

OPR Practice Note PN04

Planning for Employment Growth - The Development Plan and Employment Lands



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Oifig an
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This Practice Note was prepared when the Planning and Development Bill 2023 (the 2023 Bill) was being progressed through Dáil Éireann. It is acknowledged that the amendments proposed in the 2023 Bill, relating to development plans, may change before the enactment of the legislation. As with all OPR publications this Practice Note will be reviewed and updated, where required, to reflect changes in legislation.

We invite comments, feedback, suggestions and relevant case studies from users of this Practice Note and these should be sent to research@opr.ie.

*herein referred to as the '2000 Act'.

Acronym List

AA	Appropriate Assessment	ESM	Environmental Sensitivity Mapping
ABTA	Area Based Transport Assessment	ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
AI	Artificial Intelligence	EU	European Union
AIRO	All-Island Research Observatory	FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
ATOS	Access To Opportunities and Services	FTE	Full Time Equivalent
BMS	Building Management System	GDA	Greater Dublin Area
BOD	Biological Oxygen Demand	GEA	Gross External Area
CAP21	Climate Action Plan 2021	GIA	Gross Internal Area
CAP23	Climate Action Plan 2023	GIS	Geographic Information System
CAP24	Climate Action Plan 2024	GW	Gigawatt
CARO	Climate Action Regional Office	HEA	Higher Education Authority
CEAP	Circular Economy Action Plan	HGVs	Heavy Goods Vehicles
COMAH	Control of Major Accident Hazards	HNDA	Housing Need and Demand Assessment
CPOs	Compulsory Purchase Orders	IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
CSO	Central Statistics Office	IDA	Industrial Development Agency
DECC	Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications	JTF	Just Transition Fund
DETE	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	LACAP	Local Authority Climate Action Plan
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	LAP	Local Area Plan
DMAPs	Designated Maritime Area Plans	LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
DoT	Department of Transport	LEOs	Local Enterprise Offices
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	LTP	Local Transport Plan
DRCD	Department of Rural and Community Development	MASP	Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan
EI	Enterprise Ireland	MATSS	Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies
EMRA	Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly	MW	Megawatt
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	NACE	Nomenclature of Economic Activities
ESA	European Space Agency	NDP	National Development Plan
ESB	Electricity Supply Board	NIA	Net Internal Area
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance	NIFTI	National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland

NPF	National Planning Framework
NPOs	National Policy Objectives
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSMP	National Sustainable Mobility Policy
NSOs	National Strategic Outcomes
NTA	National Transport Authority
NWRA	Northern and Western Regional Assembly
NWRP	National Water Resources Plan
NZIA	Net Zero Industry Act
OPR	Office of the Planning Regulator
OPW	Office of Public Works
ORE	Offshore Renewable Energy
OREDP	Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan
OSI	Ordnance Survey Ireland
POWSCAR	Places of Work, School or College – Census of Anonymised Records
PTAL	Public Transport Accessibility Level
RDM	Regional Development Monitor
RD&I	Research, Development and Innovation
REPs	Regional Enterprise Plans
RES-E	Renewable Energy Share in Electricity
RESPF	Renewable Electricity Spatial Policy Framework
RPOs	Regional Policy Objectives
RRDF	Rural Regeneration and Development Fund
RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
RWRPs	Regional Water Resource Plans
S3	Smart Specialisation Strategy
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SCOT	Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SPA	Special Protection Area
SRA	Southern Regional Assembly
SuDs	Sustainable Drainage Systems
TCF	Town Centre First
TCFP	Town Centre First Plan
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
UÉ	Uisce Éireann
UN	United Nations
URDF	Urban Regeneration and Development Fund
UWWT	Urban Waste Water Treatment
WSPS	Water Services Policy Statement
WSSP	Water Services Strategic Plan
WWTPs	Wastewater Treatment Plants

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1.0 Introduction

Economic conditions have significant implications for planning, in times of growth and decline. The economic development strategy of the local authority development plan is therefore a key component of the plan's overall strategy for proper planning and development.

In addition, the economic development strategy has to work hand in hand with other key development plan strategies including climate action, housing delivery, sustainable transport, heritage and quality place-making.

There have been multiple economic initiatives at European, national, regional and local levels to support a strong economy, balanced regional development and job growth. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs) of the three regional assemblies, provide a crucial bridging point from national policy to local level.

Such strategies have strengthened recognition of the key role that local authorities play in enterprise and employment in the performance of their functions. Learning from the application of evidence-based approaches to housing delivery through the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) process, such strategies also recognise the value of methodologies to evaluate the demand for and supply of land for enterprise and employment.

1.1 The Purpose of this Practice Note

This practice note seeks to set out a practical approach for estimating enterprise land requirements to inform the development plan preparation process, which ensures consistency with the national and regional strategic and statutory policy context in the National Planning Framework (NPF), the RSEs, the requirements of planning legislation and planning guidelines. The practice note outlines methodologies for implementation of national and regional economic policy at the local development plan level, and through a structured framework adaptable to different contexts and locations.

A central element of such methodologies is the enterprise and employment land assessment (the Assessment). This Assessment gives effect to the overarching economic development strategy of the development plan, and in turn contributes to the implementation of higher-level plans and programmes of the government. The Assessment is an integral part of the plan preparation process.

The Assessment should:

- evaluate the demand for and supply of land for enterprise and employment;
- identify suitable sites for employment development; and
- identify those sites, which are no longer considered appropriate for employment development, that should be released for other uses.



A robust approach to the Assessment should, in the first instance:

- be informed by the economic development strategy of the current development plan;
- be consistent with the national and regional policy framework; and
- contribute to the achievement of the National Climate Objective¹ to pursue and achieve the transition to a climate neutral economy by 2050 and the interim target for 2030.

A key prerequisite of the Assessment is engagement with national, regional, and local government and agencies. A multi-disciplinary and collaborative approach is key, between relevant local authority departments and external agencies at critical stages in the preparation of the development plan.

Preparation of enterprise and employment land assessments requires a range of skills and expertise to deliver a strong and reliable evidence base for the zoning of land for employment purposes. This practice note strongly advocates a partnership approach with key stakeholders to benefit from sharing expertise, knowledge and resources.

The core element of this practice note is set out in section 5.0. It comprises a step-by-step approach to the process of assessing enterprise and employment land. It provides an adaptable framework which planning authorities can tailor to create their own methodologies, dependent on the resources available, their local circumstances and economic profile.

The step-by-step approach, proposed in section 5.0, is supported by the information contained in the Appendices.

Section 2.0 provides an overview of the relevant legislative and policy framework; section 3.0 considers common issues that arise in the current approach to enterprise and employment in statutory plans; and section 4.0 sets out the key elements to the development of a sustainable enterprise and employment portfolio.

By highlighting the key tasks, sources of information and best practice, it is anticipated that this practice note will promote greater consistency in the approach to estimating the differing zoning requirements for employment uses and support planning authorities in their focus on the spatial components of economic activity.

However, this practice note fully recognises there is not a *'one-size-fits-all'* approach that can be applied by all planning authorities. Rather, for practical purposes, each planning authority will necessarily tailor their Assessment based on the resources they have available to them, constraints affecting them and having regard to the particular character (urban/rural) and settlement structure of the planning authority's administrative area and its wider context including possible interdependencies (being within a metropolitan area, for example).

¹ The National Climate Objective is defined in Section 3(1) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended (the Climate Act).





2.0 Employment Lands in Context

Since the inception of the formal planning system in Ireland with the enactment of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 1963, development plans have supported and facilitated economic development through zoning objectives and policy measures, reflecting the evolution in legislation and guidelines as the national economic landscape changed. Most development plans already include an economic development strategy or chapter as recommended in the Section 28² Planning Guidelines.³ The draft Planning and Development Bill 2023 (the 2023 Bill)⁴ includes an obligation to prepare a strategy relating to economic development. This strategy is required to include objectives relating to:

- the promotion of sustainable economic development, employment generation and retail provision;
- the location of employment-related, industrial commercial development, having regard to—
 - (i) economic and employment trends, and
 - (ii) the promotion of sustainable transport;
- enabling conditions for creating and sustaining jobs;
- the location of retail development, having regard to sustainable transport and the vibrancy of town centres;
- identifying the attributes of particular places within the functional area that are essential to enhancing economic performance, including the quality of the environment, cities, towns and rural areas, the physical infrastructure, and the social, community and cultural facilities; and
- such other matters as may be prescribed.

An overarching economic development strategy, consistent with national and regional development objectives, and informed by the range of relevant government policy and statutory requirements, provides the necessary framework of vision and objectives to inform the planning authority when undertaking the detailed Assessment and determining the area and spatial distribution of land required to be zoned for economic and enterprise uses.

Figure 1 below sets out the range of strategies to be considered when preparing an economic development strategy and determining the associated land-use zoning requirements. The range of strategies are described in more detail in the following sections.

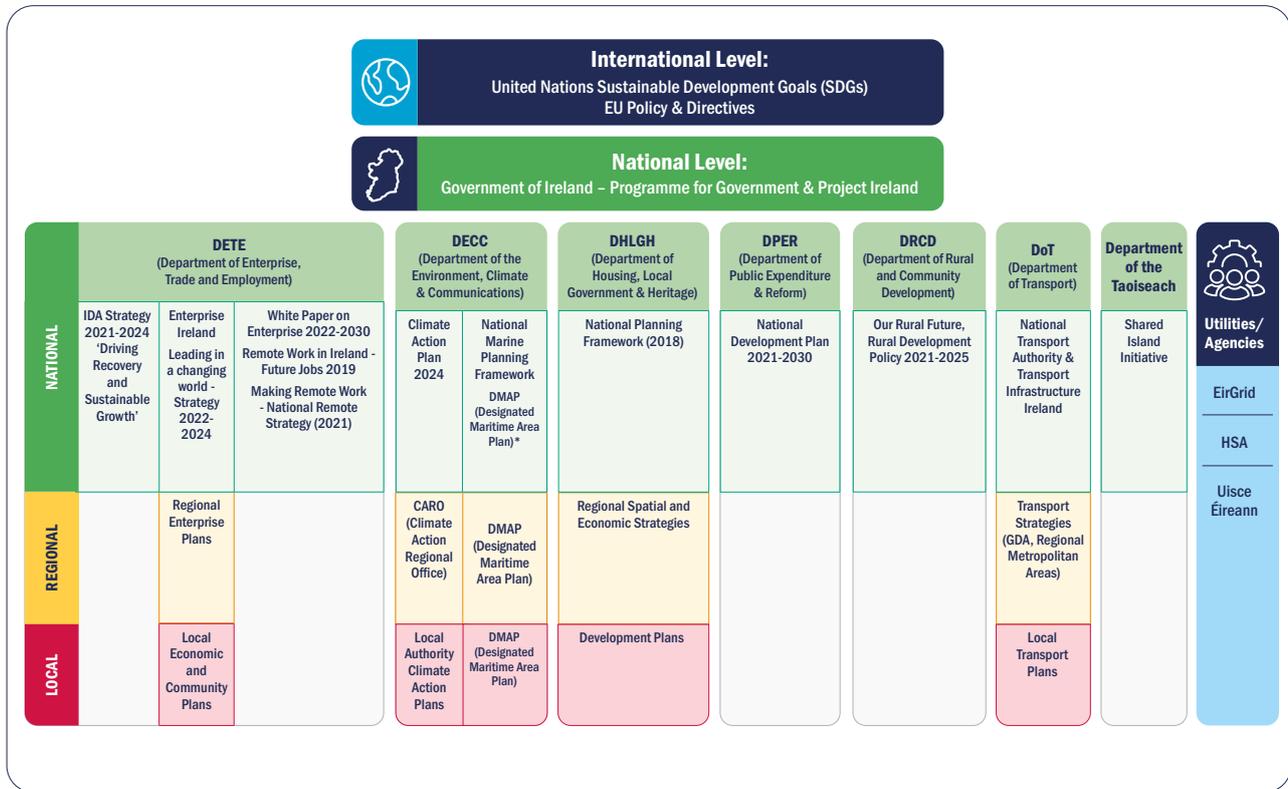
² Section 28 of the 2000 Act.

³ Both the current Section 28 Guidelines: Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022) and the preceding Section 28 Guidelines: Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007).

⁴ Section 45 of the 2023 Bill [No. 81b of 2023].



The Assessment should accord with the relevant legislative requirements and should be consistent with, have regard to and/or be informed, by the relevant policy framework, as required under the legislation.



*A DMAP can be prepared at national, regional and local level.

Figure 1: Strategic Policy Context for Consideration in the Preparation of an Economic Development Strategy and Undertaking an Enterprise and Employment Land Assessment.

2.1 The Role of the Enterprise and Employment Land Assessment

The Assessment is intended to provide a detailed evidence base to assist in the implementation of the economic development strategy of a development plan. The Assessment should be consistent with the national and regional policy framework and should determine the area of land required to be zoned sufficient to accommodate the full range of economic and enterprise uses in sustainable locations. In this way, the Assessment will inform parallel objectives and policies in subsidiary statutory plans⁵ and in Local Economic Community Plans (LECPs) and Town Centre First Plans (TCFPs).

Further, the Assessment will also provide an evidence base against which to monitor and review the implementation of the development plan and the effectiveness of higher-level strategies, policies, programmes and initiatives. Figure 2 illustrates the relationship of the Assessment within the planning policy hierarchy.

⁵ Local Area Plans (LAPs) under the 2000 Act, or other such plans as may be required under the 2023 Bill on enactment.



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Figure 2: The Planning Policy Hierarchy and the Assessment of Enterprise and Employment Land.

The economic development strategy and associated zoning of land under the development plan must accord with statutory provisions, be consistent with national (NPF) and regional development (RSES and Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)) objectives and, within the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), must be consistent with the Transport Strategy of the GDA. They also must have regard to statutory planning guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28 of the 2000 Act, which cover an extensive range of topics.

In addition, there are a range of government and/or departmental policy documents and strategies across a range of sectors and at different spatial levels, such as the non-statutory Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies, that should inform the Assessment, the economic development strategy and the development plan, not least in the context of climate action obligations on prescribed authorities.

A brief overview of some of the key legislative and statutory policy requirements and non-statutory policy guidance, of particular relevance to the preparation of the development plan's economic development strategy, is provided in the following sections.

2.2 Legislative Context

The 2000 Act, which is proposed to be replaced in full by the 2023 Bill (anticipated enactment in 2024), sets out the statutory requirements for the content of statutory plans and the obligation for consistency with higher order development objectives.

While there is currently no mandatory requirement for an economic development strategy to be included in development plans, the legislation⁶ requires such plans to include objectives for the zoning of land, including the zoning of particular areas for particular purposes, such as commercial, industrial and other uses, at the discretion of the planning authority. Section 12(18) of the 2000 Act also requires the development plan to be consistent with the development objectives of the NPF, which set employment growth targets and the RSES, which comprises an economic strategy for the region. This is further supported by the provisions for the core strategy under Section 10(2A) and by Section 10(2C) of the 2000 Act which requires the settlement hierarchy to take account of the economic development potential of a city or town. Planning authorities were advised⁷ that when preparing the core strategy, that they should undertake an appropriate level of analysis to ensure that sufficient lands are identified for employment purposes. In addition, this advice recommended that such lands should be located at suitable locations, taking proper account of national planning policies such as those above and the availability of the required physical infrastructure, particularly access and water services.

There is no mandatory objective for employment under Section 10(2) of the 2000 Act, however, subsection (k) relates to provision for the control of developments covered by the Major Accidents Directive, which is directly related to certain employment and enterprise sites. Several others are more or less directly or indirectly related to employment and enterprise development, including subsection (b) for the provision of infrastructure, subsections (c, ca and cb) relating to conservation of the environment, subsection (h) relating to the development and renewal of areas that are in need of regeneration, and subsection (n) relating to the promotion of sustainable settlement and transport strategies.

⁶ Section 10(2)(a) of the 2000 Act.

⁷ Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Guidance Note on Core Strategies (November 2010).

As noted at section 2.0 above, the 2023 Bill proposes that planning authorities will prepare a strategy relating to economic development having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Updates to this practice note, will be undertaken, where required, in the event of any relevant legislative changes and having regard to any subsequent regulations and commencement orders.

The provisions of the 2000 Act and the 2023 Bill must also be seen within the context of the provisions of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, 2015 (as amended) (the Climate Act), including as they relate to the implementation of the National Climate Objective⁸ and associated targets for greenhouse gas emissions (51% by 2030 and a climate neutral economy⁹ by 2050). Such provisions provide that a relevant body, including a local authority, *“in so far as practicable, perform its functions in a manner consistent with:*

- *the most recent approved climate action plan,*
- *the most recent approved national long term climate action strategy,*
- *the most recent approved national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans,*
- *the furtherance of the national climate objective, and*
- *the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State”.*¹⁰

Each local authority must also prepare a Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) in accordance with the provisions of Section 14B of the Climate Act. The LACAP must specify mitigation and adaptation measures consistent with the most recent approved climate action plan and national adaptation framework. Section 49 of the 2023 Bill also requires the development plan to include a strategy relating to environment and climate change, to include objectives to facilitate climate adaptation and mitigation and the implementation of the local authority’s LACAP.¹¹

There is therefore extensive integration between planning and climate legislation and subsequent implementation mechanisms.

2.3 Statutory Climate Policy Context

The Climate Act provides the statutory basis for the implementation of Ireland’s climate action obligations and the National Climate Objective through, among others,¹² an annual update to the Climate Action Plan 2019. The **Climate Action Plan 2024** (CAP24) is the third annual update to Ireland’s Climate Action Plan. The Climate Action Plan’s vision is that a climate-neutral Ireland will bring new, green employment opportunities. The transition to a climate neutral economy has significant potential to create employment and enterprise section opportunities with new jobs, skills, and investment opportunities and a more resilient economy. CAP24 sets out a number of key measures, which will drive the creation of jobs with new skills requirements in a number of sectors, including building retrofits, renewable energy generation and the move to sustainable mobility.¹³

⁸ The National Climate Objective is defined in Section 3(l) of the Climate Act.

⁹ Section 1 of the Climate Act – definition of a climate neutral economy – *“A sustainable economy and society where greenhouse gas emissions are balanced or exceeded by the removal of greenhouse gases”.*

¹⁰ Section 15(1) of the Climate Act.

¹¹ Section 49(2) of the 2023 Bill.

¹² A series of three, five-year carbon budgets; and a five-year national long term climate action strategy.

¹³ Note, also, that the EU Just Transition Fund (JTF) was established to ensure the burden of transitioning to a decarbonised society must be as fairly distributed as possible. It forms part of Ireland’s cohesion funding, alongside other funds, and can support a wide range of investment such as in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups, research and innovation, transfer of advanced technologies, affordable green energy, as well as decarbonisation of local transport.





As noted in section 2.2 above, the Climate Act also requires local authorities to prepare LACAPs to incorporate both adaption and mitigation strategies for their functional areas. The LACAPs must be taken account of in the development plan in mandatory objectives promoting sustainable settlement and transportation strategies, including measures to reduce energy demand and reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and to address climate adaptation, having regard to the location, layout and design of new development.¹⁴ The OPR is required to address, in particular, this statutory provision in its evaluation of development plans.

Although non-statutory, the **Local Authority Climate Action Plans Guidelines (2022)**¹⁵ reflect the critical role of spatial planning “*as a key enabling instrument for emission reductions*” and climate adaptation. The Assessment should therefore provide a sufficient evidence base to ensure the economic development strategy is consistent with the hierarchy of climate action policies.

2.4 Statutory Planning Policy Context

2.4.1 National Planning Policy

The statutory planning policy framework comprises the national policy, including Project Ireland 2040 – the **National Planning Framework (NPF)** and, its companion document, the **National Development Plan (NDP)**, which sets out the ten-year capital spending ceiling of €165 billion to 2030 to support economic and other development aligned with the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) of the NPF. It also includes policy guidelines issued by the Minister under Section 28 of the 2000 Act. The development plan is required to be consistent with the development objectives of the NPF¹⁶ and to have regard to the Ministerial guidelines,¹⁷ except in respect of specific planning policy requirements which planning authorities must comply with in the performance of their functions.

¹⁴ Section 10(2)(n) of the 2000 Act.

¹⁵ These were not issued under Section 28 of the 2000 Act.

¹⁶ Section 12(18) of the 2000 Act.

¹⁷ Section 28(1) of the 2000 Act.

2.4.2 Mandatory National Planning Policy

The NPF is based on projected national population, housing and employment growth. Balanced regional development, compact growth, a strong economy, strengthened rural economies, a low carbon and climate resilient society, sustainable accessibility and connectivity, and the sustainable use of resources and infrastructure investment and other key strategic objectives are encapsulated by the ten NSOs of the NPF and associated strategic investment priorities. The NPF also contains 75 National Policy Objectives (NPOs), and development plans must be consistent with these NPOs.¹⁸

At a national level it is an objective (NPO1a) of the NPF that employment growth in the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA) area will be at least matched by that of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) and Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) areas combined. NPO2a stipulates that 50% of that employment growth is to be focused in the five cities and there is a presumption in favour of development that can generate more jobs in existing cities, towns and villages (NPO11).

In this regard, NPO10a requires regional assemblies and local authorities to identify and quantify locations for strategic employment development in cities. In addition, NPO10b requires regional assemblies and local authorities to identify and quantify locations for strategic employment development, where suitable, within urban and rural areas. When identifying suitable locations for strategic employment development, regional assemblies and local authorities need to take account of:

- current employment locations;
- locations for expansion of existing enterprises;
- locations for new enterprises; and
- locations for potential relocation of enterprises to facilitate more efficient urban areas through urban regeneration.¹⁹

The NPF requires:

- a more sustainable approach to land-use planning, including ensuring development occurs within environmental limits (NPO52);
- greater efficiency in land management by reducing the rate of land-use change from urban sprawl and new development (NPO53);
- a reduction in carbon emissions by integrating climate action (NPO54);
- the efficient and sustainable use and development of water resources and water services infrastructure to support economic development (NPO63);
- the integration of land-use and spatial planning to support active and sustainable transport modes (NPO64); and
- a practical, evidence-based approach to zoning, whereby only land that is serviced or serviceable during the plan period (taking account of cost) is zoned (NPO72a-c).

The first revision of the NPF is underway and includes updated demographic modelling and related housing demand projections.

¹⁸ Section 12(18) of the 2000 Act. Note, LAPs must also be consistent with the NPOs according to Section 20(5) of the 2000 Act.

¹⁹ Section 4.4 of the National Planning Framework.



2.4.3 Ministerial Guidelines

As noted in section 2.1 above, guidelines published by the Minister under Section 28 of the 2000 Act cover a wide range of topics. Planning authorities must have regard to these guidelines in the carrying out of their functions. This practice note considers those guidelines that are relevant to employment land.

The **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)** form the primary reference document for this practice note. The requirements and advice contained therein, in particular the use of the evidence-based approach, have been incorporated into the step-by-step process set out in section 5.0 of this practice note. A summary of the key requirements of the guidelines relating to the preparation of an economic development strategy is set out in Table 1.

Key Requirements from the Development Plan Guidelines for the Preparation of an Economic Development Strategy:	
Alignment:	Ensure alignment with the policy objectives of the NPF and the economic policy framework provided by the RSES.
Synergy:	Provide close interaction and synergy with, and build on the socio-economic baseline studies of the LECP (as aligned with the RSES).
Cognisant:	Be fully informed by and cognisant of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● drivers of change for the area; ● input of specialist agencies²⁰ and representative bodies; and ● the policies, objectives and strategies of agencies including the IDA Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, and Údarás Na Gaeltachta, local chambers and business representative groups.
Focus:	Focus on developing an economic development strategy to inform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the location of development; ● provision of infrastructure; ● appropriate use of land; and ● creation of quality urban place-making.
Examples:	Land-use policies could support the activities of development agencies by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>“ensuring the requirements of specific sectors are being addressed in land-use terms, i.e. both local start-up businesses and foreign direct investment;</i> ● <i>new, emerging technologies/industries and any specific land-use planning implications that may arise;</i> ● <i>co-ordination of employment and industrial land provision with other specific infrastructure requirements such as roads and public transport, water services, energy and/or communications; and</i> ● <i>planning schemes for Strategic Development Zones designated by Government under Section 166 of the Act”.</i>²¹

Table 1: Key Requirements from the Development Plan Guidelines for the Preparation of an Economic Development Strategy.

²⁰ For example Uisce Éireann (UÉ), National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), Office of Public Works (OPW) etc.

²¹ Section 4.6.2 of the Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022).

Further advice on key considerations relating to employment demand is included in the Appendices to the guidelines. Appendix A advises on considerations relating to accessibility, encouraging high intensity employment sites to be well served by public transport and that certain low intensity uses are accessible to the major road network. The standardised employment zoning categories set out in Appendix B to the guidelines provide a good indication of employment intensity.

The **Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (2020)** recognises that a credible and robust estimate of future population, through an evidence-based approach, is critical to planning for infrastructure, employment and services in order to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to estimating what the scale and nature of what those future needs will be.

Transport infrastructure is critical to facilitating sustainable employment growth. The **Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)** set out planning policy considerations relating to development affecting national roads (including motorways, national primary and national secondary roads) outside the 50/60 kmh speed limit zones for cities, towns and villages. These guidelines emphasise the importance of the strategic traffic functions of national roads being maintained by limiting the extent of development that would give rise to the generation of short trip traffic on national roads or alternatively by ensuring that the trip demand from future development will primarily be catered for on the non-national network.

In the preparation of development and Local Area Plans (LAPs) by planning authorities, it is very important to demonstrate an analysis of trip generation aspects of any land-use zoning objectives and how such trip generation is to be catered for, promoting the use of sustainable modes, while protecting the strategic function of the national roads network. Use of evidence-based approaches and detailed transport modelling, as necessary²² are therefore basic requirements.

2.4.4 Regional Planning Policy

The three RSESs – **Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly RSES, Southern Regional Assembly RSES** and **Northern and Western Regional Assembly RSES** - have been developed as part of the Government's long-term plans to meet the challenges of population growth, climate change and maintaining a competitive economy.

With a primary statutory objective to implement Project Ireland 2040 at a regional level, each RSES sets out a bespoke, long-term framework for spatial planning and economic development for its region. They seek to optimise the potential of the regions providing an evidence and place-based approach for growth and how it will be directed and managed over the next decade.

Smart Specialisation is one of the key economic principles adopted in each of these high-level statutory frameworks. The RSESs set out for 2040 additional jobs targets i.e. 320,000 for the EMRA, 225,000 for the SRA, and 115,000 for the NWRA. In addition, consistent with NPO10a and 10b, the RSESs identify strategic employment zones. The RSESs set out the regional policy approach to sustainable transport, place-making and regeneration, including policy objectives and guiding principles, which enable enterprise and employment to be considered in a broader policy context. As the development plan (and any LAP) is required to be consistent with the development objectives specified in the RSES,²³ the foregoing should form a basis for devising an economic development strategy and associated zonings in the development plan.

²² Box 2.4 of the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012).

²³ Section 12(18) of the 2000 Act.



In addition, the RSEs include five Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) for the five cities – three in the SRA area: Cork, Limerick and Waterford; and one each in the EMRA and NWRA areas. These comprise strategic development strategies to provide more detailed policy objectives and targets for these cities, which are targeted for 50% of future population and employment growth to 2040, to provide for greater coordination and integration of land-use and transport planning and development between the multiple planning authorities overseeing these metropolitan areas.



Figure 3: The Three Regional Assemblies.

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The RSES also provides the policy framework for the preparation of local authority LECs.

The RSES provides an important source of information and analysis on the characteristics of the economy and employment for the region, including employment forecasts based on the NPF, and is supplemented by the Regional Development Monitor (RDM).²⁴

The National Transport Authority's (NTA's) **Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042**²⁵ sets out the framework for investment in transport infrastructure and services over the next two decades to 2042. The transport strategy was developed to be consistent with the policies and objectives of the EMRA RSES and is based on national policies on sustainability as set out in climate action and low carbon legislation, and in climate action plans. It sets out a range of measures relating to planning for sustainable development, integration, the various transport modes, traffic management, freight delivery and servicing and climate action management. Each planning authority within the GDA is required to ensure their development plan²⁶ and any LAP is consistent with the strategy.²⁷ The EMRA RSES is also required to be consistent with the transport strategy.²⁸ While the NTA has also made Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies (MATSS) for Cork, Limerick and Waterford to align with the MASPs, these currently have no statutory basis.

2.4.5 Local Planning Policy

The LAP is the key, statutory planning policy document for the sub-planning authority level. The LAP must be consistent with:

- the objectives of the development plan and its core strategy;
- the relevant RSES;²⁹
- for relevant local authorities, the NTA's GDA Transport Strategy;³⁰
- the development objectives of the NPF; and
- any specific planning policy requirements of Section 28 guidelines.³¹

The objectives of the LAP, including in relation to the zoning of land, will be useful to inform stage 1 of the Assessment. It should be noted that, under the 2023 Bill, it is intended that LAPs will be replaced by a number of plan types including Urban Area Plans, Priority Area Plans and Coordinated Area Plans.

Non-statutory local plans prepared by the planning authority are also relevant to the Assessment, including the Town Centre First Plans (TCFPs) prepared in accordance with Action 16 of the Government's **Town Centre First (TCF) Policy (2022)**. The TCF policy builds on NPF objectives, to build strong towns that provide services and opportunities to residents and businesses, in recognition of the potential that particular employment sectors can play in supporting regeneration and renewal in town centres, aligned with wider sustainable development and climate goals. TCFPs are prepared by local town teams which comprise a group of local residents, community and business representatives.

²⁴ Note - The three regional assemblies are also the managing authorities for several EU funding programmes, including the Just Transition Fund (JTF). The EU JTF aims to address employment, economic, social and environmental impacts associated with the transition to climate neutrality. Many of the projects funded in this way can support the implementation of development plans, including the objectives of the economic development strategy.

²⁵ Section 12 of the Dublin Transport Authority Act, 2008.

²⁶ Section 9(6A) of the 2000 Act.

²⁷ Section 19(2A) of the 2000 Act.

²⁸ Section 23(7) of the 2000 Act.

²⁹ Section 19(2) of the 2000 Act.

³⁰ Section 19(2A) of the 2000 Act.

³¹ Section 20(5) of the 2000 Act.



The TCFP identifies challenges, actions and integrated responses across themes, including business and commercial, to capitalise on the TCF and others funds, such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) and the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF).

2.5 Enterprise and Employment Policy Framework

The following European, national, regional and local level plans, policies and programmes are of particular relevance and should be central to the development of the economic development strategy and should assist the planning authority in assessing the requirement for and location of enterprise and employment lands.

2.5.1 Relevant European Policy

The Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA) is designed to support the EU's net zero manufacturing capacities and products, helping to meet Europe's climate neutrality goals, create green jobs and maintain the EU's competitiveness. From a land-use perspective, the NZIA requires Member States to encourage national and local authorities responsible for preparing plans, including zoning, spatial plans and land-use plans, to include, where appropriate, provisions in such plans for the development of net zero manufacturing projects and all the necessary infrastructure.

2.5.2 National Enterprise and Employment Policy

The **White Paper on Enterprise 2022-2030**, prepared by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) sets out the Government's vision for "*Irish-based enterprise to succeed through competitive advantage founded on sustainability, innovation and productivity, delivering rewarding jobs and livelihoods*". It focuses on the delivery of seven priority policy objectives:

1. Integrating decarbonisation and net zero commitments;
2. Placing digital transformation at the heart of enterprise policy;
3. Advancing Ireland's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and trade value proposition;
4. Strengthening the Irish-owned exporting sector;
5. Enabling locally trading sectors to thrive;
6. Stepping up enterprise innovation; and
7. Building on Ireland's existing strengths and opportunities.



The White Paper also addresses key competitive environment conditions that impact enterprise including infrastructure challenges, the cost of doing business, skills and talent development, access to finance, and taxation and regulation. The paper sets key targets under each of the seven priority pillars. These include commitments to increase the productivity of Irish-owned enterprise and domestic sectors and setting targets for balanced regional growth. For example over two-thirds of Enterprise Ireland (EI) assisted new jobs between 2022 and 2024 are to be created outside of Dublin, as well as at least half of all FDI investments between 2021 and 2024, and the target is to ensure that unemployment does not exceed one percentage point of the national unemployment rate in any region.

The White Paper specifically recognises regional and spatial clustering of similar enterprise types as a key tool for achieving enterprise policy objectives, including driving innovation, attracting and embedding FDI and developing linkages between multinationals and indigenous firms. It notes the role clustering can play in the green and digital transitions and, further to the commitment in the White Paper, a National Clustering Programme is being developed with a target to fund five national clusters by 2025. A national coordination entity, located in the newly established Cluster Ireland Unit in the DETE is intended to provide coherence to the existing ad hoc clustering ecosystem and to support the development of clusters of scale.

The White Paper also recognises the comparative competitive advantage provided by Ireland's abundant renewable energy capability and its potential to create new industrial development opportunities and to transform energy use by industry. Accordingly, the DETE has published **Powering Prosperity – Ireland's Offshore Wind Industrial Strategy** to 2030 to ensure that the economic development opportunities associated with achieving the Government's target for 37GW of Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) are maximised, in a strategically planned way. The overarching objective is to maximise the economic benefit of achieving Ireland and Europe's ORE targets by creating a solid domestic supply chain and resilient ORE industry. It sets out how Ireland can maximise the economic impact of future renewable energy use, leveraging the full potential of additional generation capacity that will arise from achieving our ORE targets, which will strengthen Ireland's global competitiveness and deliver balanced regional economic development.

The Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) published **Our Rural Future – Rural Development Policy 2021-2025**, which adopts a strategic, ambitious and holistic approach to investing in and maximising opportunities for rural areas. It focuses on a number of key thematic objectives, including the following:

- optimising the opportunities for rural communities from high-speed broadband;
- supporting improved quality employment and career opportunities in rural areas; and
- assisting the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages.

The whole-of-government approach to service delivery and investment provides for investment in rural towns and villages as hubs of social and economic activity. This approach provides new opportunities for the diversification of rural economies, including through the delivery of high-speed broadband. The emphasis is on a place-based approach to rural development. There are a total of 146 actions identified and many of those focus on revitalising rural towns and villages which present opportunities for developing complementary local development plan policies.



In addition, IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland are two key national enterprise and employment development agencies under the aegis of the DETE. Under the IDA's strategy **Driving Recovery and Sustainable Growth 2021-2024**, it aims to attract half (400) of all investments from 2021-2024 to regional locations outside Dublin and maintain the same high level of investment as targeted previously for each region of the country, guided by the focus in the NPF on building stronger regions and centres of scale. The IDA's ability to maintain existing levels of FDI and to attract new investment is dependent upon effective collaboration to ensure that each region has the necessary conditions in place to foster enterprise and innovation and attract investment and talent.

Enterprise Ireland's **Leading in a changing world – Strategy 2022-2024** aims to support the creation of over 45,000 jobs across the country by the end of 2024, working with the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), with over two-thirds of new jobs created in regions outside of Dublin. This is achieved by the provision of supports and schemes to achieve five ambitions for Ireland and Irish enterprises:

1. Export-focused Irish enterprises delivering growth across all regions;
2. A world-leading location to start and scale a business;
3. Achieving competitive advantage through customer-led innovation and digitalisation;
4. Leading globally on sustainability and achieving climate action targets; and
5. The world's most successful enterprise development team.

2.5.3 Regional Enterprise and Employment Policy

The DETE oversees the implementation at national level of nine Regional Enterprise Plans (REPs), which facilitate regional stakeholders to work collaboratively to strengthen the regional enterprise ecosystem.

These bottom-up plans are developed by regional stakeholders including the local authorities, enterprise agencies, LEOs, regional skills fora, and education and training institutes. The plans focus on undertaking collaborative initiatives to support enterprise growth and job creation in each of the nine regions across Ireland. The current REPs were developed in parallel with the creation of Ireland's **National Smart Specialisation Strategy for Innovation 2022-2027** (S3) which was prepared by the DETE. The stakeholder consultation events undertaken as part of the development of the REPs acted as an entrepreneurial discovery process, which has contributed valuable insights to the S3 for Ireland.

Each REP is overseen and monitored by a Steering Committee made up of regional stakeholders and chaired by a senior private sector businessperson. A full time REP Programme Manager is responsible for driving implementation and stakeholder engagement on the ground in each region. The current set of REPs run until the end of 2024.

2.5.4 Local Enterprise and Employment Policy

The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government's **Putting People First – Action Plan for Effective Local Government (2012)** envisioned local government as the main vehicle to lead economic, social and community development. It proposed that "*as a minimum ... the range of local authority economic development functions will be brought together and underpinned in an economic development plan in conjunction with the spatial planning function, as a component of the City/County Development Plan, in effect, forming a local 'Spatial and Economic Development Plan'.*"

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This vision is reflected in the **Local Government Reform Act 2014** (the LG Act 2014) which ushered in the fundamental reorganisation of governance structures to devolve greater decision-making powers to local authorities. This includes the requirement for each local authority to prepare a LECP, to set out high-level goals, objectives and the actions needed to promote and support economic development and local and community development. It is an evidence-based, action-focused plan that must be consistent with the core strategy and objectives of the development plan, the RSES³² and consistent with the policies and objectives of the government.³³

LEOs³⁴ play a central role as part of a supportive ecosystem for enterprise – providing advisory and enterprise support services and financial support directly to small businesses and promoting entrepreneurship in towns and communities across the country.³⁵

2.6 Strategic Policy Context on Enabling Infrastructure

Economic development depends on a range of critical physical infrastructure, services and resources, which provide access to markets and to workforces, connectivity for communications, energy supplies, water resources, wastewater services and waste management facilities. These are generally governed by non-statutory strategies or policy documents, being the stated government policy and/or prepared by a relevant public agency.

A detailed analysis of the infrastructure necessary to accommodate the planned spatial distribution and intensity of enterprise and employment at a settlement and site-specific level, against the existing and/or planned availability and capacity of existing infrastructure, is essential to determine the potential for such development to be accommodated over the period of a development plan. It will also enable the planning authority to determine and cost the provision of additional infrastructure to provide appropriately serviced zoned land to implement its economic development strategy, consistent with requirements for a tiered approach to zoning under NPO72 and with the requirements for a Settlement Capacity Audit under the Development Plan Guidelines.³⁶

2.6.1 Transport and Accessibility

Transport infrastructure is critical for the operation of any enterprise that produces a physical product and/or provides a workplace for employees. Investment in future transport infrastructure is set out in the Government's **National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (2021)** (NIFTI), under the Project Ireland 2040 umbrella. NIFTI, prepared by the Department of Transport (DoT), prioritises future investment in the land transport network to support the delivery of the NSOs identified in the NPF and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 50% in line with the Climate Action Plan.

Future transport projects must align with the four investment priorities:

1. decarbonisation;
2. protection and renewal of transport infrastructure;
3. mobility of people and goods in urban areas; and
4. enhanced regional and rural connectivity.

³² Section 66B(4) of the Local Government Act 2001 (revised).

³³ Section 66(C) of the Local Government Act 2001 (revised).

³⁴ Enterprise Ireland (EI) supports the 31 LEOs through the EI Centre of Excellence.

³⁵ In 2023, the LEOs supported over 38,000 jobs with 82% of new jobs recorded as outside the Dublin region.

³⁶ Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022).



The investment priorities are supplemented by modal and intervention hierarchies, which establish the types of preferred solutions from both an environmental and cost-effectiveness perspective. The framework encourages the use of (1) active travel and (2) public transport ahead of solutions reliant on (3) private transport. Further, (1) maintenance or (2) optimisation or improvement of existing assets, including through demand management, is also preferred to (3) extensive improvements of infrastructure or (4) new infrastructure.

The key message out of the foregoing is that the Assessment should therefore identify lands for enterprise and employment opportunities that align with the NIFTI's investment priorities, modal and intervention hierarchies.

The Government's **National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)**(NSMP) was published in line with Action 238 of the CAP21. The NSMP, prepared by the DoT, sets out a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport journeys to help Ireland meet its climate obligation, aligned with the NPF particularly in relation to decarbonisation, compact growth and balanced regional development. It highlights that sustainable mobility has benefits for economic development by allowing more efficient movement of people, providing access to employment opportunities, and reducing traffic congestion.

Its ten goals are underpinned by the principles of safe and green mobility (goals 1-5); people focused mobility (goals 6-8); and better integrated mobility (goals 9-10). Key goals include expanding availability of safe sustainable modes and encouraging people to choose these instead of the private car; taking a whole of journey approach, designing infrastructure according to Universal Design Principles and the hierarchy of road users; and better integrating land-use and transport planning at all levels.

The Assessment should be informed by and support the implementation of the government's transport policies.

2.6.2 Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment

The Government's **Water Services Policy Statement 2024-2030** (WSPS)³⁷ was published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in February 2024. The WSPS will contribute to the development of water services policy in the short and medium term. It sets out objectives and priorities and provides a framework for Uisce Éireann (UÉ)³⁸ to consolidate and develop public water services through its Strategic Funding Plan. UÉ's current **Strategic Funding Plan**, covered the period from 2019 to 2024 and set out the measures proposed over that period to implement the objectives of UÉ's approved **Water Services Strategic Plan (2015)** (WSSP). UÉ is currently preparing a new WSSP (WSSP 2050) which will present its objectives for the next 25 years and the means by which it will achieve them. UÉ has commenced the consultation process for the new WSSP which will replace the current 2015 WSSP. Once adopted the new WSSP 2050 will ensure that there is efficient and sustainable water services systems in place to meet customers' needs and to contribute to economic growth and development.

³⁷ Required under the Water Services Act 2017.

³⁸ Uisce Éireann (UÉ), formerly Irish Water, is responsible for the management and maintenance of all public water and wastewater services and for investment and planning of capital projects.



Figure 4: The Regional Water Resource Plan Areas (extract from the National Water Resources Plan (NWRP)).

The **National Water Resources Plan – Framework Plan (2021)** is a strategic plan used to identify deficiencies and need in water supply and to develop plan level capital and operational solutions to address these issues. It is supported by four **Regional Water Resource Plans**³⁹ that identify the needs within the water supplies in each region and develop a preferred approach to resolve them. The region areas are illustrated in Figure 4, above.

In addition, a standardised approach to the management of treated wastewater sludge is set out in UÉ’s **National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan (2016)** which will be relevant to planning for certain enterprise and employment activities.

UÉ produce a **water supply capacity register** and a **wastewater treatment capacity register** for each planning authority, which provides details of capacity surplus/constraints that may exist, which may be considered against UÉ’s current **Capital Investment Plan 2020-2024**, which is a five-year investment strategy for water and wastewater assets and infrastructure.

³⁹ The four Regional Water Resource Plans (RWRPs) were adopted in 2023.



2.6.3 Waste Management

The Government's **A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy – Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020-2025** was published by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment in September 2020. It sets out the roadmap for waste planning and management, and shifts the focus away from waste disposal.

The subsequent, **Whole of Government Circular Economy Strategy 2022 - 2023**, published by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) provides a national policy framework for Ireland's transition to a circular economy and has a statutory footing through the **Circular Economy and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2022**.

The circular economy is as much a social and economic agenda as it is an environmental one. Scaling the circular economy will create the opportunity for significant job creation and will give a focus to inclusive, balanced and sustainable development, particularly in terms of regional development.

A plan-led approach for essential waste management infrastructure including, for example, transfer and pre-treatment facilities, material recovery facilities, biological treatment facilities and final treatment, is necessary for the delivery of the circular economy and sustainable economic development.

2.6.4 Energy

Accessibility to energy supply networks and the capacity of energy sources is a key consideration for the location of employment and economic development, particularly large-scale FDIs. EirGrid,⁴⁰ which develops and operates the national high voltage electricity grid in Ireland, details network projects under development, and committed, for a ten-year period in its **Transmission Development Plan 2021-2030**.

The **Renewable Electricity Spatial Policy Framework (RESPF)**, currently in preparation, will provide a national policy for onshore renewable electricity and will inform and reshape the development and distribution of onshore renewables in order to enable the delivery of Ireland's renewable electricity targets, as set out in CAP23 (Action EL/23/2).



⁴⁰ EirGrid is a state-owned company and is independent from the Electricity Supply Board (ESB).

The government has set ambitious targets to achieve 9GW of onshore wind, 5GW of offshore wind and 8GW of solar by 2030, as well as supporting at least 500MW of local community-based renewable energy projects and increased levels of new micro-generation and small-scale generation.

Through the first revision of the NPF, presently underway, a range of regional renewable electricity capacity allocations are proposed. It is intended that these allocations will be integrated into the RSES and associated Regional Renewable Energy Strategies, which will then be translated to county-level targets in development plans.

Likewise, evolving marine planning policy context including the **Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (ORED P I Interim Review and ORED P II**, currently in preparation) and the preparation of **Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs)** will provide additional context and evidence base, particularly for coastal planning authorities, in undertaking an Assessment and subsequent plan-making.

In the energy sector, transition to a zero carbon economy from renewable sources of energy is an integral part of Ireland's climate change strategy. The decarbonisation of the economy will enhance Irish competitiveness and support a rapid transition to climate neutrality.

2.7 Environmental Obligations

As illustrated in Figure 2 the Assessment process is a non-statutory technical working paper that complements the preliminary stage 1 of the plan-making process.⁴¹ The Assessment can be used as an evidence base to inform the economic development strategy of the development plan and associated land-use zoning objectives.

Consideration of the economic development strategy and zoning of lands will be undertaken as part of the statutory plan-making process. Therein, formal obligations of the planning authority in respect of compliance with the EU directives and in particular Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA), together with the requirements to undertake Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) will be required to integrate into the plan-making stages, including the relevant consultation with prescribed authorities and the public. Policy and land-use zoning decisions are ultimately a reserved function of the planning authority, that must be made within the context of proper planning and sustainable development and having regard to their role as a competent body for SEA and AA. However, the Assessment should be fully informed by all relevant constraints, including all relevant environmental constraints.

⁴¹ Section 3.2.2 of the Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022).





3.0 Common Issues

As part of the process of preparing this practice note, engagement took place with relevant stakeholders including local authorities, relevant government departments and agencies to gain important insights into current practices, opportunities and challenges in planning effectively for enterprise development and employment land needs.

3.1 The Development Plan Process – Responding to Local Characteristics and Issues

Preparation of the development plan is a major task, addressing different development contexts from large cities to suburban and rural areas. Experience therefore signals that good practice is to address the local context and economic profile in a methodical step-by-step approach rather than adopting a rigid template.

3.2 Engagement with Infrastructure and Enterprise Stakeholders

Section 11(3) of the 2000 Act sets out statutory requirements for consultation with the providers of physical and/or social infrastructure in the preparation of development plans. The development of land for enterprise and employment purposes is dependent on infrastructure, particularly physical infrastructure, such as water services, transport, energy, communications and waste management infrastructure.

Stakeholders indicated that effective development plan policies and objectives for enterprise and employment critically depend on early engagement between the plan preparation team and key statutory and commercial providers of essential infrastructure. This enables providers to plan infrastructure delivery to assist in the achievement of the objectives set out in the development plan, or to highlight where development plan proposals conflict with or are unable to be supported by their infrastructure delivery strategies. Key agencies include: UÉ for water supply and wastewater services; NTA and TII for transport services and road/rail infrastructure; and EirGrid/ESB Networks/Gas Networks Ireland for energy supply. Where there is no relevant agency, as in the case of waste management, relevant policy documents should be consulted, such as the relevant Regional Waste Management Plan.

DETE recognises the benefits of cross-boundary local authority co-ordination in the planning for and realisation of economic development. This is evidenced by the role of regional assemblies in overseeing implementation of RSEs linked to the REPs under the Government's Action Plan for Jobs. Engagement with the REPs Regional Programme Managers may also be useful during the plan preparation process.

Enterprise agencies under the DETE, including IDA Ireland, EI and Údaras Na Gaeltachta, play key roles and are a valuable resource to draw from in understanding future land and real estate requirements of the enterprise sector. These agencies welcome the opportunity to engage with planning authorities during the plan preparation process.

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Stakeholders highlighted the critical role for planning authorities in bringing the perspectives of different agencies together to ensure that the resultant development policies and objectives are based on the widest degree of buy-in possible and are ambitious, but also realistic and pragmatic.

3.3 Economic Development and Planning Co-ordination within Local Authorities

Good practice in the co-ordination of planning and economic development functions occurs in local authorities when they ensure effective communications and information-sharing between the relevant sections (and teams). For example, baseline and background data from the LECP can be invaluable in developing an economic profile for the development plan to address in planning policy terms.

Planning authorities highlighted the benefits of key personnel, from the various internal departments, working together to ensure co-ordinated implementation of the development plan and the LECP, with the local enterprise sector. Through this engagement, planning authorities can identify and assess the suitability of existing employment lands and future land-use needs.

3.4 Information and Other Resources

Stakeholders also pointed to the growing range of statistical sources and GIS-type analytical tools, such as the RDM, that development plan teams can draw from in developing an economic profile. Appendix A to this practice note provides a non-exhaustive list of useful data sources.

3.5 Practicalities of Employment Projections

The NPF and the RSEs set a strategic outlook in relation to the distribution and growth in population, change to employment and housing demand, and provide a sense of potential future levels of employment that planning authorities need to plan for.

Stakeholders acknowledged the need to reflect the long-term trends underpinning NPF/RSE objectives, including in relation to employment. However, they also emphasised the importance of taking local considerations and pace of development, in the near and medium term, into account to ensure development plans reflect realistic prospects for development opportunities.

3.6 Inclusion of Employment and Enterprise Zoning Objectives

Local authorities have applied individualistic approaches to zoning categories used for employment and enterprise lands, from general to specific categories, in the recent development plan review cycle. However, stakeholders reflected that future plan reviews will provide opportunities to move towards the recommended standardised zoning categories, as set out in Appendix B of the **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)**, which were finalised towards the end of the recent development plans review cycle. Local authorities recognise that a standardised approach will enable better understanding of infrastructure requirements by their infrastructure providers, as they engage with the plan-making process, especially for utility intensive sites. A standardised approach will also provide greater certainty in the planning system and be easier for developers/applicants for development, and the public to understand.



3.7 Enabling Business Start-up

Reflecting the different developmental contexts local authorities must address, stakeholders also highlighted the organic nature of enterprise creation, particularly in relation to business start-ups.

Such start-ups may not always integrate easily with enterprise and employment objectives and zoning designations in the development plan and where business viability may need low-cost settings and properties. Such factors highlight the importance of local authority planning and economic development functions being effectively co-ordinated in both anticipating and providing for the needs of business start-ups.

3.8 Planning for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) Growth and Enabling Urban Regeneration

Stakeholders also highlighted the importance of proactively planning for and facilitating the relocation of economic activities from older industrial estate-type locations.

Many of these locations were originally located on the edges of or outside urban areas. However, with urban growth many such locations now find themselves in areas where there are significant policy drivers for urban regeneration including housing delivery in compact and public transport served locations. Accordingly, stakeholders highlighted the need for such regeneration strategies to work hand in hand with the provision of appropriate and cost effective locations for established enterprises to be able to move to.

3.9 Balancing Environmental Obligations and Enterprise Considerations

Environmental sustainability is a major objective for the enterprise sector, as it engages with the environmental, social and governance (ESG) framework and the need to assess an organisation's business practices and performance on various sustainability issues. In this regard, stakeholders emphasised the critical role of development plans in balancing economic development and environmental protection to securing overall proper planning and sustainable development.

The requirements for systematic assessments under EU environmental directives in relation to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) in relation to protected habitats and species, and flood risk management protection, in addition to EU and national standards for air and water quality and noise parameters, drive the need to securing economic development in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. In this regard, engagement with the Office of Public Works (OPW) is essential in addressing Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and flood risk management, while engagement with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is also necessary in carrying out SEA and AA, including screening.

With increasing demands on the planning system to promote and facilitate low carbon development, stakeholders also highlighted the importance of securing a just transition in climate action.



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4.0 Developing a Sustainable Enterprise and Employment Land Portfolio

4.1 Understanding Macrotrends in Employment

It is important that planning authorities have an understanding of the macrotrends at international, national and regional levels that inform the policy context. The following tables summarise some of the main change factors that influence macrotrends under three themes:

- (a) technology;
- (b) economy and business; and
- (c) environment and social.

Understanding the implications of these factors will assist in carrying out the Assessment, especially the determination of future workforce supply and demand (stage 2) and employment land requirements (stage 3).

A library of resources and further reading is also included in Appendix A.



CHANGE FACTOR - TECHNOLOGY	
 <p>Artificial Intelligence (AI)</p>	<p>The World Economic Forum (2022) published The Future of Jobs Report 2023 which indicates that the potential scope of automation and augmentation will further expand over the next few years, with AI techniques maturing and finding mainstream application across sectors. The impact on the geographies of economic land-use are not yet clear, but AI will become an increasingly important factor.</p>
 <p>Automation and Technological Advancements</p>	<p>Industries associated with manufacturing and transport, warehousing and distribution are at the forefront of automation and technological advancements. These advancements are expected to cause a reduction in overall employment generated, but they will not necessarily translate into a reduction in the amount of floorspace or land required.</p>
 <p>Smart Specialisation</p>	<p>Smart specialisation is part of the EU's Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 Strategy that focuses on each region's strengths and the activities that support these strengths (European Commission, 2020). The policy relies on a place-based approach and identifies strategic areas for intervention based on i) the analysis of the strength and potential of the economy, and ii) on an Entrepreneurial Discovery Process with wide stakeholder involvement.</p> <p>The National Smart Specialisation Strategy for Innovation 2022-2027 (S3) prepared by the DETE takes a regional approach to Ireland's Research, Development and Innovation (RD&I), where IDA Ireland, EI, LEOs, SFI and all enterprise agencies, the REPs and LECPs must ensure industry, education institutions and communities play a key role in the entrepreneurial discovery process.</p>
 <p>National Space Strategy for Enterprise</p>	<p>Close to 100 Irish companies and a growing number of Irish research teams are actively involved in space-related developments supported by the European Space Agency (ESA), through EI. The National Space Strategy for Enterprise 2019 – 2025 prepared by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation outlines the Government's vision for Ireland to develop "<i>an economically sustainable and expanding space-active industry, delivering quality jobs for the economy of tomorrow</i>".</p>
Land-Use Planning Implications	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agile working, connectivity, permeability. ● Automated processes, responsive environments. ● Big data in space management. ● Integrated, smart Building Management System (BMS), demand management. 	

Table 2: Details of Technology Change Factors and Their Potential to Influence Macrotrends.

CHANGE FACTOR – ECONOMY AND BUSINESS	
 <p>Changing Nature of Work and Remote Working</p>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic greatly accelerated the trend in home-working. Remote/hybrid working has become the norm for nearly a third of Ireland's workforce.⁴² The 2023 National Remote Working in Ireland Survey: Summary Findings Report⁴³ found that remote/hybrid working is a key factor for 92% of respondents in their decision to change employer illustrating the new dynamic remote working can bring to locational decisions.</p>
 <p>Clustering</p>	<p>Create, maintain, or upgrade economic strongholds in a favourable business ecosystem; proactively linking uses and activities in policy both in geographical locations, technologies and economic anchors. (World Economic Forum, 2020). The Government's White Paper on Enterprise 2022-2030 (DETE, 2022) proposes, under the National Clustering Programme, to adopt "a more coordinated national approach to clustering, [it aims] to maximise the scale, impact and international visibility of Irish clusters and cluster organisations, while simultaneously leveraging the benefits of proximity and co-location to boost regional and rural economic development outcomes".</p>
 <p>Economic Ecosystems</p>	<p>The OECD (2019) recognises the need for economic policy to support the provision of a highly interconnected 'ecosystem' of entrepreneurs and investors, technologists and innovators. The White Paper on Enterprise 2022-2030 (DETE, 2022) seeks to enhance the entrepreneurial, technological, and scaling ecosystem for enterprise by promoting links between Irish-based multi-national enterprises and Irish SMEs, increasing the services provided by enterprise agencies, facilitating knowledge transfer and addressing infrastructure and 'ecosystem' framework conditions for enterprise.</p>
 <p>eCommerce</p>	<p>The rise of eCommerce has seen significant growth in the demand for freight and logistics industrial space in close proximity to customers (World Economic Forum, 2020).</p>
 <p>Industrial and Logistics Floorspace</p>	<p>At national and local levels, there remains a strong demand for industrial and logistics floorspace (CBRE 2024). Online retail and enterprise, not only has implications for town centre uses (particularly retail), but it also drives a demand for decentralisation of distribution hubs for these goods and services.</p>
 <p>Evolution of Retail</p>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted the physical retailing paradigm globally and nationally. It has dramatically increased the adoption and use of online platforms, with many retailers moving towards a more digitalised business model.</p>

⁴²The Irish Examiner - 06 April 2024.

⁴³Carried out by University of Galway/Western Development Commission.



Land-Use Planning Implications

- Short-term planning horizons, managing uncertainty.
- Outsourcing and contingent workforce.
- Disruptive forces.
- Greater variety of floorspace needs, more turnkey solutions.
- Smaller footprints, flexibility and responsiveness.
- Flexible space/contracts, core and flex space, commodity space.
- Effective workplace, range of work settings, space as a brand.
- Locational priorities.

Table 3: Details of Economy and Business Change Factors and Their Potential to Influence Macrotrends.



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CHANGE FACTOR - ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL	
 <p>Climate and Green Economy</p>	<p>Climate change, sustainable development and the green economy are central policy concerns for global bodies including the United Nations (UN), World Economic Forum, World Bank and EU. 'Net Zero', renewable energy generation and new energy sources including battery and hydrogen technologies, energy consumption and dependence on fossil fuels, have implications for real estate investment, economic development and employment/industry locations and infrastructure demands.</p> <p>National and sectoral targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions will drive changes in planning, developing and operating business and enterprise.</p>
 <p>Place-making</p>	<p>Vibrant, attractive and accessible places with supporting amenities and services can better attract and retain businesses and employees. Employees now expect not only a place to work, but a place that has modern amenities and ease of access, which positively influences their work experience (IPUT, 2020). The role of place-making in helping to enhance Ireland's attractiveness to investors has been highlighted by research carried out by the IDA Ireland and the DHLGH. The creation of urban environments that offer good quality of life is important in allowing investors to attract and retain valuable workforces.</p>
 <p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives i.e. social, environmental and economic, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. ESG is now a particularly relevant issue driving corporate investment and decision making.</p>
 <p>Logistics and Proximity to Key Transport Routes and Strategic Infrastructure</p>	<p>The proximity of employment to key transport routes is a key priority for industry, distribution and logistics sectors as transport costs comprise a large share of the operational cost base relative to rental cost. Savings can be achieved by locating nearer to key transport infrastructure such as ports, airports, freight rail lines and major road infrastructure.</p> <p>But the freight haulage industry is also under pressure to decarbonise and Ireland's Road Haulage Strategy 2022–2031 (DoT, 2022) considers the potential for intermodal transport of freight, particularly in the context of the All-Island Strategic Rail Review: Final Report, which was jointly commissioned by the DoT and the Department for Infrastructure in Northern Ireland, and was published in July 2024.</p> <p>In addition, accessibility for employees by active and sustainable modes is also an increasing concern, in view of national and sectoral climate action obligations, ESG and the other factors referred to in this section.</p>
 <p>15-minute City</p>	<p>This concept envisages that within 15 minutes people should have the ability to access most of their daily needs across six functions - living, working, supplying, caring, learning and enjoying - from where they live on foot or by bicycle.</p> <p>In terms of access to employment, the '15-minute city' is facilitated by well-located employment centres within an environment permeable to, and accessible via, safe and welcoming active and sustainable transport infrastructure and facilities.</p>

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 <p>Displacement of Employment and Enterprise Lands</p>	<p>Mixed-use regeneration of urban areas has significant benefits for urban economies and supports vibrant, liveable towns and cities. While this has often affected defunct industries, there are also potential negative effects from the displacement of local industries/businesses.</p>
 <p>Circular Economy</p>	<p>The circular economy action plan (CEAP) is one of the main building blocks of the European Green Deal and will reduce pressure on natural resources and create sustainable growth and jobs. It targets how products are designed and promotes circular economy processes, and aims to ensure that waste is prevented and the resources used are kept in use for as long as possible.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Land-Use Planning Implications</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environment, social and governance criteria. ● Sustainable development goals. ● Corporate social responsibility. ● Carbon neutrality. ● Importance of communities and public realm. ● Attraction and retention of employees, improving productivity. ● Workplace experience. ● Diversity and multi-generational workforce. 	

Table 4: Details of Environmental and Social Change Factors and Their Potential to Influence Macrotrends.

4.2 Forecasting Methods

In order to determine the land area required to accommodate enterprise and employment uses, it is necessary for the planning authority to arrive at a reasonable estimate of jobs demand within the plan area by the end of the plan period. Demand will primarily be driven by the demographic characteristics of the planning authority area, its settlements and the wider region, influenced by the economic development strategy of the draft development plan.

An evidence-based approach is critical to ensure a robust planning framework that will promote sustainable development by providing sufficient zoned land for employment uses in justified, sustainable locations which can be economically serviced with necessary infrastructure. This will enable the planning authority to be more efficient and effective in facilitating economic development.

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The planning authority should also consider the strategic development needs over the long term to align with NPF and RSES targets. This will ensure that sufficient land is reserved for economic development in the right locations and will enable the planning authority to plan for delivery of necessary facilitating infrastructure over the longer term. However, the release of development land (through zoning objectives and infrastructure delivery) must be proportionately phased to align with the evidence-based enterprise and employment needs for the development plan period.

Different forecasting techniques are available to planning authorities to establish future enterprise and employment land requirements. The **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)** (Appendix A, Section 1.4 Enterprise & Employment Zoning) suggest that local authorities may formulate a methodology to establish future enterprise and employment land requirements. The guidelines recommend that this methodology should be adapted to suit a local authority’s enterprise/employment profile and local characteristics. The guidelines state that the approach chosen by the local authority should provide a clear logic to the quantum of lands proposed for zoning. The guidelines set out a simple standardised approach based on future potential workforce analysis that should generally be followed. This is explained in section 4.2.1 below, and is also outlined in the second stage of the proposed methodology.

4.2.1 Future Potential Workforce Analysis

This analysis is a top-down, policy-led approach, which reflects higher level NPF and RSES population parameters, as implemented through the **Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (2020)**. The first key factor to consider is projected county population growth and its disaggregation to settlement level through the core strategy.

The second key factor is the jobs:resident work force ratio⁴⁴ (jobs ratio). A review of the existing jobs ratio will indicate the scale of in/out commuting flows for the planning authority’s administrative area and at settlement level, indicating that there is a surplus or deficit of jobs in certain locations. A well-considered economic development strategy may be expected to include objectives and/or targets to improve the jobs ratio of settlements, taking account of core strategy housing targets and sustainable transport infrastructure, to create more self-sufficient settlements with more sustainable commuting in/out flows having regard to national statutory greenhouse gas reduction targets. The review will inform the level of employment and enterprise growth necessary to secure the desired change in ratios over the plan period.

In this regard, the economic development strategy is required to be consistent with the NPF which envisages that “*future jobs growth would be geographically more distributed, but to a limited number of larger and regionally distributed centres*” (page 27), supported by NPO2a, NPO2b, NPO7 and NPO11.

The local authority development plan’s economic development strategy should also be consistent with the relevant RSES, which set out regional economic strategies, and should have regard to relevant policy and strategies published by the DETE. In addition, to ensure the strategy is achievable, it needs to be realistic. That is, having regard to the aforementioned policy objectives of the NPF, it should generally support the concentration of major employment locations in larger urban centres, except where otherwise provided for by the national and regional policy framework.

⁴⁴ A ratio of 1.0 means that there is one job for every resident worker in a settlement, however, different planning authorities and/or settlements within a planning authority area may have very different commuter patterns. Indicatively, those with net-inflow commuting will having a ratio of greater than 1.0, while commuter settlements with net-outflows will have a ratio of less than 1.0.



The third key factor is the use of county labour participation rates. These rates, which are available from the Central Statistics Office (CSO), differ between local authorities based on their specific demographic profiles. However, they have also been shown to be strongly affected by in-migration.⁴⁵

Projections for future potential workforce in the local authority's administrative area, by the end of the plan period, can therefore be determined based on projected population and predicted demographic profile for this period, combined with labour participation rates. Based on the distribution of population across the settlement hierarchy under the proposed core strategy, including assumptions on immigration/migration, it will be possible to estimate the total future potential workforce available in the different settlements and the open countryside outside of villages and towns.

The **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)** suggest that an estimate of the employment land required to accommodate the future potential workforce is based on assumptions of the number of jobs per hectare or per square metre of employment floor-space,⁴⁶ including having regard to the economic development strategy of the draft plan and the LECP. However, planning authorities may find it useful to undertake a survey of employment densities for different employment sectors in its administrative area to better understand land-use demand to inform its land-use zoning objectives decisions. Engagement with the Programme Manager for the relevant REP and with the relevant regional assembly may provide further useful information on evolving employment land demand and associated trends.

This approach ensures that there will be sufficient land available to accommodate the future demand for jobs in the plan area over the plan period. As set out in the stepped approach (see section 5.0), it should be supplemented by detailed market analysis and by appropriate stakeholder engagement.

4.2.2 Future Potential Jobs Supply Analysis

A complementary approach that some planning authorities may consider is future potential jobs supply analysis. This is a bottom-up approach using regional and local economic forecasting methods, comprising scenario modelling.⁴⁷ This approach takes account of the uneven spatial distribution of economic activity, agglomeration and concentration, migration, population, and unemployment rates. Projecting the growth of jobs over a regional or county area will provide a robust basis for assessing the demand for employment land. There are several sub-steps that have to be undertaken in converting jobs into 'full-time equivalent' employment and estimating the proportion of each CSO employment category which is likely to take place on employment lands.⁴⁸ This can be done in an Irish context by using, for example, NACE⁴⁹ economic sector data.

This approach has significant monetary and time resource implications as it would necessarily be undertaken by specialist external experts. It is also more suited to a regional/sub-regional level than to individual planning authorities.

⁴⁵ Byrne, S., O'Brien, M. D., Central Bank of Ireland, Research Technical Paper 01/RT/16- Understanding Irish Labour Force Participation (2016).

⁴⁶ In this regard see step 5 and Appendix B Ratios.

⁴⁷ An example of this is Prospects for Irish Regions and Counties: Scenarios and Implications (ESRI, 2018).

⁴⁸ An example is the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment: Phase 1 Report (Cambridge Econometrics, 2021).

⁴⁹ NACE (Nomenclature of Economic Activities) is the European statistical classification of economic activities.



Therefore, it may be more appropriate to consider this approach alone, or in tandem with the future potential workforce analysis, for the joint constituent planning authority for each of the five metropolitan areas of Cork, Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Waterford, in conjunction with the regional assemblies (or metropolitan areas authorities, where different), rather than by/for individual planning authorities. The use of the two approaches in tandem would enable them to validate one another.

4.3 Sustainable Enterprise and Employment Land Portfolio

After determining the land zoning area requirements, the planning authority should develop a '*Sustainable Employment Land Portfolio*'. This should be based on the quality and suitability of sites zoned for economic development uses in accordance with sustainable development principles and policies outlined in national and regional policies in relation to compact growth, accessibility to active and sustainable transport infrastructure, and efficient use of serviced or serviceable lands.

In developing a portfolio, a local authority should aim to ensure that sufficient land and sites are available to accommodate new employment uses and to facilitate the expansion of existing employment uses, where appropriate, realising the potential for economic growth. The portfolio should also be robust and defensible in terms of compliance with relevant qualitative criteria.⁵⁰ A framework for planning authorities to identify a robust and defensible portfolio of both strategic and locally important employment sites in their development plans could be based on the planning principles of '*Survey, Analysis and Plan*'⁵¹ as illustrated in Figure 5. This three-stage approach is further discussed in section 5.0.

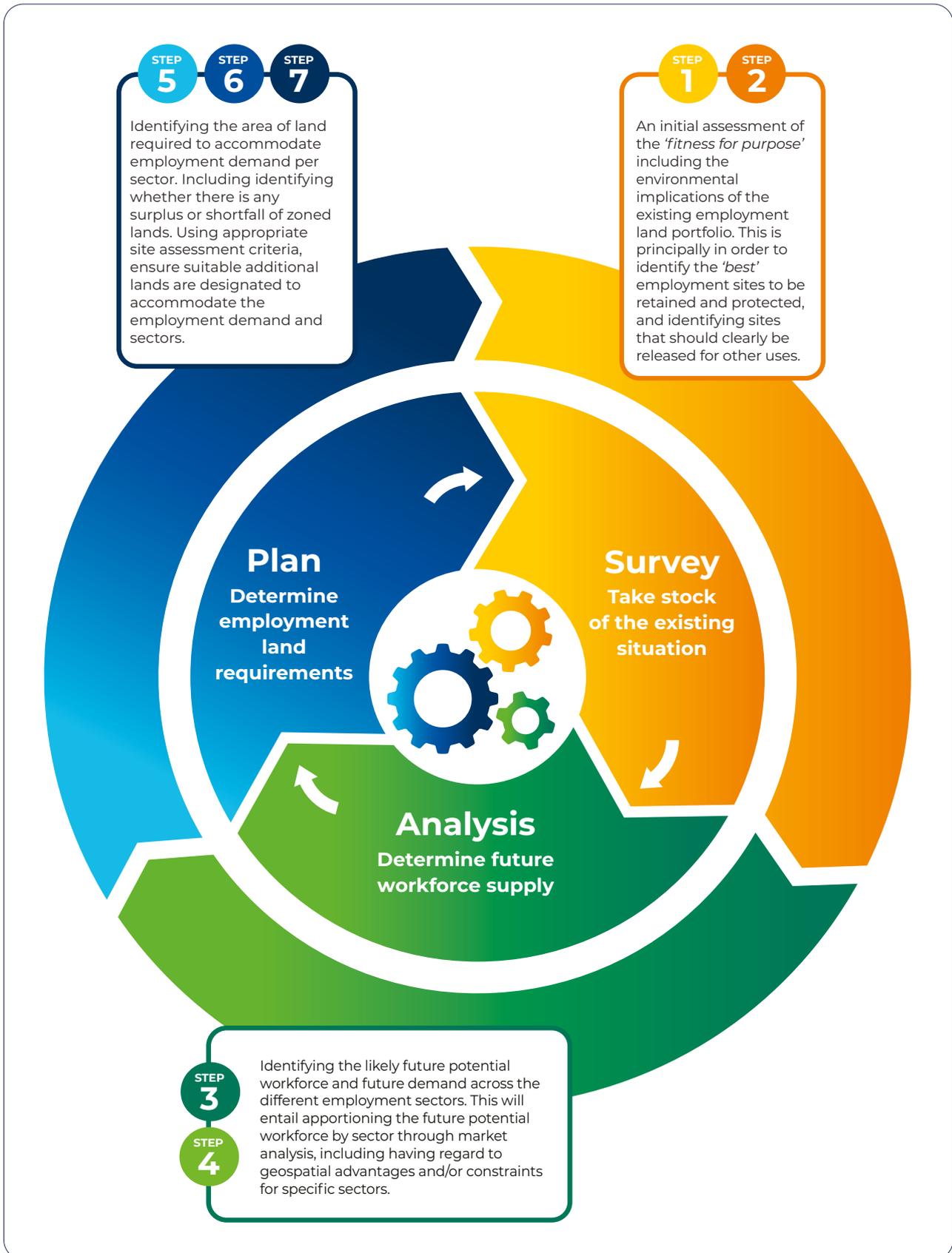
Land zoned for economic use should be protected as a valuable resource for local and external investment, providing a network of economic development opportunities to enable a continuous supply of land for employment purposes. The take-up (or loss) of relevant zoned land should be systematically monitored to help understand trends, to inform forward planning and investment decisions.



⁵⁰ As set out in section 5.0 and Appendix C - Template Site Appraisal Form.

⁵¹ Geddes P., *Cities in Evolution: An introduction to the town planning movement and to the study of civics* (1915).





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Figure 5: Summary of the Planning Principles of 'Survey, Analysis and Plan' for the Enterprise and Employment Land Assessment.

4.4 Defining Enterprise and Employment Lands

Planning for the provision of sustainable employment objectives and zoning objectives requires careful consideration of the suitability of particular locations to the types of employment envisaged. Factors such as accessibility, density of employment (high intensity/low intensity), infrastructure, resources, avoidance of risks of pollution, and place-making are part of the decision framework. Ultimately, good planning seeks to make the most sustainable use of valuable infrastructure and investment.

Enterprise and employment land assessments must align with the recommended standardised zoning objectives detailed in Appendix B of the **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)**.

Not all categories will be relevant to the sectoral characteristics of each local authority's administrative area. The guidelines recommend that general employment zonings with ambiguous or unclear objectives should not be included in a development plan.

Enterprise and employment land-uses are clearly not only restricted to mono-use zones. The guidelines also define zoning categories to be utilised in mixed-use environments under the general heading of '*Urban/Town*'. Consideration of the balance of uses and density of employment in such mixed-use environments can be complex. Ultimately, the approach taken by the planning authority in regards to same should be supported by an appropriate evidence base.



5.0 Assessment of Enterprise and Employment Lands and the Development Plan

5.1 Introduction to Enterprise and Employment Land Assessment

The Assessment of enterprise and employment land is focused on three main stages aligned to the broad principles of plan-making i.e.:

Stage 1 – Survey;

Stage 2 – Analysis; and

Stage 3 – Plan.

These stages are discussed in section 4.3 and illustrated in Figure 5. The three-stage framework is further broken into seven individual steps, which are detailed in section 5.3 and illustrated in Figure 7.

5.1.1 Preparation

Prior to embarking on the detailed step-by-step Assessment process, an effective project scope is essential, within the overall project management structures for the delivery of the development plan. This will help to ensure that an overall strategic vision for the future development of enterprise and employment lands for the plan area is delivered. In certain areas, such as within the parts of the country covered by MASPs there will be an additional need for co-ordinated planning between relevant local authorities to align their respective enterprise and employment land assessments. Such co-ordination is most effectively facilitated by a joint steering committee and an agreed terms of reference and geographical scope. Section 5.2 outlines some practical suggestions on actions that can be taken by planning authorities at the outset.

5.1.2 Post Enterprise and Employment Land Assessment

The Assessment output will essentially comprise a baseline report and technical working paper that will input to Stage 1 of the plan-making process, as outlined in the **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)**. This will inform the formal economic development strategy and enterprise and employment land-use zoning objectives of the plan.



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Thereafter, the Assessment together with other technical working papers will go through the formal plan-making process, which includes public consultation, engagement with the elected members, formal input from prescribed authorities and the parallel environmental assessments. The plan will ultimately be made by the elected members as informed by the evidence-base, in keeping with their statutory role.⁵²

Following the adoption of the development plan, the economic development strategy and land-use zoning objectives should be appraised by the project team to determine the effectiveness of the methodology that was employed. This is essential to establish a feedback loop for future assessments and plans. Moreover, this will assist the statutory obligation to monitor the implementation of the development plan and its objectives (see section 5.4).

5.2 Assessment Preparations

5.2.1 Establishing the Assessment Team

This practice note recognises that, taking account of the optimum assessment delivery structure set out below, each planning authority will tailor their own Assessment to local circumstances using the step-by-step approach, subject to the resources available, local staff and organisational structures and the economic profile of their area.

A project team should be established, led by a senior official e.g. the Senior Planner, from the Forward Planning section, to comprise a core project team of relevant skilled and technical staff including:

- forward planning and development management sections of the planning department;
- GIS/data analytics resource (or external resources, where necessary); and
- appropriate administrative support.

The project team should define a preliminary scope⁵³ for the Assessment and the timelines for completing the steps having regard to statutory timelines for making the plan. This team will ultimately produce the Assessment report.

In addition, the project team should establish, form part of and lead a broader local authority working group⁵⁴ for the carrying out of the Assessment, typically this would include relevant technical expertise from the following sections (or their equivalents) of the local authority:

- Economic and LEO;
- Transport;
- Environment;
- Climate Action;
- Town Centre and Regeneration;
- Conservation and Heritage;
- Community; and
- Any other specialist technical officers that may be relevant on an individual local authority basis e.g. 'Seveso' sites, marine planning.

⁵² Section 12(11) and 12(18) of the 2000 Act.

⁵³ That is, the land-use types to be considered in the enterprise and employment land assessment and reasons for including or excluding land-use types having regard to their potential to generate employment and enterprise uses.

⁵⁴ In some local authorities there may already be structures or working groups to utilise and in other local authorities the Senior Management Team may perform this role.



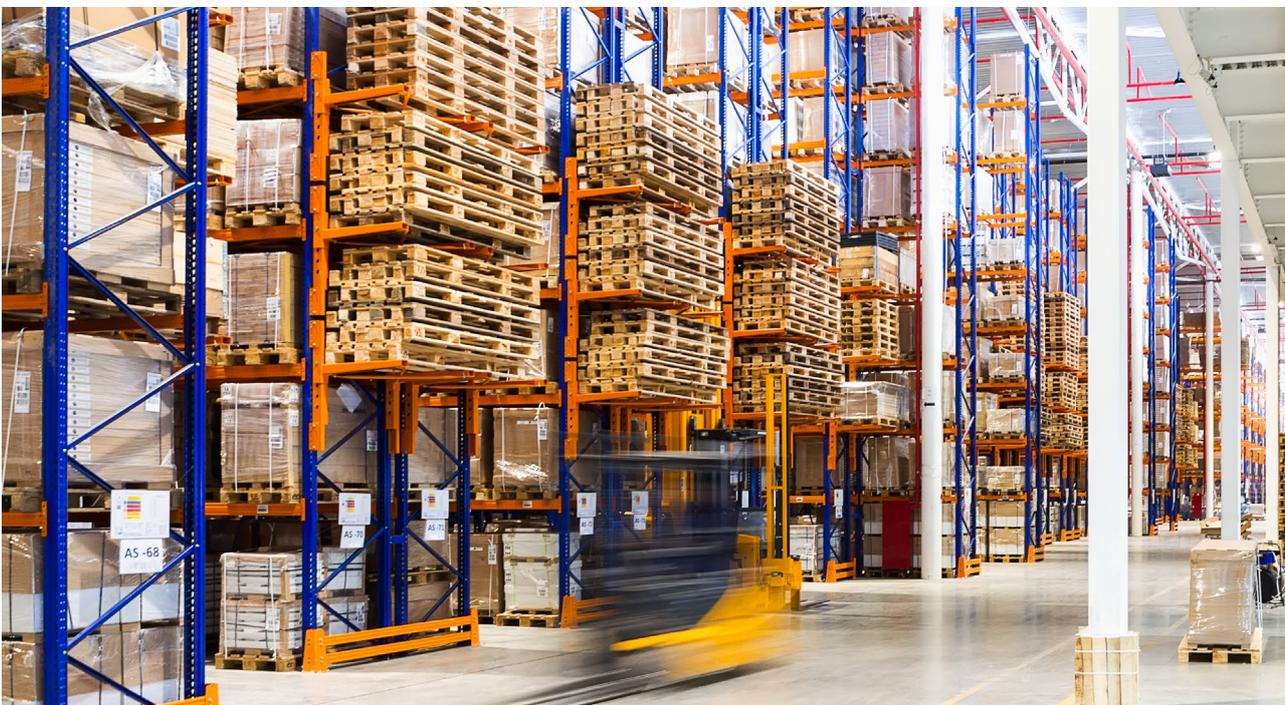
The working group should agree the scope⁵⁵ for the Assessment, which may be adjusted once the full policy context has been established. Then, following a SCOT⁵⁶ analysis of the local authority's economic profile, the working group should propose a clear strategic vision for the future economic development of the local authority area. They will inform the Assessment process.

Key stakeholders from external organisations, including from infrastructure providers (e.g. TII, NTA, UÉ, OPW), key agencies (e.g. regional assemblies, EI, IDA), and neighbouring local authorities (where relevant), should be included in a Steering Committee at key stages of the Assessment including agreeing the strategic vision identified by the working group and may suggest amendments to the scope. They will endorse the enterprise and employment land assessment report.

At an early stage, the project team should devise terms of reference and a communications plan to guide engagement with the members of the Steering Committee and establish lines of communications/points of contact with those organisations.

Many settlements straddle administrative boundaries of local and regional authorities, therefore consideration should be given, at the outset, as to how adjoining authorities can work together to capture all relevant data and input, as well as avoid duplication of effort. Consideration should be given to designing into either the project team, working group and/or steering group, relevant stakeholders from adjoining authorities. This is likely to be of relevance particularly where there is a city with a MASP and MATS.

Figure 6 illustrates the relationships and role of the organisational structures for managing the enterprise and employment land assessment process.



⁵⁵ That is, the land-use types to be considered in the Assessment and reasons for including or excluding land-use types having regard to their potential to generate employment and enterprise uses.

⁵⁶ Strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats.



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Figure 6: The Assessment Team - Organisational Structures for Undertaking the Enterprise and Employment Land Assessment Process.

5.2.2 Setting the Enterprise and Employment Land Assessment Scope

The scope of the Assessment generally relates to deciding the land-use types to be considered and reasons for including or excluding land-use types having regard to their potential to generate employment and enterprise uses.

Employment locations tend to attract very significant trips, particularly at peak times. Therefore, in order to ensure an integrated approach to land-use and transport planning that will assist in meeting Ireland’s mandatory targets for greenhouse-gas emissions reduction, it is important that the working group consider all land-use zoning objectives with significant employment potential.

The standardised zoning objectives recommended in Appendix B of the **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)** identify the following land-use zonings are for employment purposes:

- Business Park/Industrial Estate;
- Special Industry;
- Warehousing and Distribution;
- High Technologies/Manufacturing Campus Development; and
- Commercial Office Employment.

The land-uses above will be the main focus of the Assessment process, however, this does not preclude the examination of other key areas or zones where local circumstances would suggest this is necessary. Best practice would entail a comprehensive review of a broader range of land-uses and locations, where resources permit. For example, significant employment will be located in other land-use zones, in particular those which fall within the scope of mixed-use and regeneration zonings:

- Urban Core – retail, commercial, civic, leisure;
- District Centre – retail, commercial, civic, leisure;
- Regeneration – enterprise; and
- Retail warehousing – retail warehousing.

In particular, depending on the local economy/circumstances, significant opportunities may be available on brownfield/infill sites in locations outside the conventional land-use zones.

It is also important to acknowledge that in certain local authorities additional significant employment will arise in other activities including the following categories:

- Community infrastructure – hospitals, religious institutions, childcare;
- Education – schools, other education establishments;
- Open space and recreation – sporting, leisure facilities;
- Tourism – hotels and leisure facilities; and
- Transport and utilities infrastructure.

It will be for the project team to determine which land-use zonings, in addition to employment land-use zoning, should fall within the scope of the Assessment, having regard to the particular plan context and the resources available to the planning authority. However, the overriding aim should be to identify all sites with significant employment generation potential.

At a minimum these should include strategic employment lands, brownfield sites and greenfield sites included in the RSES. Areas with a high proportion of extensive vacant or derelict buildings should also be considered. For practical purposes, a minimum threshold may be applied, at the discretion of the planning authority in relation to excluding the consideration of sites from the Assessment process. As an example the following thresholds have been applied in the UK context - economic sites of 0.25 ha (or 500m² floor space) and above.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ These thresholds apply within the UK policy context, see Guidance: Housing and economic land availability assessment (Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Community and Ministry of Housing, Community & Local Government, 2019).

5.2.3 Outline the Relevant Policy Context for the Area of the Plan

The project team should set out the relevant national and regional policies and highlight the key changes in planning, economic and related policy areas since the last development plan was made. In particular, the economic policy of the RSES, including associated Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs), will be critical. As will the rapidly evolving related national and regional policy areas of climate action and transport, including the adopted LACAPs (refer to sections 2.0 and 4.0).

The existing development plan should be examined to determine the degree to which existing policy approaches need updating or revision to be consistent with the current national and regional policy. It may also be helpful to review relevant background papers or studies that informed those plans.

The LECPs, prepared by local authorities, may provide useful policy context, subject to taking account of subsequent changes in national and regional policy and in the development plan. They may also provide economic data analysis that can be used to inform the preparation of the Assessment. This is similarly so for the LACAPs, regarding policy and evidence-basis.

The project team should consider the output of any relevant employment studies and economic development strategies that could inform the context to the Assessment.

These considerations should be shared with and discussed with the steering and working groups, who may identify other relevant policy considerations and studies to inform the Assessment.

5.2.4 Collate Data on the Economic Profile of the Plan Area

The project team will need to outline the economic (or enterprise and employment) profile of the plan area, including a high level SCOT analysis, which will identify strengths or assets, challenges or constraints, future opportunities and threats.

This information will enable it to implement an effective strategy towards the identification of employment lands. The baseline assessment should comprise a profile of the characteristics of the population and of enterprise and employment for the plan area, and disaggregated to the main settlements of the plan's settlement hierarchy including the following.

● Population size, profile and demographic trends	● Existing employment types
	● Jobs:residents ratio
● Educational attainment	● Existing business types and sizes
● Labour force participation	● Travel to work patterns

The following data sources are suggested.

● Census	● RDM
● Other CSO data	● LEO Impact Reports
● POWSCAR	● GeoDirectory

Potential optional data source links for planning authorities to utilise for this exercise are appended to this practice note (see Appendix A).



Finally, in many areas there will be outliers or legacy sites where significant employment uses are located outside of settlements or conventional industrial sites. It is important that the baseline report captures these sites and has an understanding of their role within the wider economy.

5.2.5 Proposing a Strategic Vision

Based on the particular economic profile of the plan area and the national and regional policy context informing the economic development strategy for the plan area, the working group should develop a suggested vision for the development of enterprise and employment uses within the plan area.

This vision for the plan area should provide clear aspirations on the future economic development of the local authority's administrative area, and the spatial distribution and range of lands to accommodate enterprise and employment uses consistent with an integrated approach to land-use and transport planning. It should signpost what needs to change and what needs to be enhanced to realise the vision for the plan area. This will, in turn, provide a strong evidence base that will inform the formal statutory plan-making process.

5.3 The Step-by-Step Process for Undertaking an Assessment

This section provides a step-by-step process of assessing enterprise and employment lands, across the three key stages, as illustrated in Figure 7. It is intended as an adaptable framework which planning authorities can adjust depending on their resources and local/economic circumstances.

The process should help inform the preparations for and the carrying out of the development plan review. In particular, it is advised that the gathering of baseline data should begin at least two years earlier as part of the ongoing monitoring of the development plan.⁵⁸ This should provide information on the availability and serviceability of undeveloped and developed enterprise and employment lands.

The stages and steps outlined in this section are based on the Assessment being commenced in advance of the formal review of the development plan, therefore, key elements can be used to inform the Issues Paper stage of the overall plan-making process.

⁵⁸ Under Section 15(2) of the 2000 Act the Chief Executive of a planning authority is required to produce a two-year progress report for the members of the local authority on the progress achieved in securing the objectives of the development plan and to produce a baseline report, published as the evidence base for commencing the review procedure for the development plan not later than four years after its adoption. This provision is proposed to continue and be expanded under Section 56 of the 2023 Bill. See also Sections 10.3 and 10.4 of the Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022).



Figure 7: Enterprise and Employment Land Assessment – the Step-by-Step Process.

Stage 1. Survey - Take Stock

Step 1: Gather existing data on lands for enterprise and employment⁵⁹ uses

Objective - To establish an accurate database of the existing extent (land area, hectares) and location of all lands zoned for or otherwise in active employment and enterprise uses, including their employment/enterprise sector use and suitability.

A standard site appraisal template form is provided in Appendix C. Each identified parcel of land, zoned for enterprise and employment uses, should include this core information to build an evidence base. This will entail a quantitative survey, but also a qualitative evaluation of the suitability of the land, to establish a database, linked to geo-spatial data through GIS including:

- The total area of lands currently in use for enterprise and employment uses (including relevant non-zoned lands and established uses on contrary zoned lands), broken down by land-use zoning objective;⁶⁰
- The distribution of employment (numbers employed/jobs) across different land-use zones;
- Developed zoned employment lands;
- Undeveloped greenfield zoned employment lands;
- Brownfield land, zoned for employment uses, suitable for redevelopment;
- Vacant or underutilised lands and premises on zoned employment lands;
- Extant permissions on zoned lands; and
- Known constraints to zoned lands.

The following data / knowledge sources will be useful:

- Previous Assessments;
- Planning permissions granted;
- Commencement notices;
- Existing employment zonings from development plans and LAPs; and
- In-house knowledge.

A land-use survey should also be undertaken to gather information on the total existing floorspace area (square metres) available to enterprise and employment uses, which can be obtained from GeoDirectory.

Planning authorities may need to validate this data through other sources available to them, such as planning histories, commercial rates information available within the local authority.

⁵⁹ Note, this practice note is referring to all lands zoned for employment uses, not just lands zoned enterprise and employment lands.

⁶⁰ These might be grouped to provide a broader picture, between i) enterprise and employment lands; ii) town, district, neighbourhood centres; and iii) other land-use zones – residential, education, agricultural.



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Step 2: Assess site suitability to determine total area of available land suitable to accommodate enterprise and employment uses

Objective - To determine the suitability of lands in the database for enterprise and employment uses in the context of national and regional policy and to determine the area (in hectares) of:

- **suitable undeveloped greenfield lands available for development of specified enterprise and employment sector and types (high, medium or low intensity);**
- **suitable brownfield lands available for redevelopment for specified enterprise and employment sector and types (high, medium or low intensity);**
- **land not suitable for enterprise and employment uses, or land more suitable to other uses (may include lands in existing enterprise and employment uses that it would be appropriate to relocate to facilitate other appropriate uses); and**
- **total area of suitable land available.**

With a view to ensuring consistency with the national and regional policy framework and having regard to relevant Section 28 Guidelines, the following areas will be key considerations for the planning authority:

- **planning and spatial analysis criteria – settlement hierarchy, compact growth, sequential approach to development, strategic employment sites, regeneration areas, central urban/suburban/edge areas;**
- **accessibility criteria – ease of access to/from populated areas such as walking, cycling and by public transport networks; ease of access to national road network (for HGVs); accessibility by private car;**
- **infrastructure criteria (tier 1 or tier 2) – availability of footpath access, cycle access, road access, public lighting, wastewater, water supply, surface water drainage, and broad estimate of cost of delivery of infrastructure where not currently available;**
- **environmental criteria – flood risk management, environmental protection sites, cultural heritage, amenity areas, and sensitive uses; and**
- **other constraints and barriers to development.**

See Appendix C for the standard template site appraisal form, which provides detailed criteria and templates for site assessment.

Local authority departments (planning, transport, environment, water services) will have information on infrastructural availability and constraints. However, it is important to consult infrastructure providers in carrying out the Assessment such as the NTA, TII and UÉ (ESB Networks Ireland and Gas Networks Ireland should also be consulted for enterprise and employment types with high or specific energy demands). This is especially important as water services departments in local authorities will ultimately transfer to UÉ and therefore it is essential to engage early.



In particular, it is important to engage with the NTA and with TII on accessibility and transport issues concerning the techniques and/or transport modelling necessary to inform the site assessment, including having regard to the potential to impact on national roads and the provisions of the **Spatial Planning and National Roads: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)** regarding the evidence-based approach.⁶¹ If a local transport plan (LTP) is required for the plan area, consideration should be given as to how the Assessment can be integrated with the LTP preparation process and the **Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) Guidance Notes (2018)**.⁶²

Transport analysis tools available from the NTA, such as the Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) and the Access To Opportunities and Services (ATOS), can be used to further assess site suitability in the context of transport accessibility.

Also, in planning for enterprises that are intensive users of water resources, or intensive users of wastewater treatment infrastructure, early and close engagement with UÉ will be necessary to determine the capacity of the resource and/or infrastructure to accommodate such development. Bespoke assessments, such as a Water Resource Assessment or Groundwater Resource Assessment, may be necessary.

In addition, having regard to the requirement to reuse water under the Urban Waste Water Treatment (UWWT) Directive, the planning authority should consider whether enterprises with complementary water use demands can be sited together to mitigate potential impacts on water infrastructure and whether particular industry needs to be accommodated close to wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs).

IDA Ireland and EI may also provide useful information to inform the site assessment.

The site assessment can be substantially conducted as a desktop exercise; site visits should be carried out to assess the situation on the ground.

The site suitability assessment should determine:

- lands justified to be retained for enterprise or employment use designation;
- lands justified for removal from enterprise or employment use designation; and
- the costs of providing necessary infrastructure or other enablers to enable any constrained lands retained for enterprise and employment purposes.

Arising from the site suitability assessments, the project team should quantify the total area of existing zoned land that may be suitable to be retained for enterprise and employment, per employment sector, at least at a settlement level.

The output of the assessments should be recorded as a digital GIS layer with the relevant attribute information attached, allowing for spatial analysis and overlaying of other relevant layers.

⁶¹ See Box 2.4 - Key Steps for Building an Evidence-Based Approach.

⁶² See the NTA's Guidance documents for associated guides and templates.

Stage 2. Analysis – Determine Future Workforce Supply

Step 3: Forecast workforce supply

Objective - To determine the future potential workforce by the end of the plan period.

While local authorities should formulate a methodology that suits their local characteristics, the demographic and labour supply approach set out in the **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)** is a straightforward methodology and useful starting point. This approach is explained in section 4.2, above. The guidelines refer to three key factors; however, an additional factor is proposed which may further assist in the forecasts. Therefore, the following four key factors can be used to determine the future potential workforce for the local authority's administrative area:

- First key factor - projected county population growth;
- Second key factor - adult working population based on demographics;
- Third key factor - county labour participation rates; and
- Fourth key factor - jobs:resident workforce ratio (jobs ratio).

This should be determined for county level, but should be disaggregated at settlement level in relation to the principal settlements.

The disaggregation of the data at other spatial levels will be appropriately based on the character of the planning authority and the economic development strategy, in relation to rural local authorities, for example, at settlement tier level, including the rural tier. For city or urban authorities, it may be feasible to disaggregate it on other practical area bases including city districts.

An alternative approach, known as the Future Potential Jobs Supply Analysis - as discussed in section 4.2.2 - is a detailed model approach. Such an approach requires specialist external expertise/reports to assist the project team and would be particularly suited to local authorities in metropolitan areas or where such authorities otherwise elect to carry out the Assessment jointly.



Step 4: Determine employment sector demand

Objective - To determine future demand across the different employment sectors and apportion the future potential workforce by sector through market analysis, including having regard to geospatial advantages and/or constraints for specific sectors.

Market analysis comprises an examination of the broader employment and enterprise trends that will impact employment land demand and rate of take up; how employment may change; and the consequential implications of these changes on land-use demand.

The relevant national and regional policy framework will reflect and influence employment sectoral demands and provide a good indication of employment growth sectors.

As the plan is required to be consistent with the objectives of the NPF and RSES, relevant NPOs and RPOs should explicitly be taken into account in the analysis (e.g. requiring a particular focus on objectives for digital or the marine). The REPs overseen by the DETE will provide further direction (section 2.0 of this practice note set out the broader policy framework that will inform this step).

Effective engagement with the members of the Steering Group is essential in this step. As noted in section 5.2.1, the Steering Group will typically include IDA Ireland, EI, IBEC and Regional Programme Managers for the REPs. Together with the local authority working group, they will collectively have insights on trends developing across the employment sectors at a national and global level, including any advice on spatial planning implications and constraints, which may affect the development of the various sectors. They may therefore have useful information for the subject plan area relating to:

- Macroeconomic changes in the global economy;
- Employment growth areas;
- Emerging sectors;
- Declining sectors;
- Sectoral geospatial characteristics that will affect demand from certain employment sectors (e.g. harbour facilities supporting marine industry; accessibility to international airport; accessibility to national road network; education establishments);
- Sectoral geo-social/demographic characteristics that will affect demand from certain employment sectors (e.g. population thresholds; education attainment);
- Sectoral specific requirements; and
- Location-specific opportunities and constraints to growth for the planning authority.

Past trends will be informative of future trends. Annual data on development demand within the broad employment sectors is available from the CSO, which illustrates past trends in demand for those sectors at national level, for comparison with that evident in the planning authority's area. CSO data will provide additional data on:

- Past broad employment sector trends at a national level.

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The planning authority will have direct access to its own annual data on planning applications, in addition to pre-application discussions, which will give a more detailed and nuanced picture of trends in demand at a local level. It will also have important information on the implementation of permissions, enterprises that are operating, and vacancy rates. Such analysis may include:

- Past employment sectoral trends in the planning authority's administrative area and its sub-areas;
- Spatial development pressures;
- Employment sectoral development pressures;
- Rate of take-up/implementation of employment permissions;
- Evidence of declining sectors - vacancy rates;
- Local sectoral geospatial advantages in the area (e.g. harbour facilities supporting marine industry) that will affect demand;
- Local sectoral geosocial/demographic characteristics that will affect demand from certain employment sectors (e.g. population thresholds; education attainment); and
- Location-specific opportunities and constraints to growth for the planning authority.

The analysis will be further assisted by a review of property market reports and other recently published research to build an understanding of the market analysis (see Appendix A).

The analysis may also result in the identification of lands for specific users and other employment-led opportunities that may be associated with local resources, skillsets or assets, the key here will be to determine the overall employment sectoral breakdown to be achieved by the end of the plan period.



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Stage 3. Plan – Determine Employment Land Requirements

Step 5: Translate future workforce supply into land-use requirements

Objective - To determine the area of land required to accommodate employment demand, per sector and in total.

Initially, the project team may find it useful to determine the future distribution of jobs between the broad land-use zones,⁶³ having regard to the existing distribution, the proposed economic development strategy and the national and regional policy framework.

This will enable the project team to determine the proportion (and number) of future jobs to be accommodated on dedicated enterprise and employment lands.

This will make it easier to calculate associated land-use requirements, as they will only relate to the proportion of jobs going to employment and enterprise land-use zones.⁶⁴

This practice note suggests two possible approaches to determining land area requirement – (i) the employment density matrix and (ii) the plot ratio, either separately or together, which are set out below.

Other approaches may be considered, but the selected approach should be explained and justified by the project team. The project team should also be cognisant of national and regional objectives for compact growth, and the requirement for sustainable settlement and transport strategies under Section 10(2)(n) of the 2000 Act, and the National Climate Objective.

Employment Density Matrix: An employment density matrix can be used to calculate the total additional enterprise and employment land-use zoning requirements for the plan period. In the absence of Irish data, the net density figures from the UK's Homes & Communities Agency's Employment Density Guide 3rd Ed. (2015), set out in Appendix B, may be appropriate, subject to validating by sampling local employment densities in existing or permitted developments.⁶⁵ In this regard, care needs to be exercised with outliers and anomalous cases.

It is also advised that in preparing the matrix, the planning authority should have regard to the land-use categories as per the standardised zoning objectives recommended in Appendix B of the **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)**.

⁶³ For example i) enterprise and employment lands; ii) town, district, neighbourhood centres; and iii) other land-use zones – residential, education, agricultural.

⁶⁴ For example, in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, only 40% of jobs were found to be located within specific enterprise and employment zoned lands.

⁶⁵ See the UK's Employment Density Guide (2015), which sets out how to convert gross external area and gross internal area to net internal floor area.



Plot Ratio: Plot ratio refers to the ratio of floor space to site area and it is another metric for density of development that has been commonly used in the past. However, while it can be useful in determining global figures, it is a blunt tool that needs to be applied carefully and sensibly, particularly in view of increasing uncertainty in applying ratios due to the macro trends and hybrid/remote working.

Blanket plot ratios have been used frequently to calculate an overall land requirement for employment purposes. However, particularly for more urban planning authorities accommodating a mix of employment sectors with a range of characteristics – e.g. offices, industry, data centres, Seveso/Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites, bio-economy uses – sector-specific plot ratios would be more appropriate. It may be beneficial for local authorities, particularly MASP authorities to undertake additional research to inform plot ratio assumptions.

Sample surveys of existing plot ratios may be helpful, however, they will vary significantly depending on the nature and intensity of development, but also by site location. For example, traditional business parks have low plot ratios (0.25-0.4) comparable to industrial (0.35-0.45) and warehousing (0.4-0.6) development, and contrast strikingly with town centre office space (0.75-2).⁶⁶

Whether applying a blanket or sector-specific plot ratio, such ratios should also be justified, having regard to factors that affect plot ratio including, for example:

- a) accessibility of the site by sustainable or by active modes;
- b) car parking standards, which will be determined against the national/regional policy; and
- c) the area required to accommodate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and nature-based solutions.

The Assessment process presents an opportunity to identify a new economic development strategy for the desired model for future arrangement of employment uses. In addition the Assessment will identify the nature and intensity of employment uses, based on its location and accessibility and having regard to the requirements of the 2000 Act and the National Climate Objective.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ These figures come from the Employment Land Reviews: Guidance Note (UK Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004), withdrawn March 2014.

⁶⁷ Under the Climate Act.

Step 6: Quantify the shortfall/surplus of land for each employment sector

Objective - To:

- i) **determine whether additional land is required to meet the proposed economic development strategy for each employment sector, or whether significant excess land should be de-zoned/down-zoned to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of implementing the economic development strategy; and**
- ii) **identify suitable additional lands, where required under i).**

Shortfall/surplus: The total area of zoned land required to accommodate projected enterprise and employment uses over the plan period can be calculated by comparing the suitable available enterprise and employment lands, as set out under step 2, with the land-use requirements for future workforce supply, determined under step 5. This should also be considered at a settlement level for relevant settlements.

Having regard to the **Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022)** the project team should further break down this area by employment sector to enable it to determine the area of land required for specific land-use zoning objectives to accommodate growth in target sectors in line with the economic development strategy. This would better facilitate planning for employment uses of higher intensities with proximity to public transport infrastructure.

The project team may consider it necessary to zone more serviced land than would strictly be required to meet projections, in order to avoid restricting the supply of enterprise and employment lands being developed through inactivity on a particular landholding or site. The guidelines do not recommend a parameter in respect of surplus enterprise and employment lands, but apply a general limit of 20-25% for 'additional provision' in the case of residential lands, which can be taken as a reasonable appropriate guide. Similarly, the guidelines would suggest that enterprise and employment 'additional provision' should be identified and quantified (including percentage surplus) and that the need for additional land for the relevant economic sectors should be explained in the economic development strategy. In this regard, the guidelines consider the rate of land take-up over the previous plan period or periods to be a particularly relevant consideration.

Identification of suitable sites: In addition to the criteria set out under step 2 above and in the Site Assessment Form in Appendix C, the guidelines set out principles for 'additional provision'⁶⁸ in respect of residential development, which provide reasonable parameters. Within the enterprise and employment context, the project team should ask:

- Will it support the achievement of the NSO for compact growth?
- Are the lands consistent with NPO72a-c tiered approach to zoning?
- Do the additional lands support the settlement hierarchy?
- Are they accessible by sustainable and active modes, proximate to services and facilities and have regard to the need to reduce carbon emissions?
- Will they risk undermining the capacity and/or safety of national roads?
- Do they support sequential development patterns and TCF principles?
- Is phasing priority necessary to ensure consistency with the foregoing?

In addition, longer term strategic development sites that will be phased and built out over periods much longer than a development plan (for example, to accommodate very large-scale FDI development) should also be identified, quantified, and explained in the economic development strategy. The foregoing questions will be equally relevant to those cases.

⁶⁸ Section 4.4.3 - Ensuring Sufficient Provision of Housing Land/Sites.



Step 7: Conclude the Assessment and prepare the final report

Objective - To conclude the Assessment, prepare a final enterprise and employment land assessment report endorsed by the Steering Committee.

The final report should set out the recommended economic development strategy and identify, quantify, and spatially express the recommended employment land portfolio. In the interest of transparency, the report should clearly outline the process taken in its preparation.

Ideally, the report should be endorsed by the Steering Committee to ensure 'buy-in' from key stakeholders, which will facilitate implementation. The report should detail any elements of the Assessment that are not supported by the members of the Steering Committee and should explain the reasons for the member's objection and the response of the project team to same.

The report has the potential to be a key resource for future public consultation and for engagement with the elected members through the plan preparation and drafting process. Care should therefore be taken to ensure it is easy to follow and its recommendations are clear. This will enable ease in monitoring and preparing future Assessments and plans.

Suggested matters for consideration and recommendation in the enterprise and employment land assessment report that can inform the development plan-making process:

<p>Deliverability and Potential Phasing</p>	<p>Identify whether the enterprise and employment land portfolio is suitable for Tier 1, Tier 2 lands or long-term 'Strategic and Sustainable Development Employment' sites.</p> <p>The portion of any 'Long-Term Strategic and Sustainable Employment Development Sites' that are not likely to be developed within the six-year plan period may be considered as further additional provision.</p>
<p>Interventions</p>	<p>Identify whether any interventions are necessary to enable the delivery of employment development on these lands. Potential interventions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policy changes, including specific policy objectives; ● Funding to secure infrastructural services or other necessary physical interventions; and/or ● Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs).
<p>Coordination</p>	<p>Identify the responsible body for enabling the necessary interventions on the land and devise a strategy on how to enable interventions.</p>
<p>Monitoring Criteria</p>	<p>Outline the relevant data that will be collected for the purposes of monitoring and confirm the sources of same.</p>

5.4 Plan Implementation and Monitoring

It is intended that the output of the Assessment will form a key input into the draft development plan and the economic development strategy which sit alongside the other key strategies of the plan including, the core strategy, transport strategy, climate action strategy, retail strategy, and the associated zoning objectives for enterprise and employment lands.

Following completion of the Assessment and the adoption of the relevant statutory plan, planning authorities will need to undertake ongoing monitoring and review of their employment land database to ensure that there is sufficient supply to meet demand. Furthermore, the terms of reference and communications plan set out at the outset of the process (section 5.2) could include provision for the Steering Committee to reconvene after the report is finalised (step 7), to input into the monitoring of implementation of the economic development strategy, in accordance with the requirement to monitor and report on the plan implementation.⁶⁹

It would be useful for them to consider the impacts (positive, neutral and/or negative) of any departures in the adopted development plan from the final report recommendations, as this can be used to inform future iterations and refinements of the methodology for the preparation of subsequent development plan reviews, and help to develop better strategies, policies and objectives.

Furthermore, the Assessment may be used as a resource to inform any future variations to the development plan, or the preparation of local area plans⁷⁰ and the LECP. It may also provide useful inputs to other policy documents including future RSEs or REPs, especially where a common approach to enterprise and employment assessment has been implemented across the relevant region.

The approach to monitoring should be practical and useful. It should report on and analyse spatially, with maps, the planning and development trends being experienced at settlement level and to assess the consistency of such trends with the adopted enterprise and employment population projections and quantum of development proposed during the lifetime of the plan.⁷¹

Monitoring and Review	
Potentially maintain records on:	
1	Employment land and premises (current stock) database – developed and occupied commercial floorspace;
2	Employment permissions granted, by location and type (i) Office, (ii) Industrial, (iii) Retail, (iv) Warehousing and logistics;
3	Employment permissions developed by type, matched to allocated sites, including recording of net gains and losses of floorspace;
4	Employment permissions for development of sites where change of use is involved;
5	Employment land and premises availability and vacancy levels;
6	Employment premises enquiries (potentially via local commercial property agents); and
7	Quantum of non-employment development permitted in employment zoned lands.

⁶⁹ Section 15(1) and (2) of the 2000 Act.

⁷⁰ Note the 2023 Bill envisages three type of lower tier plans: Urban Area Plans, Priority Area Plans and Joint Area Plans.

⁷¹ Section 10.3.1 - Core Strategy Monitoring (Annual) of the Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022).

Appendix A

Data Links and Sources

Useful Data Sources

The screenshot shows the RDM website interface. The main header includes navigation links: Home, Our People and Places, Our Green & Sustainable Future, Our Region's Economy (selected), and Our All-Island Perspective. The main content area is titled 'Our Region's Economy' and features a call to action: 'Click on the images below to explore indicators relating to Our Region's Economy'. Below this are five indicator icons with descriptions:

- A Strong, Innovative and Resilient Economy**
- Improve Education Skills, Human Capital and Social Inclusion**
- A Global and Export Oriented Region**
- A Connected and Smart Region**
- Collaboration Platform**

The Regional Development Monitor (RDM) Hub⁷² is a collaborative project between the three regional assemblies in Ireland, the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University and spatial infrastructure partners the Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) via the GeoHive platform. The RDM provides a series of new national mapping and visualisation infrastructures to assist government departments, regional assemblies, local authorities, planners, policy makers, researchers and members of the public in gaining a greater insight into social, economic and environmental trends to aid better decision making. Many of the sources highlighted in this section are included on the **RDM website**.

<p>MyPlan</p>		<p>Myplan is a web map portal providing spatial information relevant to the planning process in Ireland.</p>
<p>Central Statistics Office</p>		<p>The Central Statistics Office (CSO) is Ireland's national statistical office and its purpose is to impartially collect, analyse and make available statistics about Ireland's people, society and economy.</p>

⁷² The update schedule for the RDM depends on the underlying datasets with some being updated on a quarterly, annual and less frequent basis. For instance, the Labour Force Survey is updated on a quarterly basis by the CSO. As soon as this data is published the results are then integrated into the RDM and the relevant dashboards. Other datasets such as EPA water quality, waste statistics, LEO impact reports etc. are only published on an annual basis. There are also some more in-frequent datasets that come from one-off pieces of analysis (EPA Emissions report) or indeed indicators that are developed using results from the Census (every five years).



<p>Environmental Sensitivity Mapping</p>		<p>The Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool is a novel decision-support tool for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and planning processes in Ireland. It allows users to create area-specific environmental sensitivity maps.</p>
<p>GeoHive</p>		<p>GeoHive is the National Geospatial Data Hub, and is designed to provide easy discovery and evaluation of, and access to authoritative geospatial data produced by public sector bodies. The hub can be used to search, view, and access the State's authoritative geospatial information via interactive map applications and data catalogues.</p>
<p>Pobal</p>		<p>Pobal Maps is a free Geographical Information System (GIS) which provides a range of functions, such as area deprivation profiling, details on childcare services, plus a range of other funded services throughout the Republic of Ireland.</p>
<p>DATA.GOV.ie</p>		<p>DATA.GOV.ie publishes Irish public sector data in open, free and reusable formats.</p>
<p>Ireland's Hub for Sustainable Development Goals</p>		<p>This is a collaboration platform for reporting on progress towards the goals and sharing information on related initiatives. Ireland's progress against each goal is measured using a set of United Nations (UN) global and EU agreed targets and indicators. Each goal includes different data types for indicators and where possible, geographic breakdown of the indicator to measure progress at a national and local level.</p>
<p>GeoDirectory</p>		<p>GeoDirectory combines An Post's resources with the technology of Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) to deliver the most comprehensive database of Irish addresses.</p>

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Theme	Source	URL	Frequency
Demographics			
2022 Preliminary Population Profile*	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpr/censusofpopulation2022-preliminaryresults/	Census Year
Population Estimates, Age Cohorts and Dependency Rates*	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/population/populationandmigrationestimates/	Annual
Population Aged 15 Years and Over 2011 to 2016	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/E9009	Census Year
Pobal HP Deprivation Index – Population Profile*	Pobal	http://trutzhaase.eu/deprivation-index/the-2016-pobal-hp-deprivation-index-for-small-areas/	Census Year
EU, State and Regional Population Density (Persons per Km ²)*	Eurostat	https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/DEMO_R_D3DENS_custom_2763207/default/table?lang=en	Annual
Business Demographics			
Business Demography NACE Rev 2	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/BRA11	Annual
Distribution and Services Enterprises	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/ANA13	Annual
Road Freight Activity	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/TFQ03	Quarterly
Business Demography – Profile of Enterprises by Enterprise Size and Persons Engaged*	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/enterprisestatistics/businessdemography/	Annual
Commercial Units Linked to Cultural/Artistic Sector Classed by NACE Activity	GeoDirectory	https://www.geodirectory.ie/	Annual
Annual Business Survey of Economic Impact, Indicators	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/ABS01	Annual
Commercial Properties and Vacancy Rates	GeoDirectory	https://www.geodirectory.ie/	Annual
IDA Companies in Ireland*	RDM	https://rdm.geohive.ie/datasets/e2cb07545b20476a98758455e558e8b7_0/explore	2022
Enterprise Data			
Irish and Foreign Direct Investment Associated Jobs, 2012-2018 (Table 3.1)	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-fdi/foreigndirectinvestmentinireland2018/ae/	Annual
Foreign Direct Investment Employment by Sector, 2018 (Table 3.3)	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-fdi/foreigndirectinvestmentinireland2018/ae/	Annual
LEO Impact Reports	Local Enterprise Office	https://www.localenterprise.ie/Documents-and-Publications/Impact-Reports/	Annual
LEO Invested Companies	Local Enterprise Office Impact Report	https://www.localenterprise.ie/Documents-and-Publications/Impact-Reports/	Annual

Theme	Source	URL	Frequency
LEO Invested Jobs	Local Enterprise Office Impact Report	https://www.localenterprise.ie/Documents-and-Publications/Impact-Reports/	Annual
LEO Invested Total Jobs Gained	Local Enterprise Office Impact Report	https://www.localenterprise.ie/Documents-and-Publications/Impact-Reports/	Annual
LEO Invested Jobs Net Gained/Loss	Local Enterprise Office Impact Report	https://www.localenterprise.ie/Documents-and-Publications/Impact-Reports/	Annual
Local Enterprise Office Supported Jobs*	Local Enterprise Office Impact Report	https://www.localenterprise.ie/Documents-and-Publications/Impact-Reports/	Annual
Foreign Direct Investment in Ireland – Employment Growth by Region of Ultimate Investor, 2012-2018 (Table 3.2)	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-fdi/foreigndirectinvestmentinireland2018/ae/	Annual
Employment			
Job Vacancies	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/EHQ16	Quarterly
Labour Market Insight Bulletin Series	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/labourmarket/labourmarketinsightseries/	Quarterly
Labour Force Survey Bulletins	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/labourmarket/labourforcesurveybulletins/	2019
ILO Participation and Unemployment Rates	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/QLF02	Quarterly
Labour Force Survey – Persons Aged 15-89 Years in Employment (by NACE and Region)	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/QLF07	Quarterly
Labour Force Survey – Persons Aged 15 Years and Over (by Region)	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/QLF08	Quarterly
Total Annual Earnings and Other Labour Costs	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/EHA04	Annual
Average Earnings, Hours Worked, Employment and Labour Costs (by NACE)	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/EHQ03	Quarterly
Average Weekly, Hourly Earnings and Weekly Paid Hour of All Employees (by NACE)	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/EHQ15	Quarterly
National Minimum Wage Estimates – Employees Aged 15 Years and Over (by NACE)	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/MWA07	Quarterly
National Minimum Wage Estimates – Employees Aged 15 Years and Over (by Region)	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/MWA13	Quarterly

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Theme	Source	URL	Frequency
State Assisted Employment (Annual Employment Survey)	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment	https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/publications/#!t=#!y=#!s=#!ty=Survey#!k=Annual%20Employment%20Survey	Annual
Labour Force Survey – Education Attainment levels (Educational Attainment Thematic Report)*	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/education/educationalattainmentthematicreport/	Annual
Education Attainment Levels (2016)*	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2017/census2016profile10educationskillsandtheirishlanguage/	Census Year
Labour Force Survey – Unemployment and Participation Rates*	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/product/LFS	Quarterly
Estimates of Household Income	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/CIA02	Annual
Graduate Statistics*	HEA Statistics Unit	https://hea.ie/statistics/data-for-download-and-visualisations/graduates/	Annual
Persons on the Live Register	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/LRM02	Monthly
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Unemployment	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/MUM01	Monthly
Foreign Nationals – PPSN Allocations, Employment and Social Welfare Activity	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/product/fnaes	Annual
Transport			
Passenger Numbers, Commercial Flights and Freight at Irish Airports*	RDM	https://rdm.geohive.ie/datasets/0065aa8664044d9696c278f753f0c658_0/about	February-May 2023
Mode of Transport – Commuting in Ireland (2016)	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2017/census2016profile6-commutinginireland/	Census Year
Journey Time – Commuting in Ireland (2016)	CSO	https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2017/census2016profile6-commutinginireland/	Census Year
Average Weekly Volume of Cars for Selected Traffic Count Sites	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/THA21	Annual
Average Weekly Volume of Heavy Goods Vehicles for Selected Traffic Count Sites	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/THA22	Annual
Passenger Journeys by Luas	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/TII01	Annual
National Route Length	CSO	https://data.cso.ie/table/NRA03	Annual
Place of Work, School or College	CSO - POWSCAR	https://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2016reports/powscar/	Census Year

*This dataset can also be viewed through the Regional Development Monitor (RDM) website.

Further Reading and Resources

National and Regional Guidance

Government of Ireland (2022), *Development Plans - Guidelines for Planning Authorities*. <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/228826/6e26204a-ffd0-42a4-b868-097d647e537f.pdf#page=null> Dublin: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

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Appendix B

RATIOS

The following ratios are an extract of the UK's Homes & Communities Agency's **Employment Density Guide 3rd Ed. (2015)**.

Use Class	Sub-category	Sub-sector	Density (m ²)	Notes ⁷³
B1a Offices	General Office	Corporate	13	NIA
		Professional Services	12	NIA
		Public Sector	12	NIA
		Technology, Media and Telecommunications	11	NIA
		Finance & Insurance	10	NIA
	Call Centres		8	NIA
B1b	R&D Space		40-60	NIA lower densities will be achieved in units with higher provision of shared or communal spaces
B1c	Light Industrial		47	NIA
B2	Industrial & Manufacturing		36	GIA
B8	Storage & Distribution	National Distribution Centre	95	GEA
		Regional Distribution Centre	77	GEA
		'Final Mile' Distribution Centre	70	GEA
Mixed B Class	Small Business Workspace	Incubator	30-60	B1a, B1b – the density will relate to balance between spaces, as the share of B1a increases so too will employment densities
		Maker Spaces	15-40	B1c, B2, B8 – Difference between 'planned space' density and utilisation due to membership model
		Studio	20-40	B1c, B8
		Co-Working	10-15	B1a – Difference between 'planned space' density and utilisation due to membership model
		Managed Workspace	12-47	B1a, b, c

⁷³ NIA – Net Internal Area; GIA – Gross Internal Area; GEA – Gross External Area; FTE – Full Time Equivalent.

B8/Sui Generis	Data Centres	Wholesale	200-950	
		Wholesale Dark Site	440-1,400	
		Co-location Facility	180-540	
A1	Retail	High Street	15-20	NIA
		Foodstore	15-20	NIA
		Retail Warehouse	90	NIA
A2	Finance & Professional Services		16	NIA
A3	Restaurants & Cafes		15-20	NIA

Use Class	Sub-Category	Sub-Sector	Density (m ²)	Notes
C1	Hotels	Limited Service/Budget	1 per 5 beds	FTE per bed
		Mid-scale	1 per 3 beds	FTE per bed
		Upscale	1 per 2 beds	FTE per bed
		Luxury	1 per 1 bed	FTE per bed
D2	Fitness Centres	Budget	100	GIA
		Mid Market	65	GIA – both types tend to generate between 40-50 jobs per gym
		Family		
	Cinema	200	GIA	
	Visitor & Cultural Attractions	30-300	The diversity of the cultural attraction sector means a very wide range exists	
Amusement & Entertainment Centres	70	Potential range of 20-100m ²		



Appendix C

TEMPLATE SITE APPRAISAL FORM

SITE APPRAISAL FORM	
1.0	GENERAL INFORMATION
1.1	Location:
1.2	Site area:
1.3	Total developable area:
1.4	Floorspace in use, for sale and/or vacant:
1.5	Current land-use and character of the surrounding area:
1.6	How was the site identified?
2.0	PLANNING AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS
2.1	Site history:
2.2	Settlement type (with reference to NPF, RSES and development plan settlement hierarchies):
2.3	Is the site located within the built-up footprint of a settlement? ⁷⁴
2.4	Site location: (i) Central area; (ii) Urban area; (iii) Suburban or edge area; ⁷⁵ or (iv) Rural area.
2.5	Is the site indicated in a Town Centre First (TCF) plan as a priority area or opportunity site?

⁷⁴ As defined in the National Planning Framework, Appendix 4, Reference 17 and any subsequent revision.

⁷⁵ As defined in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024).

3.0 LOCATION AND ACCESSIBILITY CRITERIA			
The accessibility of locations can be rated having regard to criteria for location accessibility determined by the DHLGH. ⁷⁶ Ease of access to/from populated areas walking, cycling and by public transport networks; NTA's ATOS and PTAL scores (to be determined in consultation with NTA).			
3.1	Central Urban Locations:	Distance range of site (metres)	ATOS & PTAL score
	Sites within walking distance (i.e. up to 15 minutes or 1,000-1,500m) of principal city centres.		
3.2	High Capacity Public Transport Node or Interchange:	Distance range of site (metres)	ATOS & PTAL score
	Lands within 1,000m (1km) walking distance of an existing or planned ⁷⁷ high capacity urban public transport node or interchange, namely an interchange or node that includes DART, high frequency commuter rail, ⁷⁸ light rail or MetroLink services; or locations within 500m walking distance of an existing or planned Bus Connects 'Core Bus Corridor' stop.		
3.3	Accessible Locations:	Distance range of site (metres)	ATOS & PTAL score
	Sites within easy walking distance (i.e. up to five minutes or 400-500m) to/from high frequency (i.e. ten minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services.		
3.4	Intermediate Locations:	Distance range of site (metres)	ATOS & PTAL score
	Lands within 500-1,000m (i.e. 10-12 minute walk) of existing or planned high frequency (i.e. ten minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services.		
	Lands within 500m (i.e. six minute walk) of a reasonably frequent (minimum 15 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus service.		
3.5	Peripheral and/or Less Accessible Urban Locations:	Distance range of site (metres)	ATOS & PTAL score
	All other locations within settlement.		
3.6	Rural Locations:	Distance from relevant settlement(s) (kilometres)	ATOS & PTAL score
	Site location:		
	Transport Infrastructure Characteristics of Site:	Proximity (metres)	
3.7	Footpath access (including public lighting):		

⁷⁶ Under Table 3.8 of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) and Section 2.4 of the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (2020).

⁷⁷ 'Planned public transport' refers to transport infrastructure and services identified in a Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy for the five cities and where a public authority (e.g. NTA, TII or Irish Rail) has published the preferred route option and stop locations for the planned public transport.

⁷⁸ 10-15 minute peak hour frequency.



3.8	Cycle access (including type and public lighting):	
3.9	Road access (including lighting provision):	
3.10	Access to road network – national, regional, local or other road access:	

4.0	INFRASTRUCTURE CRITERIA (TIER 1 OR TIER 2)	
	Availability of footpath access, cycle access, road access, public lighting, wastewater, water supply, surface water drainage, and cost of delivery of infrastructure, where not currently available.	
4.1	Cost of extending existing physical infrastructure networks to the site for access where it is unavailable and where feasible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Pedestrian; (ii) Cycle; (iii) Public transport; (iv) Road network. 	
4.2	Foul drainage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Will zoning accommodate developments with particular waste loading characteristics⁷⁹ that will place high demand on wastewater treatment and/or network infrastructure? (ii) Treatment – is there sufficient capacity at the treatment plant? Is there sufficient capacity in the receiving waters for additional discharges to the plant and/or the receiving environment? (iii) Network – is the site proximal to the existing wastewater collection network? Is there capacity in the wastewater network for the additional discharge? (iv) Is there potential for complementary development to reuse water effluent from one sector as an input to another, in line with the circular economy? 	
4.3	Water supply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Will zoning accommodate developments with particular waste loading characteristics⁸⁰ that will place high demand on water supply and/or network infrastructure? (ii) Source vulnerability? (iii) Is the site proximal to the existing water network? (iv) Is there sufficient capacity at the water treatment plant? (v) Is there sufficient capacity in the water network? (vi) Is there potential to provide water from alternative sources, such as rainwater harvesting and use of grey water and treated wastewater reuse, if appropriate? (vii) Is there potential for water use on the site to be offset in other parts of the catchment, so that water neutrality can be achieved? (viii) Is there potential for complementary development to reuse water effluent from one sector as water supply for another, in line with the circular economy? 	

⁷⁹ This may include developments producing high quantities of effluent and/or producing effluent with particularly high Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) or other particular effluent characteristics, such as high temperatures or very clean water, that place specific and/or high demand on wastewater treatment facilities. Uisce Éireann should be consulted.

⁸⁰ In particular, this would include all food processing, textile production, data centres and some technology industries. Uisce Éireann should be consulted.

4.4	Surface water drainage: (i) Will zoning accommodate developments with particular surface water characteristics that will place high demand on water supply and/or network infrastructure? (ii) Capacity of the site to manage surface water drainage by nature-based solutions on-site and/or network requirements. (iii) Is there potential reuse of surface water runoff as an input to development, in line with the circular economy?	
4.5	Public lighting:	
4.6	Broadband availability:	
4.7	Potential costings to deliver additional infrastructure under 4.2-4.6:	
4.8	Agency responsible for the delivery of the requisite infrastructure:	

5.0	ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA Flood risk management, environmental protection sites, cultural heritage, amenity areas, and sensitive uses.	
5.1	Flood risk:	
5.2	Contaminated land:	
5.3	Archaeology and built heritage:	
5.4	Natural Heritage Designations – proximity to European sites (SAC/SPA), RAMSAR sites, National Heritage Areas etc.:	
5.5	Landscape and visual amenity (objective rating):	

6.0	OTHER RELEVANT OPPORTUNITIES OR CONSTRAINTS RELATING TO THE SITE	
6.1	Other opportunities or constraints that may be relevant to consider in the assessment of the site. Examples of constraints may include legal, budgetary, resource, technical. Examples of opportunities may relate to circular economy, as referred to in respect of foul effluent, water supply and surface water runoff above and to waste management infrastructure.	



7.0	SITE ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
7.1	Deliverability and potential phasing: Is the portfolio suitable for tier 1 or tier 2 or long-term strategic reserve?	
7.2	All specific interventions necessary to facilitate development of the site:	
7.3	Coordination: Responsible body for enabling interventions and development of the site:	
7.4	Site suitability/potential: Location for expansion; Location for new development; Location for potential relocation of enterprise; and Site not suitable (state reasons).	
7.5	Monitoring criteria: Outline relevant indicators that will be used for the purposes of monitoring the uptake of the site in future reviews.	

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