

Aim: To protect and enhance the landscape and natural environment of the city



Introduction

- 10.1** With the intensification of the city its landscape and natural heritage assets are of huge importance to those living, working and visiting Cork. They are vital to quality of life, are non-renewable assets and help enhance the attractiveness and image of the city.
- 10.2** Cork City has an attractive physical setting formed by the Lee Valley and Estuary and the ridges rising to the north and south. These features are supplemented by a range of public open spaces and parks, walkways, public and private spaces (including sports grounds), views in and out of the city, biodiversity, trees and tree groups, which combine to form the natural backdrop for the built environment. The River Lee runs west to east through the heart of the city interacting with both the natural and built heritage to give a unique and distinctive character. The city's waterways also include environmental areas of national importance that are designated for protection.
- 10.3** The distribution of landscape, natural heritage and recreational assets (detailed in Chapter 11) around the city is vitally important to creating an accessible city. All areas of the city should have access to nature, parks, public open space and sports facilities within 5-10 minutes of their place of residence/work.
- 10.4** The City Council will strive to create a network of natural heritage areas and recreational open spaces/amenity areas by promoting linkages and accessibility between these areas and by using walkways/cycleways to connect them where appropriate. Linkages will serve to provide higher accessibility for the wider community to green areas, provide more interaction and recreation on these sites and strengthen the existing walkways and cycleways while also supporting the City Council's general objective of encouraging alternative transportation modes.

Overall objectives

- To promote the sustainable use and management of the landscape and natural heritage of the city;
- To integrate natural heritage and recreation facilities to form a combined resource;
- To protect and enhance the landscape and the natural heritage;
- To improve social and physical access to the natural heritage and recreational facilities of the city.

POLICY 10.1

Landscape and Natural Heritage

To ensure that Cork's landscape and natural heritage are preserved and enhanced, and that the overall combined potential and value of the network of open spaces and related assets within the city is recognised, retained and enhanced.

Landscape

Introduction

- 10.5** Under Section 10(2)(e) of the *Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006* the Planning Authority is required to include objectives in the Development Plan to preserve the character of the landscape where the proper planning and sustainable development of Cork requires it. This should include the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest.
- 10.6** In line with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government's *Draft Landscape and Landscape Assessment Guidelines (2000)*, the City Council recognises a broad view of the landscape, embracing its complexity of form and character. One commonly held definition of landscape is: *"Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors"* (*European Landscape Convention, 2000*).



- 10.7** The preservation of the landscape can be secured in various ways (Development Plan Guidelines, DoEHLG, 2007), including:
- Zoning designations - Zoning designations should be based upon an assessment of the landscape character of the city and;
 - Other statutory and non-statutory designations, including those available under the Planning Acts (Areas of Special Amenity, Tree Preservation Orders, Landscape Conservation Areas for the preservation of landscapes, etc.) and EU designations.

- 10.8** Landscape protection zonings have been present in Cork City Development Plans since the 1970s. The City Council, as the Planning Authority, commissioned consultants to prepare the Cork City Landscape Study 2008 to further inform the development of landscape and natural heritage plan policy.

Landscape Objectives

- 10.9** The overall objectives of this section of the plan emanate from the Planning statute and the Cork City Landscape Study 2008:
- To preserve and enhance Cork's special Landscape Character and to implement the Landscape Structure Plan;
 - To preserve and enhance Cork's Landscape Assets and Key Landscape Sites;
 - To preserve and enhance Cork's Views and Prospects of Special Amenity Value;
 - To enable the creation of new landscapes of excellence that will have a positive impact on the overall landscape.

Strategic Context

- 10.10** Relevant documents and policies in relation to Cork City's Landscape include the following:
- *Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) 2001-2020 and CASP Update 2008*;
 - *Cork County Landscape Character Assessment and Cork County Development Plan 2009*;
 - Natural Heritage and Recreation documents referenced in chapters 10 and 11;
 - *Landscape and Landscape Assessment: Consultation Draft of Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoEHLG, 2000)*.

Cork City Landscape Study 2008

- 10.11** In 2007 Cork City Council commissioned the preparation of the Cork Landscape Study 2008 from Mitchell + Associates. This study had no direct precedents in Ireland as the object was not to prepare a "Landscape Character Assessment" usually applied to rural counties but to develop an urban landscape vision that:
- Identified Cork's Landscape Character;
 - Identified Cork's Landscape Assets and a Landscape Structure;
 - Identified Cork's key Landscape Sites and how to protect them in perpetuity.
- 10.12** The Study aimed to establish the principles and provide the framework for protecting and enhancing the natural environment and positively managing its change, as well as providing the context within which the design of developments can take place in an appropriate manner.
- 10.13** The methodology for the Cork City Landscape Study 2008 was in three clear stages:
- Landscape Character Assessment - establishing broad units of area with grouped aesthetic, perceptual and boundary qualities;
 - Landscape Analysis of the Key Landscape Elements using a Sieve Map methodology, and considering: Topography; Slope Analysis; Water in the city; Tree Distribution and Protection; Open Space Categories; The Visual Landscape; Natural Conservation Areas; The Urban Structure; Vehicular Routes and Green Routes; and
 - Identification of Landscape Assets, Consideration of Key Sites and formulation of Policy Recommendations.

Cork City's Landscape Character and Key Landscape Assets

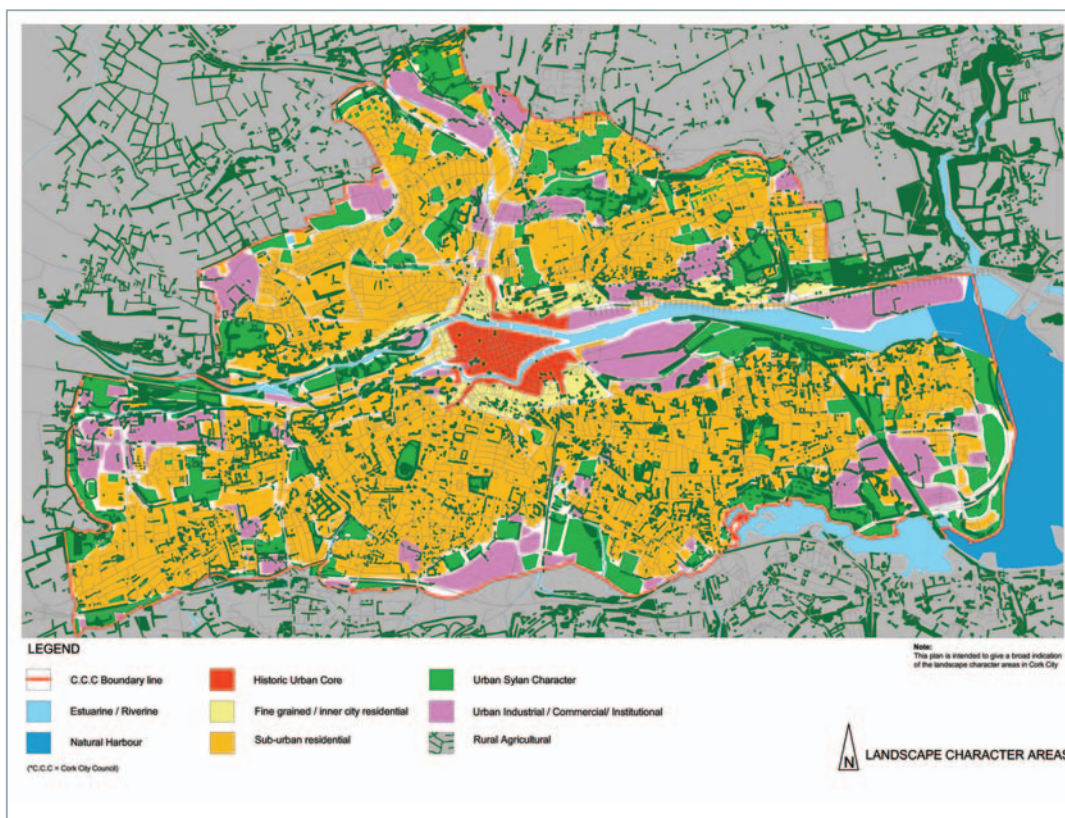
10.14 Cork has a unique and distinctive landscape that forms a key aspect of the city's character. Within cities such as Cork, landscape character involves the combination and interplay of many elements, including: the landscape; built environment; riverscape and natural heritage. Landscape is largely a non-renewable resource and therefore it is in the city's interest to ensure that the city's landscape assets that remain are protected for future generations for their visual, functional, natural heritage and other values. Many of Cork's landscape assets, and particularly those that have an open "greenfield" character, have been lost over a period of time. Given the diminishing supply of non-renewable landscape assets the City Council has sought to review the existing landscape policy and to provide a clear policy basis for protecting those remaining assets.

10.15 Cork City falls within the Cork City and Harbour landscape character type identified in the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) of Cork County (Mosart, 2003). The west of the city is abutted directly by the Broad Fertile Lowland Valley landscape character type of the River Lee Valley (and tributaries). The overall characteristics of the City Harbour and Estuary Character Type are determined by the interplay of the city and its urban, industrial and commercial developments, the extensive natural harbour, estuaries and the River Lee.

10.16 The Cork City Landscape Character Assessment in the Study defines the following Landscape Character Areas, which are illustrated in Figure 10.1 below and defined as follows:

- Estuarine/Riverine
- Natural Harbour
- Historic Urban Core
- Fine-grained Inner City Residential
- Sub-urban residential
- Urban Sylvan Character
- Urban Industrial/Commercial
- Rural Agricultural

Figure 10.1 Landscape Character Areas



Landscape Structure Plan and Key Landscape Assets

10.17 The key landscape assets that combine to create the unique and distinctive cityscape are identified in Table 10.1:

Table 10.1 Landscape Assets Categories

Ref	Assets Category
A	Topography - ridges, escarpments, slopes.
B	Water/River Corridors - rivers, estuary, harbour, The Lough, Atlantic Pond, Docklands, Port of Cork.
C	Tree Canopy - Areas with existing woodlands or significant tree groups, or areas with potential for new woodlands.
D	Ecology - areas which provide a habitat for wild flora and fauna.
E	Visually Important Land (including Views and Prospects of Special Amenity Value, Potential Vantage Points and Locally Important Views).
F	Historic Core/Townscapes/Streetscapes.
G	Landmarks/Natural Features/Cultural Landscape - land forming the setting to existing landmark buildings and/or protected structures/buildings of significance.
H	Public and Private Open Space footprint, including land with potential for Public Open Space.
I	Institutional Open Space footprint.
J	Historic Landscapes (including monuments/historic routes).
K	Rural Character/Green Belt - proximity of rural and agricultural land uses to the city.
L	Built Form
M	Public Realm
O	Gateways to the City.
P	Bridges
Q	Pedestrian/Cycle Routes in the City/Access.
R	Vehicular Access
S	The Railway in the City.

(Source: Cork City Landscape Study 2008)

10.18 The key landscape assets are illustrated in the Conceptual Landscape Structure Plan in Figure 10.2 (overleaf), which clearly shows the primary importance of the topography/ridgelines and the riverscape/corridor in the landscape character of the city.

10.19 Cork City is characterised by dramatic topographical changes and prominent ridges, forming a bowl within which the city lies and providing a series of striking viewpoints from which the city can be viewed. On the Northside, the ridges in the Shanakiel, Tivoli and Montenotte areas form dramatic backdrops to the River Lee as it runs through the city. At the northern gateway to the city, there are prominent ridges on both sides of the Blackpool Valley, particularly in the Farranferris and Commons areas. To the south of the city, the Maryborough Hill/Rochestown/Grange Ridge overlooks the Douglas Estuary, just outside the city boundary.

10.20 These ridge landscapes are extremely important to the character of Cork, particularly where they remain as undeveloped green landscapes occupied by trees, tree groups and woodlands, and where they occupy the highest points on the landscape. Other historic areas of the city, such as Wellington Road, Tivoli and Sunday's Well, successfully combine built form with the landscape. Where buildings occupy the ridge, trees often make a very important contribution to their character by providing a softening of the slope and the ridges themselves. The significance of the ridges to the overall appearance of Cork is recognised through landscape protection and the protected views and prospects of special amenity value. The County Council also protects elements of the southern ridge through the Cork County Development Plan.

Figure 10.2 Conceptual Landscape Structure Plan

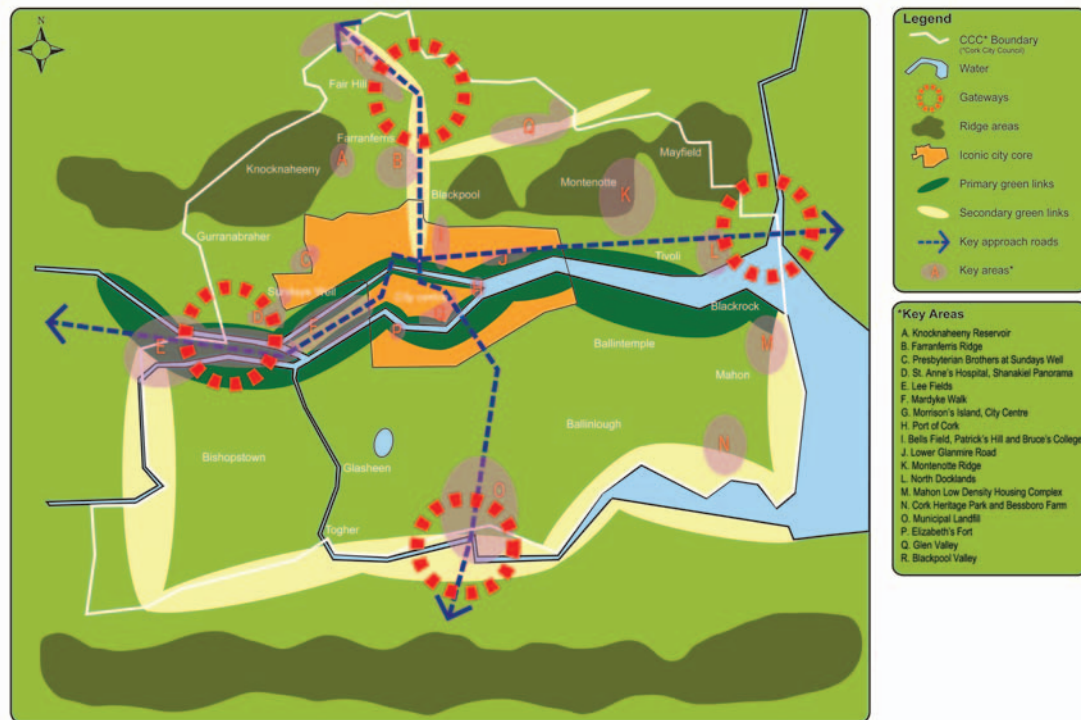
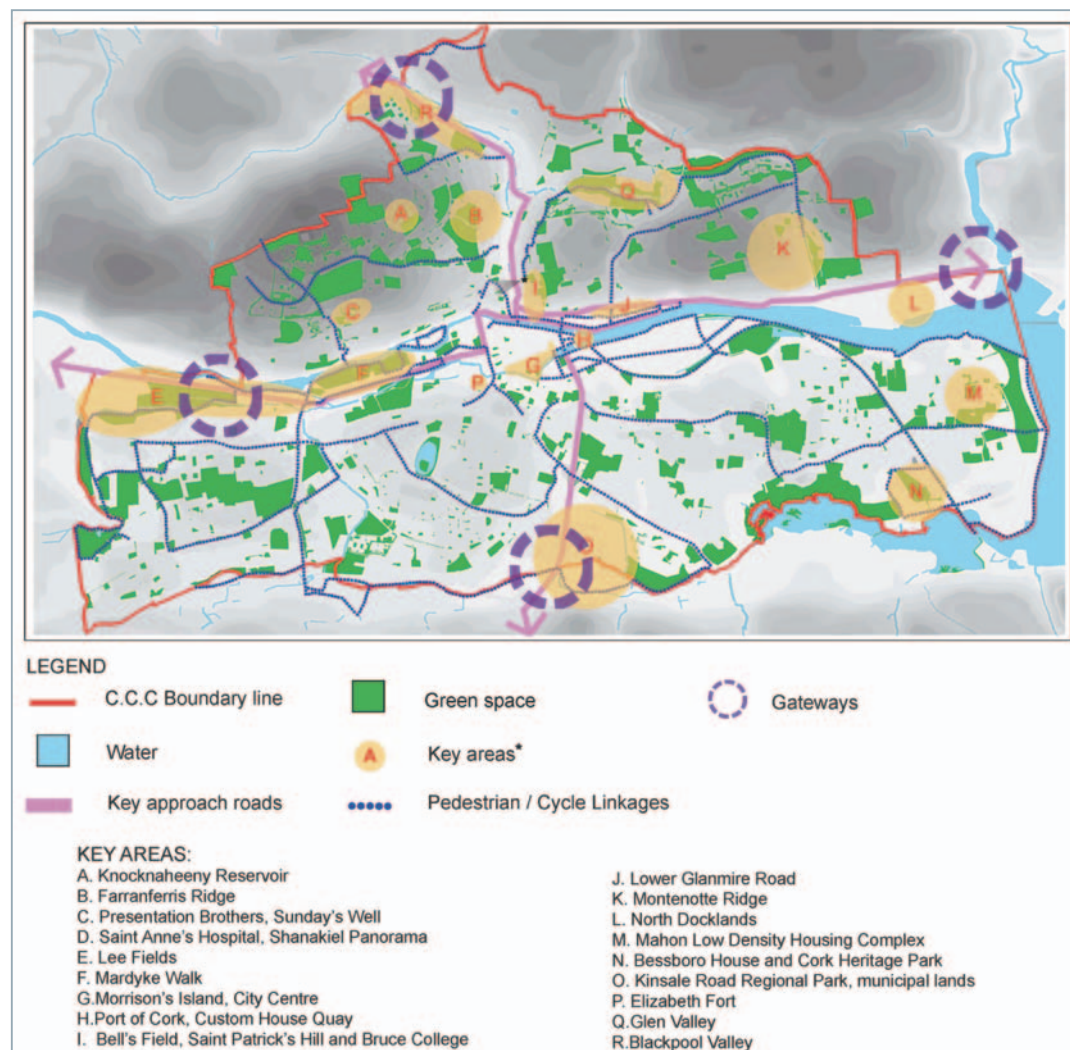


Figure 10.3 Functional Landscape Structure Plan





Enhancing Cork's landscape: Landmark Landscape Projects

10.21 The City Council will take into account recommendations from the *Cork City Landscape Study 2008* when prioritising proposals for the enhancement of Cork's landscape through the development management process and through its own activities. In particular, this will involve developing:

- The **Primary Green links** - The River Lee Corridor (north and south channels), extending from the Lee Fields to Douglas Estuary, the objective being to develop and enhance this area as Cork's "City Park" with a series of public parks and accessible spaces linked by a continual linear park and walkway (see Chapter 11: Sports and Recreation);
- The **Secondary Green Links** - These green links extend along Cork's secondary river tributaries to provide the focus for the development of new parks and upgraded landscapes with improved public access. In some cases the link will form an organising element for major new development (e.g. the Blackpool Valley);
- The **Key Landscape Areas** - Landscape and Urban Design Frameworks are needed for the following key landscape areas to provide a vision for their development and improvement: Knocknaheeny Reservoir; The Glen Valley; Tivoli; Custom House Point; the proposed City Park at the Landfill Site; Elizabeth Fort; and Saint Anne's Hospital and ridge. The City Council will prepare frameworks as resources allow.
- **New urban woodlands** - Seven areas of the city have been identified as having very low tree canopy densities and they require significant tree planting to improve their landscape quality and attractiveness:
 - Cork City Centre/Docklands
 - Gurranabraher
 - Knocknaheeny/Fair Hill
 - Blackpool/Ballyvolane
 - Tivoli Docks and Industrial Estate
 - Ballinure/Mahon
 - South Ring West Business Park and the Municipal Landfill Site
- The **City Gateways** are of major landscape and urban design value to the City Council and County Council, and will require joint approaches to their preservation and enhancement. These gateways are considered in Chapter 14: Suburban Areas and Chapter 16: Urban Design.

POLICY 10.2

Enhancing Cork's Landscape: Landmark Landscape Projects

To develop projects to enhance Cork City's Landscape as outlined in paragraph 10.21, and illustrated in the Structure Plan.

POLICY 10.3

Cork City Landscape

To preserve and enhance Cork's unique and distinctive landscape character and assets, as set out in Table 10.1.

POLICY 10.4

Cork City Landscape Structure Plan

To apply the Landscape Structure Plan set out in Figure 10.2 and 10.3, in landscape protection and in developing proposals for landscape projects.

Landscape Protection

10.22 The Council will take a proactive approach to the landscape with policies that seek to conserve and enhance the strongly distinctive landscape character of the city by protecting landscape elements of significance that are either intrinsically important or contribute to the general amenity of Cork City. Landscape assets are a non-renewable resource that the City Council will seek to protect. Policies for

the protection of significant landscape assets are outlined below. The Planning Authority will progress proposals to protect significant tree groups in these landscape assets by means of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), as resources allow (see section on Trees and Urban Woodlands).

- 10.23** Planning applications within areas benefiting from landscape protection must meet specific standards and in particular demonstrate by means of a design statement that includes a landscape assessment and visual impact assessment (see Chapter 17: Development Management) the impact on the landscape of the proposals. The City Council will seek discretionary Environmental Impact Assessments on all developments that it considers would be likely to have a negative impact on the landscape.



Areas of High Landscape Value

- 10.24** The City Council will seek to protect Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV) within the city. These areas comprise one, or more, landscape assets identified in the Cork Landscape Study 2008 and typically combine one of the primary landscape assets (Topography, River Corridor and Tree Cover) with other landscape assets. They all display special intrinsic landscape character and are usually also of special amenity value.
- 10.25** These areas of the city have high landscape character and visual amenity that it is important to conserve and enhance by landscape structure that responds appropriately to its context and the site's landscape assets. New development will be appropriate in these areas providing it has a neutral or positive impact on the landscape by adopting design responses that are both sensitive and imaginative. Many of the areas combine strong built form with a strong landscape character (e.g. on the ridges) but typically built form is secondary to landscape form and character. All development in these areas must be designed to be landscape-dominated and incidental to the landscape character and appearance of the area in the medium-to-long-term as the landscape matures. Many areas of the city have steep slopes that are not appropriate for development due to the impact of excavation to provide for construction and access which can have a negative impact on the intrinsic landscape character.
- 10.26** The key Areas of Special Landscape Value, illustrated in Suburban Maps 4-10, are shown by means of an overlay. Development complying with the landscape objective may take place according to the underlying zoning objective. The areas are:
- Montenotte/Tivoli Ridge;
 - Shanakiel Ridge/Sunday's Well Ridge;
 - Blackpool Valley;
 - The River Lee Corridor (west);
 - Lough Mahon/Douglas Estuary;
 - River Lee/Curragheen River;



Landscape Preservation Zones

- 10.27** These areas are landscape sites and assets which have limited or no development potential, typically because their landscape character combines distinctive topography/slope, tree cover, setting to historic structures/other types of open spaces and other landscape assets. The objective is to preserve and enhance the landscape character and assets of the sites. Development in these sites is limited in scope and character to the Specific Objectives outlined in this chapter. Exceptionally, limited scope for development potential exists to enable existing occupiers to adapt their existing buildings to evolving requirements, providing development is compatible with the landscape character of the area. This limited scope might include changes of use and minor extensions.

Landscape Conservation Areas

- 10.28** The Planning Authority will explore the potential and benefits of designating one, or more, Landscape Conservation Areas under Section 204 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2006 for the purposes of preserving Cork's unique and distinctive landscape character.

POLICY 10.5

Areas of High Landscape Value

To conserve and enhance the special landscape character and visual amenity of the Areas of High Landscape Value through the control of development to ensure that all development is landscape dominated and in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. Development will be permitted providing it does not cause unacceptable harm to the area. Proposals will not be permitted if they:

- Cause significant harm to the intrinsic character of the Areas of High Landscape Value and its important landscape assets, sites and features;
- Cause undue visual intrusion in the landscape;
- Harm local and strategic views of significance;
- Break the existing ridge silhouette;
- Are inconsistent with the local character of built form;
- Harm the setting of buildings, structures or other landmark features;
- Harm the historic value of the landscape;
- Harm the ecological value of the landscape and wildlife habitats;
- Cause harm to the landscape and tree structure of a site and its landscape assets.

POLICY 10.6

Landscape Preservation Zones

To preserve and enhance the special landscape character and visual amenity of Landscape Preservation Zones there will be a presumption against development within them. Development will be considered only where it achieves the Specific Objectives set out in Table 10.2.

POLICY 10.7

Landscape Conservation Areas

To consider the potential for the designation of one or more Landscape Conservation Areas in Cork to provide a statutory designation to landscapes within the city of national, regional and local significance.

Specific Objectives Relating to Landscape Preservation Zones

- 10.29** Areas in need of special protection due to their sensitive character have been identified as Landscape Preservation Zones (LPZ). Table 10.2 (overleaf) provides a schedule of the Landscape Preservation Zones and the Landscape Assets that each is trying to protect, and includes Specific Objectives where they apply. The Landscape Assets that each LPZ is seeking to preserve are identified and alphabetised in Table 10.1. Where preservation is not the sole objective, specific objectives are also identified for each site in Table 10.2.

Table 10.2 (Part 1) Schedule of Objectives applying to Landscape Preservation Zones

Map Zone	Ref	Landscape Preservation Zone (general name)	Landscape Assets to be protected (see table 10.1)	Site Specific Objectives
NORTH-WEST				
NW	1	Shanakiel Ridge (1)	G,A,E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide public open space as part of new neighbourhood park; • To allow a small amount of residential development to overlook this public open space (fronting westwards behind the existing houses) minimising the impact on the setting of Our Lady's Hospital; • To retain limestone field boundary wall as landscape element and repair/reinstate where necessary; • To ensure landscape structure maximises the potential of the stream and other assets.
NW	2	Shanakiel Ridge (2)/Our Lady's Hospital/Saint Anne's Hospital	G,A,C,E	
NW	3	Shanakiel Ridge (3) /Hyde Park/Shanakiel House	C,E,A	
NW	4	Sunday's Well (1)/ Old Jail	G	
NW	5	Sunday's Well (2)/ Lee Riverside	A,B,C,E,F	
NW	6	Sunday's Well (3)/ North Mall Distillery	B,C,D,E, G,I,Q	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a publicly accessible riverside open space with significant ecological value as part of campus development; • To provide an additional public pedestrian bridge to access the development site at the eastern end of the distillery site from the Lee Maltings site; • To provide an additional public route along through the centre of the site along the Mill Stream.
NW	7	Gurranabraher Ridge (1) /Mount Saint Joseph's	E,G,C,A	
NW	8	Gurranabraher Ridge (1) /Saint Mary's Orthopaedic Hospital	C,A,E,I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase tree coverage on the lower slopes of the hospital site and to protect and enhance the existing tree coverage at the boundary of the site; • To explore potential for publicly accessible vantage point.

Map Zone	Ref	Landscape Preservation Zone (general name)	Landscape Assets to be protected (see table 10.1)	Site Specific Objectives
NORTH-WEST				
NW	9	Knocknaheeny Water Tower	G	
NW	10	Farranferris Ridge	C,A,J,G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Area Plan to define site specific objectives.
NW	11	Commons Road/ Lover's Walk Ridge	C,G,F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To connect between Commons Road and Seminary Walk/Lover's Walk;
NW	12	Blackpool Valley (west) Ridge Commons Road	K,A,C,E,O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a woodland park on the southern valley slope to provide an attractive landscape feature at the gateway and to connect the rural landscape with the city; To provide pedestrian linkages between residential areas at the top of the slope and Fitz's Boreen and Sunbeam development area. The development potential of this site will be reviewed through the proposed North Blackpool Local Area Plan process.
NW	13	New Mallow Road/ Blackpool Ridge (West)	K,A,C,E,O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a woodland park on the southern valley slope to provide an attractive landscape feature at the gateway and to connect the rural landscape with the city;
NW	14	Lower Killeen's Road	A,B,C,E,K,O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To conserve and enhance the lower portion of the ridge, including the existing hedgerow, by additional tree planting; To conserve and enhance the landscape value of the upper portion of the ridge as an urban woodland; To provide limited development in the middle portion of the ridge to provide long-term management of the whole ridge. Development should be in small-scale pavilion style inset in a strong landscape structure.
NW	15	(Former) Good Shepherd Convent	C,G,H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide landscape structure and open space in any redevelopment.

Map Zone	Ref	Landscape Preservation Zone (general name)	Landscape Assets to be protected (see table 10.1)	Site Specific Objectives
NORTH-EAST				
NE	1	Bride Valley (1)	A,B,C,D,E (from train)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To re-establish the River as a key element of the valley floor by providing a linear park with publicly accessible riverside treed walk.
NE	2	Bride Valley (2)	A,B,C,D,E (from train)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To re-establish the River as a key element of the valley floor by providing a linear park with publicly accessible riverside treed walk.
NE	3	Bride Valley (3)	A,B,C,D,E (from train)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To re-establish the River as a key element of the valley floor by providing a linear park with publicly accessible riverside walk with new tree coverage and linked spaces.
NE	4	Blackpool Valley East	A,E,H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide tree coverage to improve the appearance of this visually prominent land.
NE	5	Saint Patrick's Hill	A,C,E,G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To allow for the future development of the Christian Brothers College providing it results in the overall enhancement of the landscape value and appearance of the site; To allow for the future development of Connemara within landscape/built heritage structure.
NE	6	Grattan Hill	C,G	
NE	7	Middle Glanmire Road (1) (Vosterburg)	C,G	
NE	8	Middle Glanmire Road (2) (Convalescent Home)	C,G	
NE	9	Middle Glanmire Road (3) (Hyde Park House)	C,G	
NE	10	Former Quarry, Lower Glanmire Road	A,C,D,E,H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a pocket park to serve needs of Lower Glanmire Road area providing development of brownfield site can be achieved to provide supervision of space.
NE	11	Tivoli Ridge	A,B,C,D,E,O	

Map Zone	Ref	Landscape Preservation Zone (general name)	Landscape Assets to be protected (see table 10.1)	Site Specific Objectives
NORTH-EAST				
NE	12	COPE School	A,E,G,I	
NE	13	Ennismore	A,B,C,E,G,J	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reinstate the historic landscape setting of Ennismore House; To seek development of new Neighbourhood Park (with public vantage point) to serve the needs of the North-East of the city; To allow for a small amount of development at the northern edge of the proposed Neighbourhood Park in the event that the City Council considers this an essential part of any landscape masterplan to provide natural supervision.
NE	14	Lota Ridge	A,B,C,E,G,J	
NE	15	The Glen Ridge	A,C,D,E	

Table 10.2 (Part 2) Schedule of Objectives applying to Landscape Preservation Zones

Sector	Ref	Landscape Preservation Zone (general name)	Landscape Assets to be protected	Site Specific Objectives
NORTH-EAST				
SW	1	Curragheen River/Inchigaggin Lane	B,C,D,E (Lee Valley/Model Farm Road), G (Carrigrohane Road and Inchigaggin House)H,J,K,OQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To preserve and enhance the setting of protected structures; To prepare a Curragheen River Landscape Masterplan to provide a framework for the improvement of the public realm and creation of riverside park and related spaces and woodlands;
SW	2	Glasheen River (3)/site	B,C,E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide riverside walkway/ cycleway.
SW	3	Sacred Heart	A,B,C,E,G	
SW	4	South Channel (1)/ Bon Secours	A,B,C,E,G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide riverside walkway/ cycleway.
SW	5	South Channel (2)/ Bon Secours Hospital car park	B,C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide riverside walkway/ cycleway.
SW	6	South Channel (3) Perrott's Inch	A,B,C,E,G,Q	

Sector	Ref	Landscape Preservation Zone (general name)	Landscape Assets to be protected	Site Specific Objectives
NORTH-EAST				
SW	7	South Channel (4)/ UCC	A,B,C,E,G	
SW	8	Bishop's Palace	A,B,C,E,G,J	
SW	9	Mardyke	B,E,H,J,M,P,Q	
SW	10	Model Farm Road/ Wilton AFC	C	
SW	11	High Street/ Convalescent Home (former Reparation Convent)/Villa	C,F	
SOUTH-EAST				
SE	1	South Douglas Road Farmhouse	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect the tree group by means of a TPO; Consider inclusion of farmhouse on RPS.
SE	2	Douglas Estuary	B,D,E,H	
SE	3	Ravenscourt House	A,C,E,G	
SE	4	Bessboro House	J,G,C,B,I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reinstate Historic Landscape; Use of grounds either as private setting to the principle use of Bessboro House or as a public park (H); To allow development within the immediate environs to the north of Bessboro House consistent with the landscape and protected structure significance of the site.
SE	5	Pond, Douglas Estuary	B,D,S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide tree planting on this visually prominent area of land to screen the Retail Park.
SE	6	RTE Mast, Ballinure Road/Douglas Estuary	B,D,E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide significant tree planting on its northern boundary, to screen Retail Park.
SE	7	Castle Road Bank/ escarpment	A,B,C,D,G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To introduce walkway/cycleway above waterline whilst protecting trees along escarpment.
SE	8	Tir-na-nOg, Church Avenue (former family home of Frank Murphy architect)	A,B,C,G	

Sector	Ref	Landscape Preservation Zone (general name)	Landscape Assets to be protected	Site Specific Objectives
NORTH-EAST				
SE	9	Dundanon House and Castle	A,B,C,G	
SE	10	Convent Lawn (north) and small area east of Barrington's Avenue	A,B,C,E,G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore potential of integration of this space into Marina Park/ Atlantic Park as part of overall project.
SE	11	Convent Lawn (south)	G	
SE	12	Blackrock Road escarpment (1)/ Franciscan Ministry of Saint Joseph's Convent	A,C,E	
SE	13	SMA, Blackrock Road	G	
SE	14	Temple Lawn House, Blackrock Road/ Crab Lane	C,G	
SE	15	Houses at top of Churchyard Lane	C,E	

Table 10.2 (Part 3) Schedule of Objectives applying to Landscape Preservation Zones

Sector	Ref	Landscape Preservation Zone (general name)	Landscape Assets to be protected	Site Specific Objectives
CITY CENTRE				
CC	1	Blackpool Valley Ridge	A,CEJ (Old Youghal Road - historic city approach)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide a pocket park (as part of Bell's Field/Lady's Well Park) on these lands benefiting from development at the edge of the space to provide supervision, whilst maintaining east-west views across the site (between Bell's Field and Shandon/western side of valley). Upgrade Old Youghal Road and Lady's Well steps/Fever Hospital Steps area
CC	2	Blackpool Valley Ridge (East)/Richmond Hill	A,C,E,F	
CC	3	Westboro House	A,C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of 2 houses between protected trees on Middle Glanmire Road is considered appropriate.
CC	4	Saint Patrick's Hospital grounds	C,D,H	

Views and Prospects

10.30 The city at large is appreciated by most people along important viewpoints such as the River Lee or panoramic views. The amenity views indicate the outer visual border of the city, the main character areas, and principle elements of the city skyline. Amenity views and prospects are defined as those views which significantly contribute to the character and amenity of:

The visual envelope of the city:

- The visual envelope of the city is defined by the north (Gurranabraher/Fairhill and Montenotte/Mayfield) ridges and the south ridge (Frankfield Douglas/Rochestown). These ridges provide the backdrop to the city and are visible from viewpoints within the city.

The city skyline:

- The city skyline is a combination of elements: the general scale of buildings, streets and spaces from area to area, major landmarks on the skyline, other individual higher buildings, higher building groups and landscape elements. Significantly, the city skyline does not break the silhouette provided by the city ridges.

Built Heritage:

- Near and distant views to and from buildings that have special, historical or architectural value e.g. protected structures, institutional buildings and grounds etc. In suburban areas amenity views and prospects can enhance or create local amenities and focal points and therefore strengthen the local character and “sense of place” of these areas.

Natural Heritage:

- Outside the City Centre, in suburban areas, views are generally dominated by landscape elements such as the urban forests and tree groups, rivers, waterways, loughs, estuaries and gardens etc.

10.31 Cork City Council has identified a number of existing views and prospects of special amenity value to the city. These special views are of strategic significance to Cork City and the City Council will seek to protect and enhance them, where appropriate. In order to fully appreciate and legislate for the unique size, scale and distinctive topography of Cork City, five different view types (below) were identified. Cork City Council will have a presumption against development that threatens to obstruct strategic views or compromise the quality or setting of these views. In addition to these strategic views and prospects of special amenity value which are enjoyed by large numbers of people, local views of significance are also very important to the character and legibility of areas within Cork. Local views will be identified on a case-by-case basis through the planning process. There will also be a presumption against proposals that would cause unacceptable harm to local views of significance and their settings.

10.32 The lists of protected views are listed in Volume 3 and shown in Volume 2. The list of protected views is neither exhaustive nor fully comprehensive as there are many other views of strategic and local significance. Additional views will be identified on a case-by-case basis through the planning control process, through the preparation of local area plans and other forward planning documents, and through future reviews of the list.

View Types

1) Linear Views of Landmark Buildings

Linear Views occur when a single landmark building (e.g. St. Fin Barre's Cathedral) is the main point of focus within the view path. Views tend to be framed within relatively narrow viewing corridors. Views of fourteen landmark buildings identified in the Cork City Development Plan 2004 have been chosen as having views of strategic importance and special amenity value that necessitate protection measures. The majority of these views are taken from City Centre or inner city viewing locations.



2) Cork Panoramas

Cork Panoramas provide elevated views of Cork City and its suburbs from viewing spaces within important open spaces. Viewing corridors of panoramas are wider than any other view type. Within these panoramas, a number of the city's landmarks often appear as part of a wider view of a substantial part of Cork. Some of these viewing locations have been classified as Panoramic Assessment Points in order to enable the Planning Authority to determine the full visual impact of large development proposals in and around the City Centre.

3) River Prospects

River prospects are usually (though not exclusively so) experienced while crossing a bridge. While many bridge crossings allow opportunities to pause and appreciate views, many of these views can also be enjoyed in motion as a viewer moves across a bridge. River prospects in this instance refer to the ability to see landmark building(s) from bridges. Other views involving the river as an important element occur in the other view types e.g. in Landscape/ Townscape views.

4) Views of significant Townscape and Landscape Features

A number of views of areas that have outstanding townscape or landscape features within the city boundary have been identified. This type includes views towards the city ridges and/or areas that have distinctive townscape character (e.g. Sunday's Well, Shandon or St. Luke's). Views are often from long-established public open spaces such as the Lee Fields, Bell's Field and the Mardyke or from important residential areas around the city such as Bishopstown, South Parish and Ballintemple.

5) Approach Road Views

Approach Road prospects often give the visitor the vital 'first impressions' of a city. The approach roads into Cork City give the viewer an instant appreciation of the unique topography and character of Cork. Many of these views reflect the relationship between the city and its landmarks, the River Lee and its surrounding ridges and tend to be framed by natural resources such as steep slopes, water and mature vegetation. New developments in these areas will be required to take due cognisance of these qualities and clearly demonstrate how they will preserve and enhance their visual appearance and amenity. Two approach road view types are identified (Old City and National Primary Approach Roads) to differentiate between the views from long established routes to the City Centre which tend to be from high vantage points and relatively modern roads which tend to be flatter and have wider viewing corridors.

POLICY 10.8

Views and Prospects

Proposals that would cause unacceptable harm to the visual impact of landmark buildings, historic buildings, key views and prospects will not be permitted.

Cork City Council will have a presumption against development that threatens to obstruct or compromise the quality or setting of views and prospects of special amenity value including strategic linear views, panoramic views, rivers prospects, townscape and landscape views and approach road views. Cork City Council will seek:

- To protect the intrinsic character and scale of the city and the city skyline;
- To protect key views and vistas and the visual prominence of important city landscape and townscape features such as areas of woodland, important tree groupings and areas of special architectural or heritage value;
- To direct high building development to areas which have been identified as having potential for high buildings and that would not seriously injure the visual amenities of the city (see Policies 16.8 and 16.9, Chapter 16 Urban Design);
- To promote enhancement of key views and vistas through improved landscaping, lighting and encourage improvement of unsightly and obstructive building design;
- To engage with Cork County Council on issues that could negatively impact on the visual quality of the city generally and on the setting of St. Fin Barre's Cathedral specifically (the Ridge from Doughcloyne to Bandon Road);
- To identify and protect views of local significance through the preparation of Local Area Plans, site development briefs and the assessment of development proposals on a case-by-case basis;
- To assess all major development proposals in accordance with the detailed schedule of assessment criteria outlined in Chapter 17 Development Management.

Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

Introduction

10.33 Cork City's natural heritage includes flora, fauna, geology and landscape. This variety of life is often referred to as biological diversity or biodiversity. Wildlife habitats occur throughout the city with many mammals, birds, invertebrates, and wild plants having adapted to live alongside humans in the urban environment.

10.34 The River Lee and its associated waterways support an immense variety of wildlife while also providing a corridor for the movement of species between the surrounding countryside and urban areas.

10.35 The built environment provides habitats for a variety of species of flowering plants, mosses, and lichens and various species of invertebrates, birds and bats. Other important wildlife areas in the urban environment include trees, parks, institutional green spaces, gardens, and graveyards, all of which play a significant role in supporting the local biodiversity.

Overall Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Objectives:

- To maintain the conservation value of all designated areas of natural heritage, biodiversity and protected species;
- To ensure that sites and species of natural heritage and biodiversity importance are identified, conserved and managed appropriately;
- To raise awareness and encourage best practice in the area of conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity.



Designated Areas and Protected Species

- 10.36** There are a number of habitats, flora and fauna within Cork City's boundary which are protected under national and international legislation. These include the national and EU designations of Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)

- 10.37** Under the *Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000* provision was made for the designation of Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs). These areas include nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms and geomorphological features, plant and animal species, or a diversity of these natural heritage attributes. The Department of the Environment, Heritage Local Government, National Parks and Wildlife Service, has the responsibility of designating protected nature conservation sites. These NHAs overlap with other nature conservation designations to form a national framework for protected areas in Ireland.

- 10.38** In Cork City a number of areas have been designated as Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA). These include:

Western part of Lough Mahon and Douglas Estuary

- 10.39** Douglas Estuary is a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA 1046). This is a large area that includes the Douglas River Estuary together with the western intertidal area of Lough Mahon as far as Blackrock Castle. In addition to intertidal mudflats the designated area contains several habitats that are rare and important on a local and national level. These include reed and large sedge swamp and saltmarsh. These habitats all support a diversity of birds, mammals and invertebrates. For example the protected and rare moth Twin-spotted Wainscot is found in a reedbed in the Douglas Estuary.



Cork Lough

- 10.40** This is a shallow freshwater lake of around 6 hectares surrounded by amenity grassland and trees. The southern section of the Lough is dominated by an island covered by willow trees. The Lough provides an important habitat to a variety of species of birds, bats and fish.

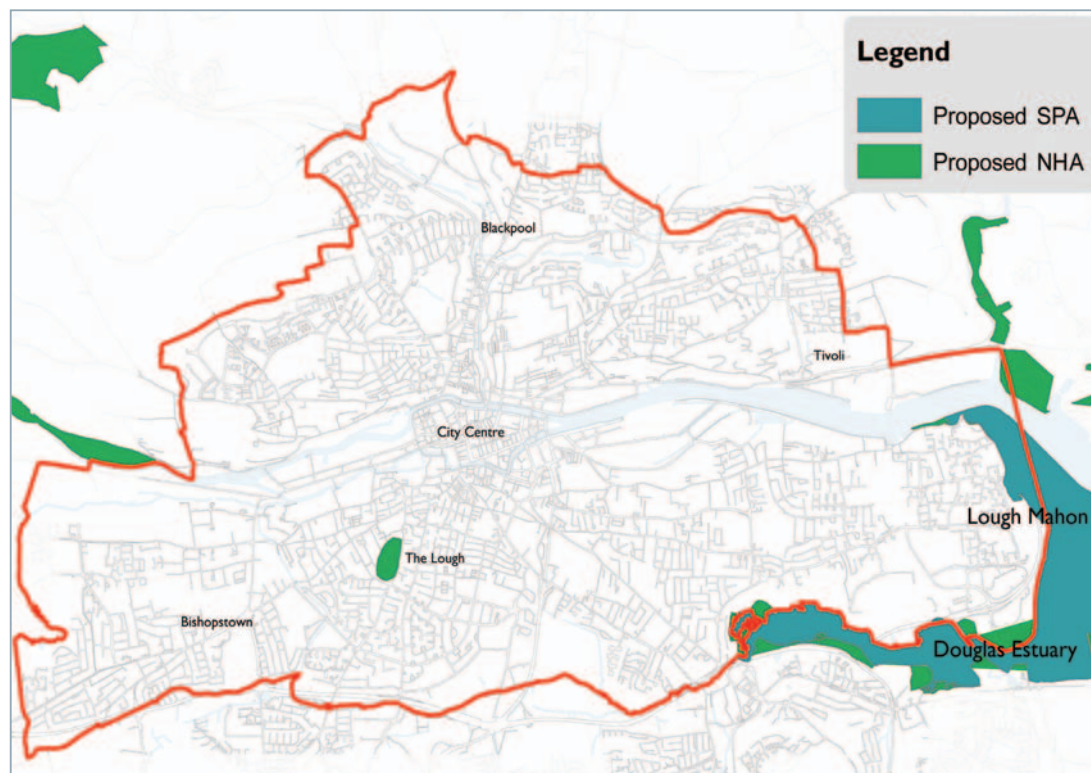
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

- 10.41** Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are areas of European importance designated under the Birds Directive EU Directive 79/409/EEC by reason of the bird species and populations that they support. Under the Bird Directive each EU member state is required to designate SPAs for natural areas that support populations of particular bird species that are rare or threatened in Europe and that require measures including the designation of protected areas to conserve them.

Western part of Lough Mahon and Douglas Estuary

- 10.42** The Douglas Estuary and the western part of Loughmahon are designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA). The importance of these areas is based on the presence of significant salt marshes, reed beds, intertidal mudflats and nationally important numbers of wading birds.
- 10.43** This designated area provides a wintering ground for many species of internationally important waterbirds, many of which having migrated long distances from Arctic breeding grounds and with numbers exceeding 25,000 each winter. These birds include Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit as well as Shelduck, Black-tailed Godwit and Lapwing.

Figure 10.4 Designated Natural Heritage Areas with statutory protection



Wildfowl Sanctuary

- 10.44** In addition to Cork Lough's designation as a pNHA it has an existing status under the *Wildlife Act 1976* as a Wildfowl Sanctuary. In total 82 species of birds have been recorded from the Lough, with numbers of regular and resident birds enhanced by occasional records of rare and unusual species.

Salmonoid River

- 10.45** Under the *EU Freshwater Fish Directive* the River Lee is designated as a Salmonoid river from its source to Cork City Waterworks. This imposes an obligation to maintain specific water quality standards and to control pollution. Species of fish found along its length include Brook, Sea Lamprey and Salmon. In addition the River Lee and its banks provide habitats, feeding and resting grounds for a variety of protected species of birds, bats and mammals such as the otter.

Protected Species

- 10.46** Certain plant, animal and bird species are protected by law. This includes plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order 1999 and animals and birds listed in the Wildlife Act, the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive. The planning process seeks to protect and enhance species protected by law and their habitats. Very often this can be done by minimising adverse impacts (for example, by requiring that development takes place outside the breeding season). In other cases it may be appropriate to seek to ensure that individual members of a species survive by providing alternative roosts in the case of bats for example. It may also be appropriate to seek to have an alternative area of habitat provided.





POLICY 10.9

Designated Areas and Protected Species

- To protect plant, animal species and habitats which have been identified by the Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, Wildlife Act and the Flora Protection Order.
- To avoid any significant adverse impact to the features for which the site is designated.
- To apply the precautionary principle in relation to proposed development in environmentally sensitive areas and to carry out and implement the mitigation measures from an EIS in order to ensure that development does not undermine the conservation objectives of these sites.
- No projects giving rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) except as provided for in Section 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.
- Where required all land use plans and projects arising from this plan will be screened for the need to undertake Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

Rivers and Waterways

10.47 Rivers and waterways are very important assets of Cork and the urban environment. Waterway corridors, defined as those areas that are physically or visually linked to the waterway, are multi-functional in nature. They:

- Provide important visual amenity for the city as a whole;
- Allow for the provision and enhancement of open space, public amenities and linkages;
- Provide for the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats and natural corridors;
- Provide opportunities for waterfront developments, new recreational facilities and leisure activities;
- Provide opportunities for tourist related development;
- Provide for drainage and flood water storage.

10.48 Rivers and waterways play an important role in the layout and structure of the city and are an integral element of the city's landscape character. The River Lee runs west to east through the city splitting into the North and the South Channels as it does so. These channels enclose the Mardyke area and the City Centre itself, giving it a distinct "island" character. The landscape character of the southside is defined through a network of waterways that enclose the area on all sides i.e. River Lee, Lough Mahon, Douglas River, Douglas Estuary, Tramore River and Curragheen/Two-pot River. The northside of the city is characterised by ridges and valleys, traversed by the River Bride and the Glenamought River.

10.49 Rivers and waterways add greatly to the biodiversity value of the city, from the River Lee to the smaller Curragheen, Bride, Two-pot, Glasheen, Glenamought and Tramore rivers. Some of these watercourses have been modified over the years yet still provide the freshwater environment that is essential for many species to live or feed. In addition they provide a unique corridor for the movement and migration of species on which the survival of some depends. Important species include the Dipper, Grey Wagtail, Grey Heron, salmon, lamprey, otters and bats. Freshwater marsh habitats occur in waterlogged places and is found close to the Curragheen river and within the Lee fields and the Glen. They often support water loving plants and species which feed on them. Alien or introduced species can also gain a foothold in these environments and if successful can out-compete local and native species. In this way species such as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and others have become part of the city flora and are difficult to control.

10.50 River corridors in the City Centre/Docklands/Tivoli Docks have been identified as both Waterfront and Quayside Amenity Areas (see Policies 13.29, Zoning Objective ZO 19 and Maps 1 and 2 in Volume 2). The Marina has also been identified as a Quayside Amenity Area (see Map 1). These areas will function as public spaces whose primary purpose is for amenity and enjoyment of the riverside location.

10.51 Within the Suburban Areas of the city waterway corridors are generally natural or naturalistic and their conservation as landscape, natural heritage and recreational assets is a key priority for Cork, particularly as the rivers provide opportunity for the creation of real Linear Parks extending along the River Lee and all of its tributaries.

10.52 It is a policy of the Council that proposals for development in waterside locations dedicate a minimum of 10 metres from the top of the riverbank, apart from in exceptional circumstances, to provide:

- Visual amenity of the river;
- Public space and access;
- Public walkway/cycleways;
- Spaces to allow for the conservation and enhancement of landscape features, such as tree coverage;
- Spaces to conserve and enhance biodiversity capacity.



POLICY 10.10

River and waterway Corridors

To achieve attractive, accessible and safe waterway corridors which conserve and enhance their value as landscape and natural heritage assets.

Development proposals in river corridors will be considered favourably providing they:

- Dedicate a minimum of 10m from the waters edge for amenity, biodiversity and walkway purposes where practical;
- Preserve the biodiversity value of the site;
- Do not involve landfilling, diverting, culverting or realignment of river and stream corridors;
- Do not have a negative effect on the distinctive character and appearance of the waterway corridor and the specific characteristics and landscape elements of the individual site and its context.

To implement measures to control and prevent the introduction and establishment of ecologically damaging alien invasive species (e.g. Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam).



- 10.53** Exceptional circumstances that would justify a reduction in the required 10 m corridor are limited to those lengths of river frontage where protected structures/buildings of significance would physically restrict access. In such a case a pedestrian boardwalk will be provided to ensure continuous walkways.
- 10.54** In new major development locations the preference will generally be to provide parks in waterside locations to maximise the potential for linkages between landscape, natural heritage and recreational opportunity.
- 10.55** A number of waterways in the city region traverse the city and county administrative boundaries. The city and county councils will work together in order to ensure the ecological value of these waterways are protected and enhanced in a co-ordinated manner.

Trees and Urban Woodlands

- 10.56** Trees make a valuable contribution to the landscape, local visual amenity and biodiversity of Cork City. They also have an educational and scientific value. Trees can help to absorb pollutants, filter dust, reduce noise, produce oxygen and reduce carbon dioxide as well as enhancing the aesthetics of the built environment and public realm thus benefiting Cork City's environmental and economic wellbeing.
- 10.57** The term 'Urban Forest' embraces trees grown in and close to urban areas, including trees in streets, parks, gardens, on undeveloped land and those in urban woodlands. It is important to protect and maintain existing trees or groups of trees in the city. In addition it is also important that new planting is promoted to ensure continued regeneration of tree cover and to replace trees in key tree groupings that are becoming increasingly old, over sized and unhealthy or are lost due to development.
- 10.58** Cork City Council carries out an extensive tree planting programme with approximately 3,000 trees and whips planted annually. The impact of the trees planted over the last 20 years is now being felt.
- 10.59** *The Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2006* sets out the legal framework and procedures to make a Tree Preservation Order. The City Council has made a number of Tree Preservation Orders which are listed in Table 10.3 and mapped on the City Council's website. Figure 10.5 (overleaf) illustrates tree coverage in Cork. The City Council will extend this list as resources allow. The *Cork Landscape Study 2008* identifies priorities for tree protection and these are summarised in Table 10.4.

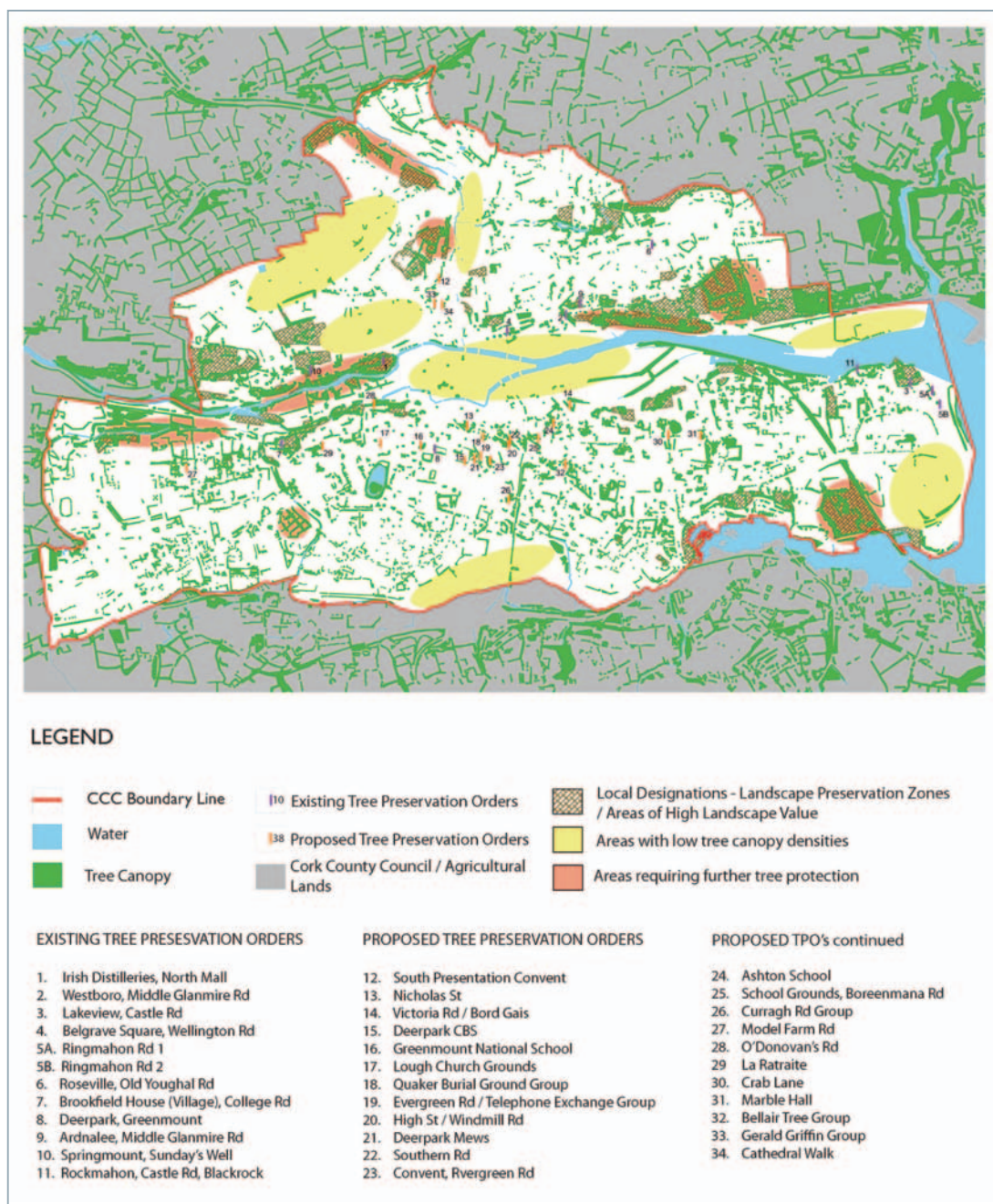
Table 10.3 Schedule of Tree Preservation Orders:

• Irish Distilleries, North Mall	• Springmount
• Westboro, Middle Glanmire Road	• Rockmahon, Castle Road
• Lakeview, Castle Road	• Brookfield House(Village), College Road
• Belgrave Square, Wellington Road	• Deerpark, Greenmount
• Ringmahon Road	• Ardnalee, Middle Glanmire Road
• Roseville, Old Youghal Road	

Table 10.4 Key Priorities for Tree Protection

Key groups (North side)	Key groups (South side)
All Landscape Preservation Zones and Areas of High Landscape Value	
Sunday's Well	Castle Road, Blackrock
Mayfield Road, Lower	The Marina
Montenotte	University College Cork
Tivoli	Mardyke
Lota and Lotabeg	

Figure 10.5 Tree Coverage and Urban Forestry Strategy



10.60 The Tree Coverage and Urban Forest Strategy diagram (Figure 10.5 above) identifies important trees and tree groups within the city which are worthy of protection under local and/or national legislation. Their value is generally based on their contribution to the broader landscape but may also be due to their ecological and cultural significance. A number of key tree groups are identified within zones already designated as Areas of High Landscape Value or Landscape Preservation Zones, and the trees within the seven key sites identified within the *Cork City Landscape Study 2008* are also included here. In addition twenty-three trees or tree groups are proposed for TPO status. Robust and appropriate levels of protection should be provided for trees and tree groups identified with a long term aim of linking groups together to provide more robust tree assemblages.

10.61 The trees in the Tivoli and Montenotte Ridges are linked visually to those at Glanmire Wood, Lota and Lotabeg and all lie adjacent to the Lee. As a whole they form a unique sylvan setting on entering the city. These areas also form a magnificent backdrop when viewed from the south side of the River Lee.



It is recognised that the Glanmire wood and Lota areas fall outside the city boundaries but they are intrinsically linked to those trees within the city boundary and included here on this basis. There is undoubted developmental pressure in these areas with a number of developments creating gaps in the tree canopy.

10.62 Important individual mature trees and small tree groups are present in the Blackrock area and are generally associated with large period houses and estates. Many of the trees have strong cultural and aesthetic value and although the trees are somewhat scattered and isolated they have a strong visual presence. There is considerable developmental pressure in this area with the recent completion of a small number of housing developments. In addition to the general issue of health and safety management of trees in this urbanised area should be a reflection of their landscape and cultural importance.

10.63 A number of large areas of the city suffer from low tree canopy densities (see Figure 10.5 and para. 10.21), including: Knocknaheeny, Blackpool Valley, Gurranabraher; City Centre; Docklands; Tramore Road area; South Mahon and Tivoli. The areas outside the City Centre are either industrial or early municipal housing landscapes that now have the opportunity to benefit from new and enhanced landscape structures through development or City Council initiatives. There are many smaller areas of the city that have low tree canopy densities also and would benefit from carefully designed landscape structure in any new development (see para. 16.27).

Table 10.5 Priorities for Tree Protection: Individual sites

Key groups (North side)	
• Cathedral Walk	• Gerald Griffin Street
Key groups (South side)	
• South Presentation Conven	• Belle Air Group
• Nicholas Street	• Marble Hill
• Victoria Road/Bord Gais	• Crab Lane
• Greenmount National School	• O'Donovan's Road
• Lough Church Grounds	• Model Farm Road
• Quaker Burial Ground	• Ashton School, Borreenmanna Road
• Evergreen Road/Telephone Exchange Group	• Convent, Evergreen Road
• High Street/Windmill Road	• La Retraite
• Southern Road	• Curragh Road
• Deerpark Mews	

POLICY 10.11

Trees and Urban Woodland

- To strengthen the protection of trees in the city and specifically in the areas identified in Table 10.4 and the Urban Forestry Strategy Diagram, and to provide additional tree planting;
- To preserve, maintain and increase the general tree cover in the city by extending planting at identified locations and identifying new sites suitable for the creation of small woodland areas;
- To protect and maintain existing important individual and groups of trees;
- To make use of tree preservation orders to protect important trees or groups of trees which may be at risk;
- To ensure that new development benefits from adequate landscape structure/tree coverage, particularly in areas of the city with inadequate tree coverage;
- To promote the planting of native deciduous trees and mixed forestry in order to benefit biodiversity.

POLICY 10.12

Urban forestry strategy

To develop an urban forestry strategy and to provide a resource to protect trees and tree groups of significance, to manage existing treed areas and to plant new urban woodlands in areas deficient in tree coverage.

Non Designated Areas of Natural Heritage Importance**Biodiversity**

10.64 It is important to realise that the biodiversity of Cork City is not just contained within designated areas alone but is found throughout the city. Many areas which do not have formal protection under legislation have a level of natural heritage value in terms of the plant and animal life that they support and the biodiversity that lies within them. There is a need to conserve wildlife species and habitats that are not designated also. Non-designated areas of natural heritage include hedgerows, tree lines, rivers, streams, private gardens, parks and urban green spaces. Other areas which serve as areas of biodiversity importance in the city include graveyards, cemeteries and the green spaces of institutional lands e.g. convents, monasteries, hospitals, schools and universities.

10.65 Protecting areas in isolation from each other is neither appropriate nor effective. It is important that significant wildlife habitat areas and corridors should be respected to protect and conserve the flora and fauna of the city. It is through the conservation of ecological infrastructure such as hedgerows and riparian corridors that we can develop a network of sites. These areas include features which are linear and continuous in nature e.g. rivers and their banks or ecological stepping stones e.g. ponds or small woodlands. These areas are very important for migration of flora and fauna between conservation areas and are essential for the dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.



POLICY 10.13

Non Designated Areas of Biodiversity Importance

To protect and promote the conservation of biodiversity in areas of natural heritage importance outside of designated areas.

To encourage the management of features which are important for wild flora and fauna. Such features are those which by virtue of their linear or continuous nature e.g. rivers, tree groups or hedgerows are essential for the migration dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.



Geology

10.66 To date sites of geological interest have not been comprehensively covered by the existing nature conservation designations. It is understood that the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) and the Geological Survey of Ireland are currently drawing up a list of sites of national geological interest. However there are a few areas within the city which are considered to be areas of geological importance. Cork City Council recognises the need to maintain and preserve important features of geological interest in the city. The Geological Survey of Ireland is in the process of identifying and selecting geological and geomorphological sites for inclusion as nationally important Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) or as a second tier of County Geological Sites (CGS). When this work is completed the City Council will seek to conserve the sites identified as being of geological interest.

POLICY 10.14

Non Designated Areas of Geological Importance

To seek the conservation of important features of geological interest in the city.

Biodiversity Plan

10.67 The *National Bio-diversity Plan (2002)* underlines the principle that environmental concerns should be integrated into all relevant sectors, stating that “*Environmental policy is now based on the internationally recognised principle of sustainability, ‘the precautionary principle’, the integration of environmental considerations into all areas, ‘the polluter pays principle’ and the principle of shared responsibility for environmental protection by public bodies, private enterprise and the general public*”. This implies basing policies and decisions on ecological principles, which recognise the conservation, enhancement and sustainable use of biological diversity in Ireland and contribute to conservation and sustainable use of bio-diversity globally.

10.68 The *National Biodiversity Plan* sets out the strategy for conserving and enhancing Ireland’s biodiversity through a series of actions. At a local level the plan highlights the key role that local Authorities can play in promoting local natural heritage and requires each Local Authority to prepare a Biodiversity Plan in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

10.69 The *Cork City Biodiversity Action Plan*:

- Provides a framework for the conservation of biodiversity and co-ordinates new and existing conservation initiatives;
- Translates international and national biodiversity obligations into effective local actions;
- Assists sustainable planning and development and provides a framework that is complementary to the Local Development Plan and Local Heritage Plan;
- Aims to raise public awareness and stimulate involvement in the conservation of biodiversity;
- Collects and collates information on local biodiversity.

POLICY 10.15**Biodiversity Plan**

To adopt and implement the Cork City Biodiversity Plan and any relevant additional actions relating to natural heritage in the Heritage Plan.