
Variation Number 1

To the Cork County Development Plan 2003

Retail Strategy

March 2004

Variation to the Cork County Development Plan 2003

Retail Strategy

Cork County Council together with Cork City Council have produced a Retail Strategy based on The Cork Strategic Retail Study (December 2002). In accordance with the national Retail Guidelines for planning authorities, it is now necessary to incorporate the strategy into the County Development Plan.

In this variation, the text of the strategy is included in full in chapter 4 (section 4.3) of volume 1 of the Plan. A number of other individual changes to the text have also been made in order to integrate the strategy fully within the plan and to ensure consistency, these are found in chapter 9 in Volume 1 of the plan.

This document sets out the variation in full and should be read in conjunction with the County Development Plan itself.

The paragraph, objective and table numbers, in this document are indicative and will be replaced with the appropriate paragraph and objective numbers when the varied plan is issued.

1 Changes to Chapter 1 of Volume 1

1.1. A new Section 1.4 entitled ‘Variations to the County Development Plan’ has been inserted as follows:

1.4 Variations to the County Development Plan

Procedure for varying the development plan

1.4.1 Under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, the planning authority may decide to vary its development plan by following certain procedures, as defined in the act. A variation made to the development plan shall have effect from the day that the variation has been passed by the County Council, it will be given a formal variation number and included in the schedule of variations.

Schedule of Variations

1.4.2 Table 1.2 below is a schedule of variations that have been made to the 2003 County Development Plan to date. Copies of individual variations can be obtained from the Planning Department of the County Council.

Table 1.2: Schedule of variations to the County Development Plan as at (8th March 2004)

<u>Variation no.</u>	<u>Title and details of Variation</u>	<u>Date of variation</u>
<u>Variation 1</u>	<p><u>TITLE: Retail Strategy</u></p> <p>This variation incorporates into the County Development Plan the Council's retail strategy, prepared jointly with Cork City Council, as required by the national Retail Guidelines for planning authorities. The variation includes a number of textual changes to Volume 1.</p>	<u>8th March 2004</u>

2 Proposed changes to Chapter 4 of Volume 1

2.1. Paragraph 4.3.7 and paragraph 4.3.8 along with objective ECO 3-1 and objective ECO 3-2 have been deleted

~~4.3.7 To help determine the appropriate planning policies for the future, the Council, together with the City Council commissioned a joint Retail Strategy to be presented for consideration by the two Councils soon after this plan is finalised. This will examine, amongst other issues, the need and appropriate location for additional retail floor space, in the light of the Government's Retail Planning Guidelines. After appropriate further consultation and discussion, more detailed policies giving effect to the strategy, will be included in this plan by way of a formal variation in due course. The Retail Strategy will help guide the development of specific policies for retailing within Cork City and County. The Retail Strategy will include the following matters:~~

- ~~▪ Confirmation of the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres.~~
- ~~▪ Definition in the development plan of the boundaries of the core shopping area of town centres.~~
- ~~▪ A broad assessment of the requirement for additional floor space.~~
- ~~▪ Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development.~~
- ~~▪ Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres.~~
- ~~▪ Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.~~

~~4.3.8 To help determine the appropriate planning policies for the future, the Council, together with the City Council commissioned a joint Retail Strategy to be presented for consideration by the two Councils soon after this plan is finalised. This will examine, amongst other issues, the need and appropriate location for additional retail floor space, in the light of the Government's Retail Planning Guidelines. After appropriate further consultation and discussion, more detailed policies giving effect to the strategy, will be included in this plan by way of a formal variation in due course.~~

ECO 3-1 Retail: General

~~It is an objective to recognise the principles established in the Government's Retail Planning Guidelines as the primary basis for the control of proposals for future retail development. These will be augmented by additional development plan objectives giving effect to the Joint Retail Strategy which the Council has commissioned.~~

ECO 3-2 Location of New Retail Development

~~It is an objective to ensure that new retail development is carried out within existing town, neighbourhood or village centres or on land zoned for the purpose of such development.~~

and have been replaced with the following new paragraphs:

Cork Planning Authorities - Joint Retail Strategy

4.3.9 The Retail Planning Guidelines published by the Department of the Environment and Local Government in December 2000 require the larger urban areas of the Country, including Cork City and County, to prepare retail strategies and policies for their areas. The strategies, to be included in all future development plans, are to comprehensively address the following matters:

- Confirm the retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town centres;
- Define the boundaries of the core shopping areas;
- Identify the additional floor-space requirements;
- Provide strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development;
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres;
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

4.3.10 Cork City Council and Cork County Council jointly commissioned consultants to prepare the Cork Strategic Retail Study 2002 (presented to the Council in February 2003), hereafter referred to as the CSRS. The strategy set out in this document is based on the findings of that study. All the planning authorities in Cork including the City and County Councils, and the nine Town Councils who are planning authorities, will adopt the strategy and include it within their development plans. It will form the agreed basis on which each authority will be able to formulate appropriate development plan objectives or policies for retail development in its area and which will be used in the determination of applications for planning permission.

ECO 3-1 Role of the Retail Strategy

(a) It is an objective to include the Cork Planning Authorities Joint Retail Strategy in current and future development plans together with appropriate objectives that will secure its implementation.

(b) It is an objective to have regard to the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities, in determining planning applications for retail development.

Retail Hierarchy

4.3.11 At the heart of this strategy is a hierarchy of retail locations that forms the basis for determining the quantum and location of new retail development. This is summarised in Table 4.2 (below).

Table 4.2: Cork Retail Centres Hierarchy

<u>Description</u>	<u>Locations</u>
<u>Regional centre</u>	<u>Cork City Centre Retail Area</u>
<u>Town / District centres</u>	<u>Blackpool (District centre)</u> <u>Wilton (District centre)</u> <u>Mahon Point (District centre)</u> <u>Douglas (District centre)</u> <u>Ballincollig (District Centre);</u> <u>Carrigaline (District Centre);</u> <u>Midleton (District Centre)</u> <u>Bandon (Town Centre),</u> <u>Bantry (Town Centre),</u> <u>Charleville (Town Centre),</u> <u>Clonakilty (Town Centre),</u> <u>Cobh (Town Centre),</u> <u>Dunmanway (Town Centre),</u> <u>Fermoy (Town Centre),</u> <u>Kanturk (Town Centre),</u> <u>Kinsale (Town Centre),</u> <u>Macroom (Town Centre),</u> <u>Mallow (Town Centre),</u> <u>Millstreet (Town Centre),</u> <u>Mitchelstown (Town Centre),</u> <u>Skibbereen (Town Centre),</u> <u>Youghal (Town Centre).</u>
<u>Neighbourhood centres</u>	<u>Ballyvolane, Bishopstown,</u> <u>Bishopstown Court, Blarney,</u> <u>Carrigtwohill, Castletownbere,</u> <u>Doneraile,</u> <u>Glanmire – Riverstown, Hollyhill,</u> <u>Newmarket, Passage West,</u> <u>Schull, Togher, Tower</u> <u>plus: Other specific locations</u> <u>defined in Development Plans &</u> <u>Local Area Plans</u>
<u>Local shops</u>	<u>Various urban locations and rural villages, in accordance with objectives set out in Development Plans and Local Area Plans</u>
<u>Retail Warehouses</u>	<u>Kinsale Road and district/town centre or edge of centre locations and other suitably zoned areas identified in the Development Plan.</u>

Cork City Centre

- 4.3.12 Cork City Centre is the primary retail centre in the County and the focus for comparison retail development. The City Centre dominates the shopping hierarchy in the County to the extent that almost 40 per cent of all the retail floor-space in the County is contained within it. It currently supports 105,000 square metres of net retail floorspace, of which 89,600 square metres (or 85 per cent) is for comparison goods.
- 4.3.13 Cork City Centre provides the main venue for higher order comparison goods and “fashion” goods within the Cork Metropolitan Area. It is therefore at the top of the hierarchy within the region. The CSRS proposes, in line with national guidance, that this dominant position of the City Centre be protected in terms of comparison goods, and particularly higher order comparison goods.

EC0 3-2 Strategic Role of Cork City Centre

(a) It is an objective to acknowledge Cork City Centre as the primary retail centre in the County and the focus for comparison retail development.

(b) It is an objective to recognise the need for Cork City Centre to both expand and improve the quality of the retail experience offered to meet its planned role as a retail centre of international importance.

Town/District Centres

- 4.3.14 Blackpool, Douglas and Wilton function as the district centres within the urban area of the city. These will be joined by the development of Mahon Point. These centres are characterised by a mix of comparison shopping and convenience shopping. They all contain a significant amount of comparison goods floorspace.
- 4.3.15 The new district centre at Mahon Point is currently under construction and on completion will provide a 2,800 square metre convenience food-store, 11,000 square metres of comparison shopping floorspace and 6,500 square metres of retail warehousing.
- 4.3.16 In recent years, district centres located in the suburbs of Cork City have expanded relatively rapidly when compared to trends in the City Centre. If the planned development of the City Centre and the metropolitan towns is to succeed, then it will be appropriate to allow only modest expansion of the three existing suburban district centres of Blackpool, Douglas and Wilton until 2006 after which all significant new comparison goods floor-space in the city will be focussed on the city centre.
- 4.3.17 The metropolitan towns of Ballincollig, Carrigaline and Midleton have also been designated as district centres in the retail hierarchy. Ballincollig and Carrigaline fulfil the role of serving their immediate catchment while Midleton has a recognised role as a self-sustaining satellite town serving a wider area. The rapid growth rates envisages suggest that there will be a requirement to continue to plan for retail growth underpinning the commercial core of these towns.
- 4.3.18 The Ring towns have relatively greater independence from the City Centre, and serve well-defined catchments and it is important that they maintain their attractiveness as self-sufficient towns by developing the range and quality of retail development in their town centres. These towns will be encouraged to improve their town centre retail functions, within the capacity of their respective catchments, with emphasis upon central retail expansion as a priority. Mallow is a particularly important location because not only is it identified as a Hub for expansion in the *National Spatial Strategy*, but it also is a key centre for retail development in North Cork.

- 4.3.19 The largely self sufficient county towns of North and West Cork are also designated as town centres in the retail hierarchy. They are located further away from the influence of Cork City and its metropolitan area, often have well defined catchments and are centres for convenience and comparison retail development often serving extensive rural areas. Although the rate of population growth for these towns is generally lower, they are the principal locations for both convenience and comparison retail development in the rural areas of the County.

ECO 3-3 Strategic Role of Town/District Centres

(a) It is an objective to acknowledge the importance of Town/District Centres in providing a wide range of both convenience and comparison shopping in locations close to significant centres of population.

(b) It is an objective to recognise the need to carefully control the future expansion of suburban District Centres so that the planned development of Cork City Centre and the Metropolitan Towns can be successfully achieved.

(c) It is an objective to plan for retail growth in the Ring and County Towns, in line with planned population growth, underpinning the commercial cores of the towns

Neighbourhood Centres

- 4.3.20 Neighbourhood centres share many characteristics with town/district centres but generally serve smaller, more localised communities. These include various suburbs of Cork, some satellite town centres, suburbs of satellite, ring and county towns or the major rural villages. In the retail sector, there is greater emphasis on food and convenience goods and these centres are typically anchored by a convenience shop, often a supermarket, but also usually include a limited range of comparison shops, service outlets, and possibly retail offices (e.g.: banks) to serve a local need.
- 4.3.21 Whilst the more significant neighbourhood centres are specifically identified in the Cork Retail Centres Hierarchy (see Table 4.2), additional neighbourhood centres may be identified as the need arises, having regard to the provisions of the Joint Retail Strategy.

ECO 3-4 Strategic Role of Neighbourhood Centres

It is an objective to acknowledge the importance of neighbourhood centres in meeting local needs primarily for convenience shopping but also for a limited range of comparison goods.

Local Shops

- 4.3.22 These shops serves immediate local needs only and provide primarily convenience goods within residential, commercial or mixed-use areas. The amount of floor-space provided is small in size and it may be appropriate to group a small number of local shops together to create more sustainable development forms. They may also form the focus of smaller villages where they could serve a rural catchment area.
- 4.3.23 Cork County Council may identify local shopping locations when preparing / reviewing development plans and local area plans but retail development at this scale may, if appropriate, take place as an ancillary element of proposals that are predominantly for other uses (e.g. housing, industry etc.)

ECO 3-5 Strategic Role of Local Shops

It is an objective to acknowledge the importance of local or 'corner' shops in meeting local shopping needs.

Core Shopping Area Boundaries

- 4.3.24 These are usually based around a compact retail core, incorporate a range of other activities, and they rely on high levels of accessibility, particularly for public transport, cyclists, and pedestrians. Centres will provide a range of uses appropriate to their scale and function.
- 4.3.25 In all these centres it is important to develop and maintain a compact core where retail and commercial uses are close enough to each other to benefit from each other's pedestrian flows and to maintain their role, new development must enhance their attractiveness and safety for pedestrians and reinforce the diversity of uses throughout the day and evening.
- 4.3.26 The boundaries to the existing, district, town and neighbourhood centres in the Cork County Council area have been defined in the established primarily town centre / neighbourhood centre land use categories for the main settlements in Volume 3 and Volume 4 of this Development Plan. The appropriate boundaries for the smaller settlements in the Cork County Council area may be identified in local area plans. It is important to identify these core areas so that an appropriate framework of objectives can regulate new development so that it occurs at the correct scale and in the right locations. These areas will form the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development.
- 4.3.27 The preferred location for new retail development where practicable and viable, is within a town centre (or district or major village centre). Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the town centre then consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre so as to encourage the possibility of one journey serving several purposes. An edge of centre site, for the purposes of this Development Plan, is taken to be one which is within an easy and convenient walking distance from the primary shopping core of a town centre. The distance considered to be convenient will vary according to local circumstances but typically is unlikely to be much more than 300-400 metres from the edge of the prime shopping area, and less in smaller settlements.
- 4.3.28 Having assessed the size, availability, accessibility, and feasibility of developing both sites and premises, firstly within a town centre and secondly on the edge of a town centre, alternative out of centre sites should be considered only where it can be demonstrated that there are no town centre or edge of centre sites which are suitable, viable and available. This is commonly known as the sequential approach to the location of retail development.

ECO 3-6 Core Shopping Area Boundaries

(a) It is an objective to ensure that Core shopping areas will form the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development, appropriate to the scale and function of each centre.

(b) It is an objective that where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the core area then consideration can be given to sites on the edge of the core area.

(c) It is an objective that there will be a presumption against retail development in other locations.

The Need For Additional Retail Floor Space

4.3.29 In this strategy, the quantity of additional floor- space required by the market to the year 2011 is based on the findings of The Cork Strategic Retail Study (CSRS) and this is summarised in Table 4.3 (Convenience Shopping) and Table 4.4 (Comparison Shopping and Retail Warehousing) below:

Table 4.3 : Additional Retail Floorspace (Convenience Shopping) 2001 – 2011 (net square meters)

<u>Location</u>	<u>Convenience Shopping 2001-2006</u>	<u>Convenience Shopping 2006-2011</u>	<u>Total Convenience Shopping 2001-2011</u>
Cork City Centre	500	2,000	2,500
Suburbs of Cork	3,500	3,000	6,500
Mahon Point (existing planning permission)	2,800	0	2,800
Metropolitan Cork Towns	5,500	4,500	10,000
Ring Towns	3,000	3,000	6,000
County Towns	1,500	2,000	3,500
TOTAL (Net Square Meters)	16,800	14,500	31,300

Table 4.4 : Additional Retail Floorspace (Comparison Shopping & Retail Warehousing) 2001 – 2011 (net square meters)

<u>Location</u>	<u>Comparison Shopping 2001-2006</u>	<u>Comparison Shopping 2006-2011</u>	<u>Total Comparison Shopping 2001-2011</u>	<u>Retail Warehousing 2001-2011</u>
Cork City Centre	19,000	33,000	52,000	0
Suburbs of Cork	7,000	2,000	9,000	10,500
Mahon Point (existing planning permission)	11,000	0	11,000	6,500
Metropolitan Cork Towns	11,000	8,000	19,000	21,000
Ring Towns	8,000	4,000	12,000	12,000
County Towns	6,000	5,000	11,000	
TOTAL (Net Square Meters)	62,000	52,000	114,000	50,000

4.3.30 The quantities of additional floorspace identified in Tables 4.3 & 4.4 are, generally, to be interpreted as guideline targets. In addition it is considered acceptable to aggregate figures for the two time bands 2001-2006 and 2006-2011 where it is likely that developments will not come on stream till 2006. It will be necessary to monitor and if appropriate adjust these figures over the ten-year period to which they apply to reflect the changes that may occur in Cork City, Cork County and in the retail market. However, in order to encourage the scale of development required, particularly in the city centre and in the metropolitan town centres, there will be a clear presumption against comparison shopping development in the Suburbs of Cork above the guideline targets indicated in Table 4.4.

- 4.3.31 In the towns, development of strong, fully competitive convenience anchors may be a precondition for attracting enough shoppers to support an enhanced comparison role. As a result, the mix of new convenience/comparison space which developers wish to supply may not match projected growth in demand, because they will see large convenience retail outlets as essential anchors for new town centre shopping complexes, while there are some supply constraints on fully meeting demand for comparison space. This may result in a need to permit new convenience space that cumulatively exceeds the convenience allocation for these towns in order that they can also develop as comparison centres. If this proves necessary, the retail property market may offset any resulting imbalance by reallocating less competitive existing convenience space to comparison retailing, thereby reducing the need for new comparison space.

EC0 3-7 Additional Retail Floorspace

(a) It is an objective to ensure that there will be a clear presumption against comparison shopping development in the suburbs above the guideline targets indicated in Table 4.4.

(b) It is an objective to recognise that, in the towns, the development of strong, fully competitive convenience anchors may be a precondition for attracting enough shoppers to support an enhanced comparison role. This may result in a need to permit new convenience space that cumulatively exceeds the convenience allocation for these towns in order that they can also develop as comparison centres.

Strategic Guidance On The Location And Scale Of Retail Development

Cork City Centre

- 4.3.32 At the heart of the future strategy is the need to enable Cork City to perform more effectively as both a high level retail and leisure destination and, in the longer term, to move the City forward to become a truly international City. This longer-term aspiration will take time.
- 4.3.33 The urgent requirement, therefore, is to replicate the recent development activity outside Cork City with new schemes in the City centre, or on its edge. Accordingly, there will be a clear presumption against comparison shopping development in the suburbs of Cork City above the targets indicated in Table 4.4.
- 4.3.34 In the period up to 2006, in Table 4.3, it is notable that there is only a limited requirement for additional convenience development in the City Centre. After this period, it may be appropriate to develop a medium sized food-store or food-hall, perhaps associated with new commercial or residential development associated with planned growth in the central area population.

Cork Suburbs

- 4.3.35 The new district centre at Mahon Point is under construction and this will meet short-term demands for comparison floorspace. The additional comparison floorspace proposed for the suburban areas of the city will allow for the limited expansion of the three district centre locations at Blackpool, Douglas and Wilton, as well as allowing for the development of some lower grade comparison floorspace within the neighbourhood centres.
- 4.3.36 Once the development of the Mahon Point centre is complete, there will be little potential for additional large-scale foodstore provision in the suburbs of Cork, although there is some remaining potential for smaller scale expansions. Within the Cork City suburbs there should be a reasonable distribution of the available floor-space between the three existing district centres, in order to avoid an imbalance of provision and ensure equality of access.

Metropolitan Cork Towns

4.3.37 Development should be focussed in the key main Metropolitan towns and not dissipated to peripheral fringes of the Metropolitan area. Ballincollig to the west and Midleton to the east of Cork are the major centres into which such provision should be allocated. Blarney and Cobh can accommodate additional floorspace serving the tourism market. Carrigaline is also a strong retail centre, which has capacity to accommodate a reasonably balanced expansion of comparison along with the convenience expansion. Development should be spread between these towns.

Centres Outside Metropolitan Cork

4.3.38 There is also scope for expansion of the ring and county town centres in response to planned population growth. Priority will be given to those locations that serve a particularly important strategic role or have a clearly defined rural catchment area.

EC0 3-8 Location and Scale of Additional Retail Floorspace

(a) It is an objective to promote Cork City Centre as the prime location for new retail development, particularly, higher order comparison shopping.

(b) It is an objective that within the Cork City Suburbs, the available floor-space should be distributed around the three existing district centres, in order to avoid an imbalance of provision.

(c) It is an objective that within the Metropolitan Cork Towns, the available floor-space should be distributed among the main centres at Ballincollig, Midleton and Carrigaline, whilst also allowing for new floorspace at the principal neighbourhood centres, in order to avoid an imbalance of provision.

(d) It is an objective to encourage an appropriate mix of convenience and comparison shopping in the Ring towns and county towns outside Metropolitan Cork.

Retail Warehouses and Retail Parks

4.3.39 Retail warehouses are large single-level stores specialising in the sale of household goods and bulky items catering mainly for car-borne customers. They have a maximum size of 6,000 square metres and a minimum size of 700 square metres, and there will be a presumption against their sub-division resulting in units less than this minimum. This plan requires that the range of goods sold be restricted only to the sale of bulky household goods including carpets, furniture, automotive products, white electrical goods and DIY items, garden materials, office and industrial plant and equipment but excluding the sale of goods which are not bulky such as food, clothing, and footwear items.

4.3.40 Retail parks, typically involve the development of three, or more, retail warehouses, together comprising 8,000–15,000 square metres, around a shared car park. They can be anchored by a single unit of up to 6,000 square metres (including garden centre). There can be benefits in grouping retail warehouses selling bulky goods on planned retail parks so that the number of trips by car are minimised and outside the town centre so that there is relief from additional traffic within a congested town centre.

4.3.41 Cork is underprovided for in terms of modern retail warehouse formats, when compared with other regions in Ireland. The majority of existing retail warehousing is located in the Cork City Suburbs and is predominantly provided in converted industrial or warehouse units, which do not offer a sufficiently attractive retail environment that is not an appropriate form of provision.

4.3.42 Particularly outside the City and its suburbs, there is concern that poorly planned retail warehouses could seriously undermine the, sometimes, fragile comparison shopping

element in many town centres. Where the range of goods sold from retail warehouse parks extends to the type of non-bulky durables which are normally retailed from town centres then there is much more potential for an adverse impact on a nearby town centre. Yet properly planned, retail warehouses can add to the overall shopping attraction of any place.

- 4.3.43 In this strategy the preferred location for all new retail development is within the core shopping areas of the city, town and district centres. However, in general, retail warehouses do not fit easily into city and town centres, given their size requirements and the need for good car parking facilities and ease of servicing. There may, however, be suitable locations for retail warehouses or parks at the edge of town or district centres.
- 4.3.44 Within the suburbs of Cork, (in addition to that being developed at Mahon Point) 10,500 square metres of new retail warehouse floorspace is proposed for the period to 2011.
- 4.3.45 In the Metropolitan Cork towns, 21,000 square metres of new retail warehouse floorspace is proposed for the period to 2011. Here, self-standing individual retail warehouse units could be more easily assimilated as part of town centre or edge of centre development.
- 4.3.46 In the ring and county towns, 12,000 square metres of new retail warehouse floorspace are proposed for the period to 2011. In these locations, self-standing individual retail warehouse units could be more easily assimilated as part of town centre or edge of centre development.
- 4.3.47 Not only must applications for development demonstrate that they will not impact on existing centres, they should also show that, taking into account the location of the proposed development, they will add to the centres overall attractiveness for shopping. In addition, proposals must also show that they are accessible by public transport, and that there is sufficient capacity in the road network to accommodate the development.

ECO 3-9 Retail Warehousing and Retail Parks

(a) It is an objective that Planning permissions granted will be restricted to the range of goods referred to in paragraph 4.3.36 and so as to prevent the subdivision of units below the minimum also quoted in that paragraph

(b) It is an objective that Applications for planning permission must demonstrate that not only will the proposal not impact on existing centres, but it will add to the centres overall attractiveness for shopping.

(c) It an objective that in addition, proposals must also show that they are accessible by public transport, and that there is sufficient capacity in the road network to accommodate the development.

- 4.3.47(i) Cork County Council intends, where necessary, to prepare policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres, using such tools as town centre management and traffic management initiatives.

Town Centre Management is important to maximise the various town centre uses in a safe, accessible and effective way, it sets out clear objectives and achievable action for town improvement through a partnership of key stakeholders, sharing aspirations, expertise and resources to create a holistic plan to meet local needs and strengthen regional interests.

Traffic Management Policies should be a set of principles and criteria designed to ensure a high standard of access by public transport, foot and private car so that retail proposals can be easily accessible by all modes of transport and all sections of society. An important consideration is to achieve improvements to the quality of the public realm in town centres

so that having accessed a retail destination shoppers can circulate easily and safely on foot in an attractive pedestrian environment.

Assessing New Retail Development

- 4.3.48 The Retail Planning Guidelines set out general principles for assessing new retail proposals. The planning authorities will implement these through the inclusion of appropriate objectives in this development plan.
- 4.3.49 The local authorities have agreed that the preferred location for retail development is within existing centres. The general scale and nature of retail development that is appropriate to such centres in Cork is set out in this strategy. Proposals for development that conflict with the strategy will not, normally, be permitted.

ECO 3-10 Assessment of Retail Development Proposals

(a) It is an objective that the planning authorities will implement the provisions for the Retail Planning Guidelines through the inclusion of appropriate objectives in this development plan. .

(b) It is an objective that the local authorities have agreed that the preferred location for retail development is within a city centre, a suburban district centre, town centre or designated neighbourhood or local centre.

(c) It is an objective that there will be a presumption against development that conflicts with this strategy.

Discount Format Convenience Retailing

- 4.3.50 This format of retailing is considered complementary to supermarkets and larger superstores and adds variety and competition in the retail market. Discount stores have been successfully accommodated in a number of towns throughout County Cork and provide a scale and form of development which can be physically accommodated within or on the edge of town / district centres or neighbourhood centres.

Factory Outlet Centres

- 4.3.51 This form of retailing is not part of the retail provision in County Cork and is inappropriate near higher order comparison centres because they compete directly with fashion orientated retail outlets. This is a niche format, which could be accommodated, in special circumstances in or close to smaller towns that have an established tourism function where they can strengthen the town and create commercial linkages.

Petrol Filling Station Convenience Facilities

- 4.3.52 This sector is a rapidly expanding form of retailing. The preferred location for petrol filling stations is often designated in development plans as being on the edge of town or village and close to the speed limit. The normally accepted upper limit on the convenience element is 100 square metres net floor area. This scale of provision will not always be accommodated, particularly in smaller villages, where such provision of convenience floorspace out of centre would cause significant trade diversion from existing village centres.

Monitoring And Review Of Strategy

- 4.3.53 The National Retail Planning Guidelines advise the relevant planning authorities to regularly monitor trends in their area and update retail policies if appropriate. A monitoring system will be put in place by the city and county authorities to ensure that any necessary adjustments in policy can be made.

- 4.3.54 Having regard to currently evolving market trends throughout Ireland in the retail warehousing sector and conscious of the prospect that a review of national policy in this sector may be necessary in the short-term, both authorities will review the quantitative and locational parameters for retail warehousing in the Cork retail strategy by 31st of December 2004.

3 Changes to Chapter 9 of Volume 1

3.1. In the section, Residential Areas, paragraph 9.3.6 has been amended by deleting the second part of the paragraph as shown below:

~~9.3.6 New Residential Areas are intended primarily for housing development but may also include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to foster the development of new residential communities. These are uses that benefit from a close relationship to the immediate community and have high standards of amenity, such as crèches, some schools, nursing homes or elderly peoples' homes, open space, recreation and amenity uses. Occasional small convenience shops, with a floor space (less than approximately 500 square metres and limited adjacent car parking) can also provide valuable services to the community. Paragraph about Retailing in Residential Areas.~~

so that paragraph 9.3.6 reads as follows

9.3.6 New Residential Areas are intended primarily for housing development but may also include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to foster the development of new residential communities. These are uses that benefit from a close relationship to the immediate community and have high standards of amenity, such as crèches, some schools, nursing homes or elderly peoples' homes, open space, recreation and amenity uses.

3.2. In the section, Residential Areas, the following new paragraph has been inserted after paragraph 9.3.6:

9.3.6 (i) Occasional retailing may be appropriate in new residential areas. This should be of limited scale to provide valuable services to the local community and support the overall residential function of the area. Consideration should be given to the introduction of a residential element to these proposals, possibly at first floor level.

3.3. In the section, Town Centres, Neighbourhood Centres and Other Centres, with reference to town centres, the following new paragraphs have been inserted after paragraph 9.3.15 in the section referring to new town centres:

9.3.15 (i) The preferred location for new retail development where practicable and viable, is within a town centre (or district or major village centre). Where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the town centre then consideration can be given to a site on the edge of the town centre so as to encourage the possibility of one journey serving several purposes. An edge of centre site, for the purposes of this Development Plan, is taken to be one which is within an easy and convenient walking distance from the primary shopping core of a town centre. The distance considered to be convenient will vary according to local circumstances but typically is unlikely to be much more than 300-400 metres from the edge of the prime shopping area, and less in smaller settlements.

9.3.15 (ii) Having assessed the size, availability, accessibility, and feasibility of developing both sites and premises, firstly within a town centre and secondly on the edge of a town centre, alternative out of centre sites should be considered only where it can be demonstrated that there are no town centre or edge of centre sites which are suitable, viable and available. This is commonly known as the sequential approach to the location of retail development.

3.4. In the section, Town Centres, Neighbourhood Centres and Other Centres, paragraph 9.3.18, referring to neighbourhood centres, has been amended by adding additional text shown in bold below:

9.3.18 Neighbourhood Centres share many characteristics with town centres but generally serve smaller communities in **small towns**, villages or suburbs within larger urban areas and particularly in the retail sector, there is greater emphasis on food and convenience goods. They are located near or adjacent to residential areas and may include an element of housing particularly at higher densities and above ground floor level.

so that paragraph 9.3.18 reads as follows:

9.3.18 Neighbourhood Centres share many characteristics with town centres but generally serve smaller communities in small towns, villages or suburbs within larger urban areas and particularly in the retail sector, there is greater emphasis on food and convenience goods. They are located near or adjacent to residential areas and may include an element of housing particularly at higher densities and above ground floor level.

3.5. The sub-heading '**Other Shopping Centres**' between paragraph 9.3.21 and paragraph 9.3.22 has been deleted.

3.6. paragraph 9.3.25 has been amended by adding additional text shown in bold below:

9.3.25 Proposals to increase the scale and density of retail and service uses in these other centres will be assessed in relation to relevant planning considerations including the Council's retail strategy, **as outlined in Chapter 4, Section 4.3**, and the traffic and transportation impacts of the proposed development. Control will be exercised through these means, rather than the amount of land subject to this descriptive zoning. Any proposals for development should exploit opportunities to improve access by pedestrians and public transport.

so that paragraph 9.3.25 reads as follows:

9.3.25 Proposals to increase the scale and density of retail and service uses in these other centres will be assessed in relation to relevant planning considerations including the Council's retail strategy, as outlined in Chapter 4, Section 4.3, and the traffic and transportation impacts of the proposed development. Control will be exercised through these means, rather than the amount of land subject to this descriptive zoning. Any proposals for development should exploit opportunities to improve access by pedestrians and public transport.

3.7. Objective ZON 3-8 has been amended by adding the additional text shown in bold below:

ZON 3-8 Appropriate Uses: Town and Neighbourhood Centres

a) It is an objective to promote the development of town & neighbourhood centres as the primary locations for retail and other uses that provide goods or services principally to visiting members of the public. **Core shopping areas will form the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development, appropriate to the scale and function of each centre.**

b) It is an objective to recognise that where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the core area then consideration can be given to sites on the edge of the core area.

so that objective ZON 3-8 reads as follows:

ZON 3-8 Appropriate Uses: Town and Neighbourhood Centres

a) It is an objective to promote the development of town & neighbourhood centres as the primary locations for retail and other uses that provide goods or services principally to visiting members of the public. Core shopping areas will form the primary focus and preferred location for new retail development, appropriate to the scale and function of each centre.

b) It is an objective to recognise that where it is not possible to provide the form and scale of development that is required on a site within the core area then consideration can be given to sites on the edge of the core area.

3.8. In the section, Commercial Areas, paragraph 9.3.32 has been emended by deleting the second part of the paragraph as shown below and adding the text shown in bold below:

9.3.32 Proposals, particularly those involving retail uses, will need to be assessed in relation to a number of considerations including the Council's Retail Strategy as outlined in **Chapter 4, Section 4.3**, and their impact on the vibrancy and importance of town and neighbourhood centres. ~~Until the Council's proposed Retail Strategy is approved and published, it is not intended that the new or established commercial areas identified in the plan should provide for new, purpose built, retail warehouse complexes. The need and appropriate locations for this form of development will be identified in the light of the Retail Strategy.~~

so that paragraph 9.3.32 reads as follows:

9.3.32 Proposals, particularly those involving retail uses, will need to be assessed in relation to a number of considerations including the Council's Retail Strategy as outlined in Chapter 4, Section 4.3, and their impact on the vibrancy and importance of town and neighbourhood centres.

3.9. In the section, Commercial Areas, the sub-heading 'Retail Warehouse Development' has been added after paragraph 9.3.33, and the following new paragraphs have been included:

9.3.33 (i) Retail warehouses are large single-level stores specialising in the sale of household goods and bulky items catering mainly for car-borne customers. They have a maximum size of 6,000 square metres and a minimum

size of 700 square metres, and there will be a presumption against their sub-division resulting in units less than this minimum.

9.3.33 (ii) The range of goods sold to be restricted only to the sale of bulky household goods including carpets, furniture, automotive products, white electrical goods and DIY items, garden materials, office and industrial plant and equipment but excluding the sale of goods which are not bulky such as food, clothing and footwear items.

9.3.33 (iii) Retail parks, typically involve the development of three, or more, retail warehouses, together comprising 8,000 – 15,000 square metres, around a shared car park. They can be anchored by a single unit of up to 6,000 square metres (including garden centre). There can be benefits in grouping retail warehouses selling bulky goods on planned retail parks so that number of trips by car are minimised and outside the town centre so that there is relief from additional traffic within a congested town centre.

9.3.33 (iv) Particularly outside the City and its suburbs, there is concern that poorly planned retail warehouses could seriously undermine the, sometimes, fragile comparison shopping element in many town centres. Where the range of goods sold from retail warehouse parks extends to the type of non-bulky durables which are normally retailed from town centres then there is much more potential for an adverse impact on a nearby town centre. Yet properly planned, retail warehouses can add to the overall shopping attraction of any place.

3.10. It New objectives ZON 3-12A and ZON 3-12B have been included as follows:

ZON 3-12A Retail Warehouse: Scale of Development

a) It is an objective to ensure that the maximum Retail Warehouse size is 6,000 square metres and the minimum Retail Warehouse unit size is 700 square metres and that there is a presumption against the sub-division of units resulting in a unit size less than this minimum.

b) It is an objective to ensure that proposals for retail warehouse parks should, typically, involve the development of three, or more, retail warehouses, together comprising 8,000 – 15,000 square metres, around a shared car park and anchored a by a single unit of up to 6,000 square metres (including garden centre).

ZON 3-12B Retail Warehouse: Range of Goods

It is an objective to restrict the range of goods sold in Retail Warehouse Units to the sale of bulky household goods including carpets, furniture, automotive products, white electrical goods and DIY items, garden materials, office and industrial plant and equipment but excluding the sale of goods which are not bulky such as food, clothing and footwear items.

ZON 3-14 Appropriate Uses – Enterprise Areas

Objective ZON 3-14 has been amended by adding additional text shown in bold below::

It is an objective to promote the development of Enterprise areas as the primary locations for the development of employment uses that are inappropriate to town centres and require environmental standards higher than those in industrial areas, such as office based industry and business parks. The development of inappropriate uses, such as industry and retailing will not, normally, be encouraged. Non-retail general offices will also be discouraged unless, on a case-by-case basis, it can be demonstrated that suitable premises or sites are not available in city or town centres and that the area as a whole generally remains in enterprise uses.

Having regard to the provisions of EU Block Exemption dated 1st October, 2002, the Council considers it necessary to make provision for the possible location of car showroom automall developments within Enterprise Areas.

In assessing the suitability of any such proposal the Council will take into consideration the supply of car showroom automalls in the general area the overall scale and design of the proposed development, together with the proximity of the proposed location to National Primary Routes and / or centres of population, provided always that any such development will not be detrimental to the predominant designation of such Enterprise Areas.