in a humane and responsible manner. However, the increasing scale of the problem is clearly manifest on the approaches to many of the main County towns and Cork City.
- 3.24 A programme of development for halting sites has been agreed for critical locations bearing in mind the itinerants own preferences, the need to distribute sites equitably among the settled community and servicing requirements. While the Council's principal obligation is to provide sites and, where necessary, house the 'travelling people', sympathetic consideration will be given to facilitating their employment needs in a properly regulated environment³.

³
Refer also to Paragraph 6.7

CHAPTER 4 : EMPLOYMENT

Employment in Cork County

4.0 Information upon which to base detailed analysis of the current employment situation is not readily available. The most complete source is the 1981 Census. However, information from the 1981 Census is to date only available at the County level. The unemployed Live Register statistics and other partial surveys by other bodies e.g. the I.D.A., enable some assessment of post 1981 trends to be made.

Employment Trends in 1981

4.1 From Table 9, it can be seen that net job losses in the agricultural sector continued through the 1970's. The industrial sector, despite considerable losses, showed significant increases over the same period. The most dramatic change was in the service sector with an increase of over 1,100 net new jobs per annum on average throughout the decade.

Table 9 : Net Change in Employment Sectors in County Cork. 1966-1981

	<u>Agricultural</u>	<u>Industry</u>	<u>Services</u>
1966-1971	-5,900	+2,000	+2,500
1971-1981	-8,000	+4,600	+11,200

4.2 These changes brought about a radical shift in the County's employment structure, with the industrial sector increasing its percentage of the workforce from around 19% to 31%, the agricultural sector declining from over 37% to 25% and the services sector remaining fairly constant at around 44% of the total workforce. Table 10 contains a more detailed breakdown of changes during the 1970's. Cork County fared well in comparison with State trends, with the exception of the 'Public Administration and Defence' sector which continues to be centralised in Dublin.

4.3 Despite these positive trends the unemployment rate in Cork County rose between 1971-1981 from 4.5% to 9.3% (from 2,333 to 4,482).

Table 10 : Employment by Industrial Group in Cork County, 1971-1981

Branch of Economic Activity	Employment 1981 (000's)	Change 1971-1981 (000's)	% Change Cork Co.	1971-1981 State
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing	22.2	-7.8	-26.1	-30.6
Building and Construction	8.0	+1.2	+16.7	+14.7
Other Production Industries	18.9	+3.1	+19.6	+10.8
Commerce, Insurance, Finance	14.2	+3.2	+29.2	+19.1
Transport, Communications ¹				
Storage	3.9	+0.7	+20.2	+13.0
Professional Services	10.7	+4.3	+66.4	+56.5
Public administration & defence	3.7	+1.3	+51.4	+62.8
Others	4.7	+0.5	+10.9	+11.9
Total at work	86.4	+6.3	+7.9	+9.1
Labour Force	93.0	+9.1	+10.9	+12.9

Employment Trends since 1981

4.4 Table II summarises the findings of the partial industrial survey conducted by the I.D.A.

Table II : Numbers of people employed in the Manufacturing Sector 1971-1981 in County Cork

	1973	1977	1981	1983	1973-1981	% Change 1981-1983
North Cork	5,192	5,672	5,757	5,379	+10.9%	-6.6%
West Cork	1,273	1,570	1,634	1,483	+28.4%	-9.2%
South Cork	8,022	8,404	8,428	8,024	+5.1%	-4.8%
L.U.T.S. Area	5,293	5,477	5,821	5,460	+10.0%	-6.1%
Non-L.U.T.S. Area	2,729	2,933	2,607	2,564	-4.4%	-1.6%
Total County Cork	14,487	15,646	15,819	14,886	+9.2%	-5.9%

4.5 From a position of growth in most geographical areas of the County up to 1981, all areas suffered a decline since, with a net loss of nearly 1,000 jobs between 1981-1983. The number of unemployed (on the live register) has dramatically increased to c. 12,700 for County Cork so that the unemployment rate for those living in the County in 1984 is over 13% (c. 15% if first time job seekers are taken into account). This equals a 4% increase in the unemployment rate in 3 years (1981-1984) as compared with less than 5% in the previous 10 years (1971-1981).

- 4.6 Table 12 shows the rise in the number of unemployed signing on at local offices in Cork County and City. It should be noted that an individual does not have to sign on at the nearest office geographically to his or her residence. Also, in the case of offices located near the County boundary a certain proportion of people may travel across the boundary e.g. people travel from County Waterford to the Youghal office. Accordingly, the Table is most useful in showing the acceleration in the rate of unemployment rather than indicating local unemployment "black spots".

Table 12 : The number of people on the Live Register (unemployed) at the various local offices. 1980-1984

Local Offices	Numbers Unemployed					Percentage Change 1981-1984
	Jan. 1980	Jan. 1981	Jan. 1982	Jan. 1983	Jan. 1984	
Bandon	138	207	329	446	550	+142
Bantry	222	333	373	449	475	+43
Castletownbere	209	257	241	313	316	+23
Clonakilty	197	318	354	435	485	+53
Cobh	232	360	450	552	707	+96
Cork*	3,722	6,053	7,242	10,080	12,702	+110
Dunmanway	197	231	272	354	409	+77
Fermoy	408	599	649	877	1,168	+77
Kinsale	140	212	281	347	396	+87
Macroom	191	318	492	582	619	+95
Mallow	484	637	825	1,099	1,252	+96
Midleton	344	691	764	1,029	1,196	+73
Newmarket	618	772	930	1,024	1,236	+60
Passage West	218	369	498	727	905	+145
Skibbereen	300	451	525	664	557	+46
Youghal	245	477	549	838	877	+84
County Cork and Cork City	7,865	12,277	14,774	19,616	23,900	+95

*NB About 85% of this total are residents of Cork City.

- 4.7 Calculating individual unemployment rates for each area is difficult as no accurate estimation of the labour force in each area is available. Such evidence that is available would indicate that rates are higher in the L.U.T.S. area than the rest of the County. However, the number of people unemployed is in such proportions that it must be considered a countywide problem.
- 4.8 Table 13 provides information on the former industrial group of those on the Live Register in the Summer, 1983. In general a wide range of previous work experience is portrayed in this table. The Table shows a significant number of people who formerly worked in the building construction sector throughout the County ; and in the agricultural sector in North and West Cork.

**Table 13 : Former industrial group of those on the Live Register July, 1983
in Cork City and County**

	CITY & COUNTY		NORTH CORK		SOUTH CORK (& CITY)		WEST CORK	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing	1,556	8%	468	17%	396	3%	692	36%
Mining, Quarrying	117	1%	8	0%	92	1%	17	1%
Food, drink, tobacco	1,492	1%	470	17%	963	6%	59	3%
Textiles, Clothing	1,425	7%	76	3%	1,306	8%	43	2%
Metals, Engineering Manufacturing Etc.	1,529	8%	253	9%	1,200	8%	76	4%
Fertilisers, Chemicals	274	1%	15	1%	253	2%	6	1%
Paper, Printing	226	1%	2	0%	216	1%	8	1%
Building and Construction	5,043	25%	619	22%	4,123	27%	302	16%
Transport and Utilities	1,396	7%	80	3%	1,193	8%	123	6%
Distributive Trades	1,762	9%	146	5%	1,495	10%	121	6%
Public Administration and Finance	889	4%	83	3%	723	5%	83	4%
Professions	962	5%	67	2%	816	5%	79	4%
Personal Services, Entertainments	1,417	7%	115	4%	1,147	7%	155	8%
Unspecified including those who have never worked	1,929	10%	417	15%	1,365	9%	147	8%
TOTAL	20,017	100%	2,819	100%	15,288	100%	1,910	100%

Employment Projections, 1984-1989

- 4.9 The labour force in the County is projected to grow by a further 7,200 people during the plan period. This factor coupled with the existing number of people unemployed in the County (c. 12,700) shows the magnitude of the task ahead.
- 4.10 Table 14 estimates the net number of new jobs that would be required in the County given various unemployment rates. It should be noted that an additional net 8,670 new jobs will be required (1,734 a year) in order to maintain the existing level of unemployment at 13%.

Table 14 : Estimated Net Job Requirements, 1984-1989

Estimated <u>Net</u> Job Requirements 1984-1989 given the following unemployment rates					
	5%	10%	13%	15%	20%
North Cork	+3,505	+2,155	+1,360	+820	-520
South Cork	+11,490	+8,435	+6,600	+5,380	+2,325
West Cork	+2,145	+1,250	+710	+350	-545
County Cork	+17,140	+11,850	+8,670	+6,550	+1,260

- 4.11 Based on an analysis of past trends and discussions with relevant bodies estimates of likely redundancies over the plan period were made. Accordingly, Table 15 below estimates the gross number of jobs required over the plan period i.e. allowing for redundancies. On this basis, approximately 12,840 new jobs (2,568 per annum) would be required to maintain the existing unemployment level at 13%.

Table 15 : Estimated Gross Job Requirements 1984-1989

Estimated <u>Gross</u> Job Requirements 1984-1989 given the following unemployment rates					
	5%	10%	13%	15%	20%
North Cork	+4,670	+3,330	+2,525	+1,985	+645
South Cork	+13,680	+10,625	+8,790	+7,570	+4,515
West Cork	+2,960	+2,065	+1,525	+1,165	+270
County Cork	+21,310	+16,020	+12,840	+10,720	+5,430

Use of Natural Resources

- 4.12 Cork County has some of the best agricultural land in the country with a wide use range. The pre-dominant role of the agricultural co-operatives in its rural economy and the beneficial impact of the food processing industry on many of the County towns is evident. A decline in the performance of this sector would have widespread detrimental effects both on direct and indirect employment.
- 4.13 Surpluses of agricultural commodities both in the E.E.C. and in the West generally, combined with changing consumer preferences and the resultant pressures on producers profit margins, have led to a need for re-appraisal by the industry. It seems paramount that new product development and competitive marketing will be required to dispose of output. Movement of producers into alternative crops, which have market potential, and the re-organisation of both the agricultural and horticultural sectors to replace substitutable imports will be necessary.
- 4.14 The Council, through its industrial and business development services, will encourage the establishment of small-scale processing of high value food products and the development of further processing of import-substitution products. Establishment of a 'food centre' at a suitable location in the County (e.g. at Midleton) will be promoted in discussions with the relevant interests.

Fishing/Aquaculture/Coastal Resources

- 4.15 Ireland's fishing industry is also going through a crisis at present. Enlargement of the E.E.C. to 12 member countries will further add to these difficulties unless responsible collective action is taken by the interests concerned. As in the agricultural sector, Cork County has extensive marine resources and an infrastructure which is capable of supporting further development.
- 4.16 Planned improvements such as those on the access road to the main designated fisheries harbour at Castletownbere and the up-grading of berthage facilities at Schull will enable greater use to be made of these resources. Other coastal works will be necessary if further opportunities are to be availed of. Much, however, will depend on the national/European context, within which the enlarged community's fishing industry is to operate.
- 4.17 Hitherto un-exploited maricultural potential is an important resource at a number of locations, particularly to the west, along the County's coastline. The Council has identified and will promote the development of such resources provided they are compatible with other planned or essential uses of the coastal waters. Establishment of a marine resources centre in Cork in this context is considered by the Council to be justified and the County will continue to press the Government for such. Use of local research expertise would be a component of this centre.

Coastal Management

- 4.18 With one of the most extensive and varied stretches of coastline in the country accommodating a wide variety of uses and development pressures ranging from port-dependent heavy industry and offshore exploration to fishing and recreation, Cork County could serve as a proto-type model for assessing resource capacity, development impact and the effectiveness of coastal management policies in a developing maritime region of the E.E.C. The existence of a comprehensive coastal data base⁴ of accepted international status, coupled with the peripheral regional location of Ireland within the E.E.C., further consolidate the Council's belief that Cork should be selected by the Community as a centre for coastal management research.

Offshore Resources

- 4.19 While it is difficult to predict the success of exploration for oil and gas off the County's shoreline, the Celtic Sea basin appears to offer the best natural prospects for further commercial finds in the short-term. The Council will assist, where relevant, the statutory authority (Bord Gais Eireann) in the identification of suitable landfall sites in the event of further commercial 'finds' being made.
- 4.20 In co-operation with B.G.E., the I.D.A. and Cork Harbour Commissioners, the Council will promote the use of natural gas as a feed-stock and energy supply for industry throughout the County. In this regard, particular attention will be drawn to the potential for integrated power/heat servicing of the County's major harbourside industrial sites.

Afforestation & Timber Processing

- 4.21 The growing international demand for timber products, at a time when much of mainland Europe's forests are threatened by acid rain, coincides with the maturation of earlier state plantations in the County and South/West Region. The continuing marginal nature of agricultural lands in parts of the County should be viewed in this context and that of a longer-term realisation of job opportunities in the timber processing industry. The Council will seek to attract in conjunction with the I.D.A., Udaras na Gaeltachta and the Department of Fisheries & Forestry further investment in this important regional resource.

Extractive Industry & Mineral Resource Protection

- 4.22 Much of the Council's concern in relation to this industry arises from the adverse impact of un-authorized operations on the environment. Appropriate action is, and will be, taken to prevent the de-spoilation of areas in this manner. Controls on permitted operations will continue to apply with particular regard to landscaping, pollution control and restoration.
- 4.23 Additionally, the Council, concerned at the level of sterilisation of mineral resources, will endeavour to protect identified deposits for possible exploitation. Co-operation of the industry in this regard is considered a necessary requirement.

⁴ National Coastline Study, Cork County, 1969, Brady Shipman & Martin.

Manufacturing Industry

- 4.24 The continuing decline in the agricultural workforce and the emergence of industry and services as the main job-providing sectors has been recognised in recent Council initiatives. Aware of the need to assist the I.D.A. through the regionalised industrial structure and to encourage the emerging small businesses sector, the Council embarked on a programme of land acquisition and development.
- 4.25 Land acquisition, servicing and development of small industrial/business premises has been initiated in a number of towns and villages throughout the County in an effort to encourage the formation and expansion of small business enterprises.

Council's Industrial Role & Funding

- 4.26 The Council is complementing the work of the I.D.A. in the acquisition, servicing and disposal of sites for large industrial undertakings in locations which are considered to have a strategic employment function.
- 4.27 In order to maintain the impetus of this initiative the Council will seek supplementary funding from the E.E.C., through the Government. It is intended to re-cycle the initial capital investment on a revolving basis, thereby minimising demand on the Exchequer. In the light of the Government's recently announced plans to allocate further industrial and tourism functions to local authorities, the Council considers that Government support for these initiatives will follow as a matter of course.
- 4.28 Further E.E.C. support will be actively sought for the measures proposed in the specially-commissioned E.E.C. study on Cork.
- 4.29 The Council will also continue to co-operate with the I.D.A. and Cork Harbour Commissioners in the promotion of Cork Harbour as a major centre for port-dependent industry availing of the facilities provided at Ringaskiddy. Aware of the potential of Bantry Bay, the Council has taken measures to protect sites capable of accommodating port-dependent uses relying on deep-water navigation.

Services Sector

- 4.30 The prolonged recession has produced significant lay-offs in the building and construction sector throughout the County. Measures to remedy this, in the absence of an upsurge in economic activity and house building, have traditionally tended to rely on public sector capital investment in infrastructure. More recently, special Government employment schemes have provided some temporary relief.
- 4.31 Given the current restrictions on public expenditure, the Council considers that selective investment in infrastructure, which will facilitate longer-term industrial, commercial or tourism growth, is necessary within the County. Details of the Council's transportation and sanitary infrastructure programme are relevant in this context (see later paragraphs 5.5 and 5.72) and will form the basis for short-term job creation measures.

- 4.32 Reference has already been made to the use of 'revolving' capital funds for the Council's small industry/business initiatives. The same principle can be applied in respect of urban renewal, provided the market exists for disposal of properties. Selective application of this is considered possible in the main 'black spots' in the County's settlements (refer also to paragraph 3.16).
- 4.33 The growth of employment in 'services'⁵ has been dramatic over the past ten years. However, the economic recession and continuing stagnation in agricultural and industrial employment opportunities is likely to undermine such gains, as has happened in the building and construction sector. Consolidation of service jobs and the realisation of other possible opportunities (e.g. in tourism) will be pursued by the Council in its development policies.
- 4.34 In its settlement strategy for the County, expressed in the Divisional Plans for each administrative area, the Council is proposing the strengthening of district centres and the promotion and consolidation of 'priority towns and villages'. It is considered that this strategy will also facilitate the growth of service activities in locations accessible to consumers. In many cases, opportunities have been identified for central area uses in these settlements.

Tourism Development

- 4.35 Tourism holds out one of the answers to the County's future employment needs. While 'external' factors such as access transport costs, competitiveness, and the rates of international exchange will continue to have a significant influence on consumers travel preferences, much can still be done to improve the attractiveness of Cork County as a destination. A number of measures such as the promotion of a touring route strategy and the integrated development and marketing of specialist tourist attractions, which the Council proposes to take, are outlined in the Divisional Plans.
- 4.36 The Cork-Kerry Region is the most important region in the State, earning c. £160 m. in 1983 (c. 24.3% of gross national tourist revenue) and attracting almost 1.7 m. visitors. Cork County and City account for an estimated 45% of the regional total; the region as a whole, 21% of the national total.
- 4.37 Employment sustained directly or indirectly by tourism in the City and County was estimated to be close to 10,000 jobs in 1982. Tourism is of particular importance to West Cork as a seasonal support to the area's economy.
- 4.38 The prolonged recession has produced a significant downturn in tourism, which first began to show signs of decline in the early 1970's. Inflation and other domestic factors, together with the troubles in Northern Ireland, have also eroded the attractiveness of Ireland as a holiday destination. Improvements in both of these areas is expected to lead to a gradual recovery over the remainder of the decade.
- 4.39 Cork County Council has an important facilitating role in assisting Cork/Kerry Tourism to achieve a better regional performance. To this effect, the Council will adopt a five year programme as part of its review of the County Development Plan

⁵ Refer to Table 9, page 16

- 4.40 The prospect of E.E.C. support, through the Regional Development Fund, will be solicited in respect of special projects in connection with Bord Failte and other public agencies. Reliance on finance from the Department of the Environment's (D.O.E.) Youth Employment Programme and the Youth Employment Agency (Y.E.A.) will continue to be a fundamental part of the Council's development strategy.
- 4.41 Investment in centres which hold the greatest potential for attracting tourists, is implied and will be actively encouraged through co-operation with Bord Failte. It's regional subsidiary Cork/Kerry Tourism and other public bodies, community groups and the 'industry' itself. Projects, which have a capacity to provide sustainable jobs, will receive priority.

De-centralisation

- 4.42 On grounds of equity and in the interests of effective regional planning, the Council considers that de-centralisation of public sector jobs from the Dublin region to Cork is overdue. It is considered that this would have a beneficial effect on the private services sector in generating induced employment opportunities. Further opportunities presented by re-organisation of public sector bodies and the regional distribution of E.E.C. research organisations will be pursued with a view to locating some of these in Cork.

Other Employment Measures

- 4.43 For the past number of years, the Council has availed of government sponsored schemes aimed at alleviating the high unemployment levels. While limited in scope, the schemes have provided valuable short-term relief for redundant workers. In anticipation of a continuation of such measures, the Council has devoted what staff resources it can towards the design, supervision and execution of suitable projects.
- 4.44 Self-help and community effort, now termed the 'fourth sector' has provided many enlightening examples of the manner in which scarce resources can be used to provide local employment. The Council has assisted local communities, where possible, through limited financial funding, design and advisory facilities in a wide range of projects. Further assistance will be considered, particularly where communities are willing to maintain public amenities in the larger urban centres. This should ensure a responsive attitude by communities and the provision of limited job opportunities if organised on a structured basis.
- 4.45 Co-operative or community groups, which identify worthwhile job creation schemes will receive similar assistance through the provision of low rental space in the Council's prototype workshop/industrial units and through the Council's advisory service.
- 4.46 Co-operative or community groups, which identify worthwhile job creation schemes will receive every possible support from the Council.

CHAPTER 5 : INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructural Investment

- 5.0 As stated earlier, the Council has drawn up a programme for investment in roads, water supply and drainage during the plan period. Much of this investment is centred in the major development areas, where infrastructure is either seriously deficient and consequently hinders development or, where the advance provision of facilities is desirable in the interests of promoting development.
- 5.1 On the basis of the L.U.T.S. strategy, the Council is committed to improving the sanitary and road systems in the urban/industrial areas around Cork City and harbour. Many of the areas in question have, or are currently having, substantial improvements in these networks. The Council will continue to up-grade facilities in line with the strategic plan as resources permit. The ancillary re-modelling of footpaths and provision of public lighting is also proposed.
- 5.2 Elsewhere in the County, major improvements are planned in the infrastructure of many of the principal County towns and on the arterial road system which serves them. The adoption of the concept of 'priority towns and villages' establishes the importance and phasing of investment in smaller centres considered capable of sustaining development activity. Details of these are given in the Divisional Plans.

Energy Networks & Services

- 5.3 Extension of the Bord Gais Eireann natural gas trunk network (See Fig. 4) to the main industrial centres in North Cork and the potential to establish combined heat and power servicing of the main port-side industrial areas in Cork Harbour will be supported by the Council.
- 5.4 Other opportunities to utilise natural gas or offshore oil resources will be borne in mind by the reservation of suitable sites in both Cork Harbour and Bantry Bay.

Transportation Policy

- 5.5 While the Council welcomes the Government's commitment to the up-grading of the arterial road system in the County, it regards the lack of investment in other parts of the road system as detrimental to economic activity. Proposals to remedy this are considered on a County-at-large basis and detailed further in the Divisional Plans.

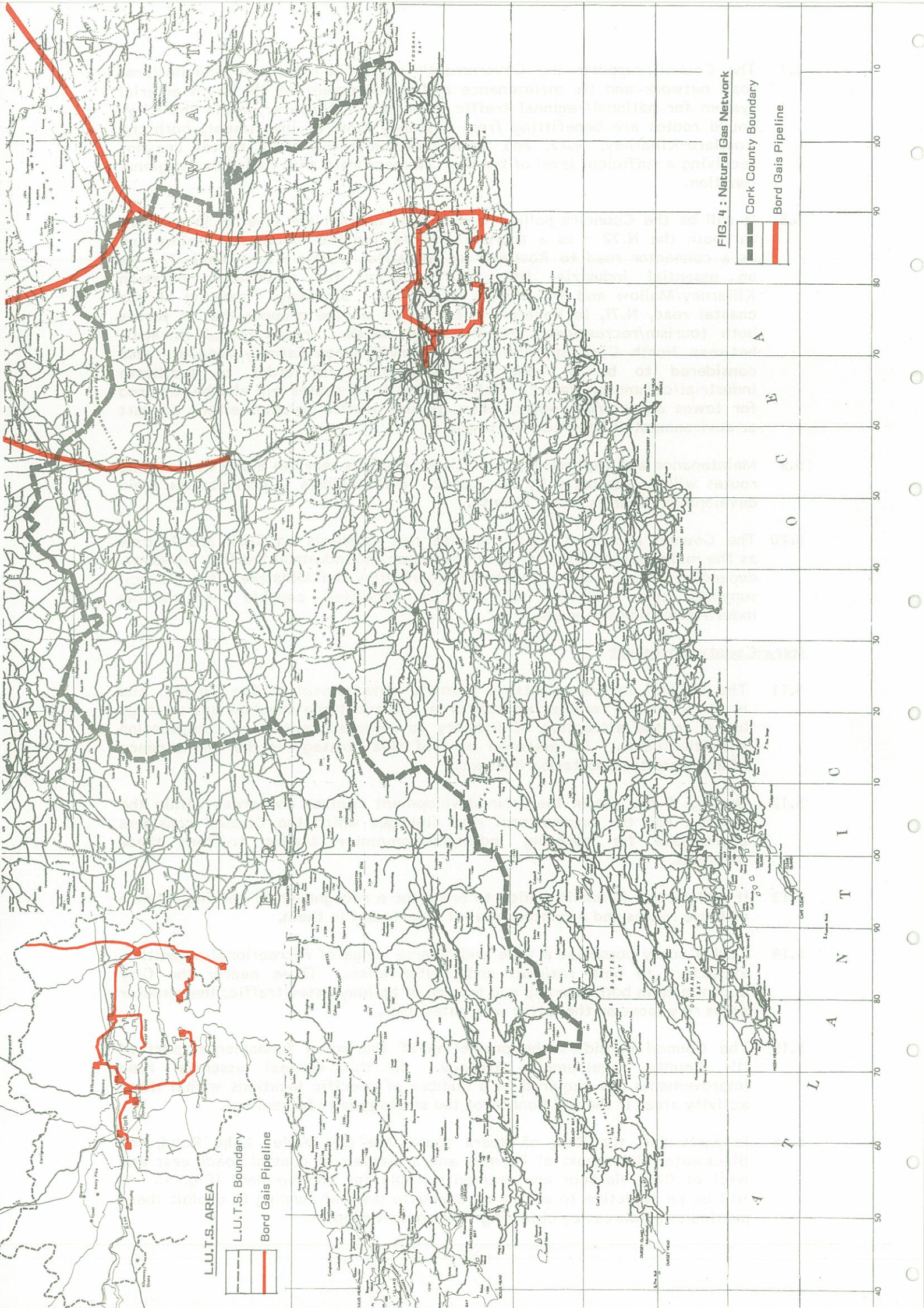
National/Regional Movements

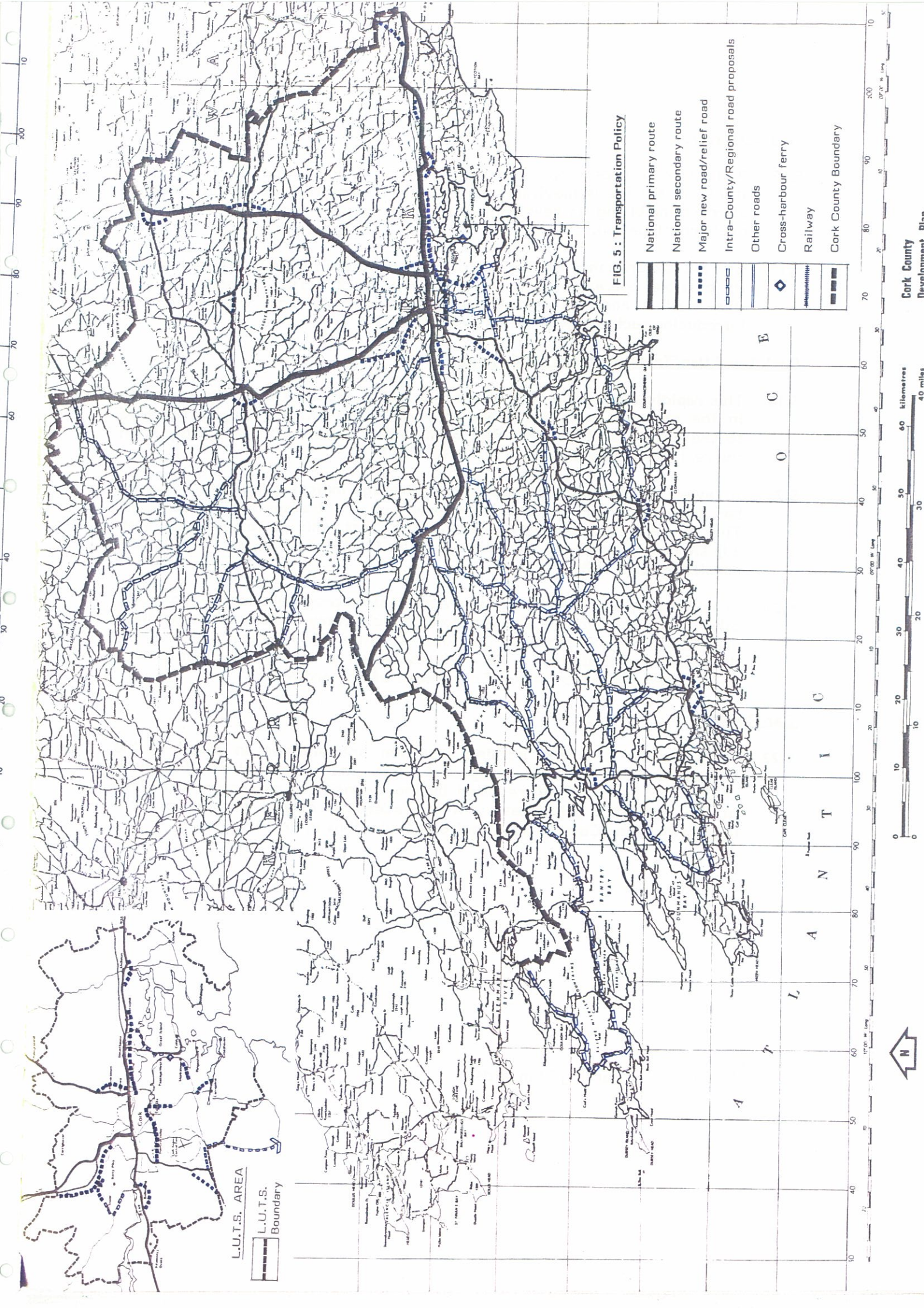
- 5.6 The principal transportation corridors linking Cork with the province and rest of the country constitute, in road terms, the national road network which is largely focussed on Cork City and harbour. C.I.E.'s express bus service co-incides with the main radial routes to the City. The mainline network to Dublin and branch line from Mallow-Killarney complete the system.

- 5.7 The Council supports the Government's policy in respect of the national road network and its maintenance and improvement as the main arterial system for national/regional traffic movement. However, while the City-bound routes are benefitting from a steady flow of investment, both the Rosslare-Killarney, N.72, and Mallow-Mitchelstown, N.73, routes are not receiving a sufficient level of funding commensurate with their intra-regional function.
- 5.8 It will be the Council's policy to secure an appropriate level of investment for both the N.72 - as a tourism corridor for the Blackwater Valley and as a connector road to Rosslare for industrial traffic - and the N.73 - as an essential industrial link road catering for movements between Killarney/Mallow and the Dublin, N.8, road. Similarly, financing of the coastal road, N.71, to Bantry will be sought on the grounds that it serves both tourism/recreational and industrial needs. Intra-regional linkages, between North Cork and the North Kerry/Shannon Estuary area are also considered to be in need of improvement in order to facilitate industrial/commuter traffic. Relief routes or by-passes will also be required for towns on arterial routes, when through traffic volumes either congest or environmentally degrade the towns.
- 5.9 Maintenance and expansion of C.I.E.'s express bus services along the existing routes will be supported by the Council in its efforts to promote the main development centres in the County.
- 5.10 The Council accepts C.I.E.'s mainline rail emphasis on Cork and Mallow as the main factor points for both commuter and industrial traffic. However, dependent on the future growth of Charleville and Millstreet, the Council supports the retention of existing facilities capable of meeting industrial/commuter needs.

Intra-County Movement

- 5.11 The Council in its efforts to promote development of the County, and in particular the remoter western area, has adopted a development strategy based on the attraction of industry to selected centres in co-operation with the I.D.A. An essential part of this strategy is the maintenance of adequate transportation linkages.
- 5.12 On Fig. 5 are shown the main development centres and areas within the County, and the non-national road linkages which the Council considers appropriate for carrying industrial/commuter traffic to/from these locations.
- 5.13 It will be the Council's policy to press for a recognition of the importance of these routes and a related level of investment in them.
- 5.14 Cork County possesses a wide and diverse range of recreational amenities, attractive to both resident and visitor alike. Those nearer the City accommodate both day-trip and touring or holiday based traffic; the remoter areas rely more on the latter user categories.
- 5.15 The Council considers the promotion of tourism a fundamental part of its County development strategy. In this context essential road improvements are required in a number of specific locations within these activity areas if the full benefit of the strategy is to be realised.
- 5.16 In particular, the Ring of Beara route, the Lee Valley Lake Road, the Blackwater Drive east of Fermoy and a number of coastal roads east and west of Cork Harbour are deemed suitable for improvement (Fig. 5). It will be an objective to secure an adequate level of funding to exploit these particular resources by obtaining Government support.





Public Transport

- 5.17 In relatively under-populated areas of the County, the level of public transport service is inevitably weak. The Council regards this as a further element inhibiting its development strategy for such areas and is concerned at its continuation.
- 5.18 Current experiments in the use of the post-bus in County Clare indicate its possible operation in parts of County Cork. The Council considers this feasible and will initiate discussions with An Post with a view to introducing such a prototype service.

Cork Land Use/Transportation Study Area

- 5.19 This rapidly developing part of the sub-region received particular attention in the study of some six years ago. Its problems are largely confined to the envelope defined on Fig. 5 and will be dealt with separately from the rest of the County where this is relevant.
- 5.20 A review of the existing development strategy indicates that good progress has been made in the implementation of its transportation proposals. The Council will endeavour to ensure that this is maintained with adjustments made to accommodate post-L.U.T.S. changes which are considered desirable.
- 5.21 In addition to the clearly stated transportation proposals concerning roads, other measures such as the proposed vehicle ferry between Passage West and Cobh, the establishment of local taxi/minibus services within towns like Cobh and Ballincollig, the re-introduction of a commuter rail service to Midleton and the creation of cycleways will be promoted.

Car Parking

- 5.22 Proposals for new car parking provision are outlined in detail in the Divisional Plans and the component town and village plans. Standards of car parking provision required by the Council for developers are given in the Council's guidelines⁶. Where adequate on-site parking can not be provided, the Council will require contributions in lieu of same.

⁶ Refer to 'Car Parking Standards'.

CHAPTER 6 : ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Protection

- 6.0 Protection of the County's attractive and diverse physical environment is a necessary pre-condition for tourism development. More recently, the importance of a good environment has been accepted as a contributing factor in the success of attracting foreign industry. For the residents of the County, and the contiguous City, an attractive physical environment is now widely perceived to be an integral component of everyday life.
- 6.1 Some of the most noticeable problems arise from widespread littering, shoddy or second-rate treatment of public places or amenities and the proliferation of undesirable developments along the main approaches to towns and villages and on arterial routes. While legislative deficiencies are unhelpful, effective measures to resolve these problems in an equitable and reasonable manner are necessary.
- 6.2 The safe and economic disposal of both domestic and industrial/trade wastes is a major objective of the Council. This is essential if the County is to maintain a pollution-free environment and simultaneously accommodate the development needs of the urban centres and industrial areas. Provision of an adequate number of suitable and well located sites throughout the County coupled with a more rigorous use of legal measures for unauthorised littering or dumping is proposed. Consideration will be given to the use of the Government's temporary employment schemes in this latter context and specifically in relation to coastal resorts. Environmental campaigns, aimed at increasing community awareness and involvement, will also be continued in an effort to 'educate' public opinion and provide encouragement to voluntary efforts.
- 6.3 The Council's ability to maintain public amenities at a satisfactory level is dependent on community involvement. Where feasible, local communities will be encouraged and, where possible, assisted, in the task of caring for such areas. It is hoped that this will ensure a greater level of commitment by communities to the protection of amenities.
- 6.4 A new strategy⁷ aimed at curbing the proliferation of illegal signs alongside roads has been adopted by the Council. This attempts to regularise the placement of essential signs and will be accompanied by a drive to remove illegal signs and advertisements, particularly along main roads.
- 6.5 Stringent controls⁸ will continue to be exercised on advertising both on the approaches to and within towns and villages as well as along roads in the countryside regard being had to the protection of amenities and the avoidance of traffic hazard.
- 6.6 Frontage development along the main approaches to large towns, major industrial areas and the City, where permitted, will be required to have a standard of design and landscaping appropriate to the importance of these routes. In the case of designated touring routes, other than the main arterial network, a similar standard of design will be required.
- 6.7 Casual trading activities along arterial routes have both diminished the aesthetic qualities of these roads but also given rise to traffic hazard. The Council will use what means are possible to prevent this happening.

⁷ Refer to 'Fingerpost Memo' on Local Advertising, Cork County Council.

⁸ Refer to 'General Advertising Memo', Cork County Council.

Conservation of Built Heritage

- 6.8 Protection of the County's historic buildings/streetscapes and sites is a difficult task given the available financial resources. 'Listing' of heritage items is insufficient in itself. The Council has tried to tackle the matter in three ways namely 'listing', active conservation measures - including the granting of limited financial assistance in special circumstances - and education, by high-lighting the importance of heritage features in selected areas. Additionally, the Finance Act allows for tax incentives to owners of historic buildings open to the public and in which investment is made in restorative works.
- 6.9 When the current County archaeological survey is available, a comprehensive 'listing' of heritage sites will be published. This will entail an amendment of the County Plan so as to include additional sites. A separate publication is proposed in this regard. It is also proposed to integrate a sites and monuments record into the planning register with a view to maintaining a close check on potentially adverse development impacts. Publication of further 'antiquities pamphlets' covering areas rich in archaeological items is also proposed.
- 6.10 Selective investment by the Council in restoration or remedial works on important monuments will continue. Furthermore, where monuments are in Council ownership and have a prospect of becoming major tourist attractions, efforts will be made to obtain supplementary funding or assistance from both private interest and other public bodies.

Preservation of Amenities

- 6.11 Cork County contains a wide spectrum of natural amenities ranging from its scenic coastline to mountainous inland areas and wooded river valleys. Included are important areas of scientific interest. As previously, the County Plan 'lists' these sites and features e.g. scenic views and landscape which will require a continued protection in order to provide an attractive environment for recreational demands and the generation of tourism revenue.
- 6.12 Over the years there has been no diminution in the threats to these amenities and reliance solely on controls has not been as effective as the circumstances would merit. Active involvement by the State, the Council and other interested parties will be necessary to ensure an adequate level of protection. Where feasible, the Council will promote the acquisition and management of important amenities in the public interest.

CHAPTER 7 : RECREATION

Recreational Needs and Provision

- 7.0 By 1989, the population of Cork County will be in the region of 290,000. Of this, approximately, 50% will be under the age of 25. Continuing high levels of unemployment and short-time working will also ensure that a significant proportion of the population will have free time. Leisure activities, particularly the use of low-cost recreational facilities, will be required to meet these needs. The involvement of young people in the provision, maintenance and management of leisure facilities suggests itself as a partial remedy. The age structure of the population coupled with changing trends in recreational pursuits, and increases in the cost of travel will further influence the range, diversity and incidence of new recreational facilities.
- 7.1 Cork County Council will itself, and in conjunction with other interested parties, attempt to meet this challenge over the next five years by providing a range of facilities in or adjacent to the main population centres. In attractive coastal or rural areas, the Council will encourage the development of outdoor pursuits centres, coastal or mountain walks and other amenities which would exploit the natural capacity of such areas and provide a diversity of environmental experience for the County's youthful population.

Coastal Planning for Tourism Development

- 7.2 Some ten years ago, the National Coastline Study made a number of policy recommendations for the County which are still considered valid but largely remain to be acted on in a positive manner. These included the sensitive exploitation of the coastline's amenity resources and related inland recreational reserves. In recent times, the Council has attempted to implement the developmental aspects of these policies along the lines suggested in the Study. Both the Blackwater and Lee Valleys have benefitted from the co-operative actions of the Council, Cork/Kerry Tourism and other public agencies and authorities.
- 7.3 While a number of changes have occurred over the past decade, the Council considers that a touring route strategy should continue to form a key element in the County Plan. This strategy aims at achieving an integrated promotion and exploitation of the County's most attractive areas and has been recently effected, as already stated, for the Blackwater Valley.
- 7.4 Due to the idented nature of much of the Cork coastline and its spur and loop road system, a different approach will be adopted for the coastal settlements with emphasis being put on the locational attractiveness of the many holiday destinations. This will involve the allocation of functions to the various towns and villages so as to guide subsequent policy implementation. Fundamental to this is the building up of key centres, particularly in the more isolated peninsular areas.
- 7.5 Water based activities, particularly those on the coastline, are regarded as having significant growth potential by satisfying the needs of a youthful clientele and the Council in its policies will attempt to identify and promote these.

Caravan/Camping Facilities & Youth Hostels

- 7.6 The growing demand for well-sited and carefully scaled caravan parks requires a drive to resolve the problems caused by the growing demand for this type of holiday accommodation. As a general rule, new facilities should not detract from the landscape and should not "swamp" existing amenities, e.g. beach capacity, or overload services. A new approach might be considered for very small caravan clusters as an attempt to minimise the reliance, hitherto, on large-scale developments. The support of Bord Failte and the industry itself will be a necessary pre-condition for such innovations.
- 7.7 Low-cost accommodation for young visitors to the country and for those resident in the state has been provided in a most attractive and effective manner by An Oige. The Council considers that potential exists for further youth hostels in a number of scenic locations throughout the County.

Holiday Housing

- 7.8 In areas like West Cork, employment and income from tourism can benefit from the harmonious design and siting of new "one-off" houses. To assist the new house builder, the Council will, through a series of advice notes⁹, attempt to establish a wider appreciation of the merits of good design and siting.
- 7.9 Holiday complexes, both in the form of integrated schemes having their own service and recreational facilities, and residential-only development of a time-sharing nature, have become a feature of the most attractive tourism regions at home and abroad. These will be dealt with on their merits, having regard to the wider benefits to the local economy and environment.

Cultural Activities & The Arts

- 7.10 The Council provides limited financial assistance towards the development of the Arts and considers that this multi-faceted cultural activity has an important contribution to make in the lives of residents in the County as well as providing for some visitor needs. It is proposed to promote the Arts and public interest in them through a variety of measures and in consultation with An Comhairle Ealaíonn (the Arts Council).
- 7.11 In order to establish a development programme capable of optimising the resources within the County, the Council will endeavour to secure an appropriate level of funding from An Comhairle Ealaíonn, within the framework of agreed criteria.
- 7.12 Greater use of the Council's library service and facilities, the establishment of creativity centres at selected locations, the nurturing of community-based activities and the presentation of the County's artistic, linguistic, and cultural heritage in a manner of interest to resident and visitor alike, will be promoted.

⁹ Refer to "Building in the Countryside", Cork County Council.

CHAPTER 8 : Retailing

Retailing

- 8.0 The County Council recognises the importance of the retail industry in the County in providing for the needs of residents and visitors and as a source of employment.
- 8.1 In the first instance, the retail planning policies of the Council derive from the General Development Policies as set out in the 1979 Development Plan viz. Section 2.1 and in particular, the policies:-
- 2.1.1 To create a good living environment for the people of the County.
 - 2.1.2 To preserve the character and identity of the County and the County towns.
 - 2.1.3 To create the conditions for economic expansion in urban and rural areas.
 - 2.1.4 To develop the Cork City Environs and Harbour Area as a national growth centre as a counter balance to the growth of Dublin.
- 8.2 The Council sees its role in relation to retailing as one of creating a climate which will encourage the continuing development of the retail structure of the County by the adoption of positive policies to assist the accessibility of the shopping public to a wide range of retail opportunities.
- 8.3 The Council recognises the essentially commercial and market nature of retailing and accepts that shopping is responsive to the needs and movements of consumers. To be successful, new shopping developments must satisfy the locational requirements of both retailing and planning.
- 8.4 The Council recognises that the shopping public, urban and rural and including visitors, non-car owners and the infirm, seek access to a variety of shopping opportunities and, in particular, to three levels of provision corresponding in local district and regional centres. In particular, the Council considers that Cork City and environs has a national role to play in retailing provision.

8.5 POLICY 1

In considering all applications for new retail developments at any level, the Council will have regard to the proper planning and development of the area and all applications will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts, 1963-1983. The Council will also have regard, where appropriate, to the Local Government (Planning and Development) General Policy Directive, 1982.

8.6 POLICY 2

Planning applications for retail developments in the environs of Cork City will be considered in the context of the City and Environs as a whole and the Council will support the role of the area as a regional and national centre.

8.7 POLICY 3

The policy of the Council is the consolidation of existing District or Service Centres and the creation of new District Centres in line with overall planning objectives for the County. Consequently, large stores or shopping centres will not normally be permitted in rural areas or at the edge of towns where the Council considers this to be injurious to the character and identity of the town centre. In considering proposals for large additions to existing District centres or new District centres, the Council will have regard to the General Policy Directive, 1982, and in particular, the following considerations:-

- (a) The role of the proposal in consolidating the location and identity of an existing centre, or in establishing a new centre.
- (b) The suitability of the proposal in fulfilling District or Service Centres functions as reflected in its retail composition and its location.
- (c) The accessibility of the proposal, including pedestrian access, public transport and traffic considerations.
- (d) The contribution of the proposal to the quality of the retail environment of the centre.
- (e) The suitability of the site to accommodate the proposed development and associated car parking.

8.8 POLICY 4

To maintain the functional role of District Centres, the Council may, subject to policy no. 2, especially in the case of large new developments, seek to control the use of outlets through the inclusion of an appropriate condition in any permission granted.

8.9 POLICY 5

The Council seeks to maintain and improve the level of shopping provision throughout the County and will permit additional floorspace of appropriate scale in rural villages and at suitable town centres.

8.10 POLICY 6

New shops in rural areas will not normally be permitted outside of towns and villages. Small shops (normally less than 500 sq. ft. retail area) may be allowed in areas where the settlement pattern is very dispersed.

8.11 POLICY 7

The Council will not normally permit the conversion of residential properties for shopping purposes except in rural areas or small settlements.

8.12 POLICY 8

The Council is prepared to consider the location of retail warehouse type outlets, including D.I.Y., self assembly furniture and garden centres, at appropriate and accessible sites including those on the outskirts of towns.