

# Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023-2029



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

**Limerick** City  
& County Council

**In accordance with the provisions of Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Caherconlish Local Area Plan came into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2023, six weeks after the adoption of the Local Area Plan by the Elected Members of Cappamore Kilmallock Municipal District on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April 2023.**

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## Chapter 1 – Introduction

### 1.1 What is the Local Area Plan?

The Local Area Plan (LAP) is a statutory document prepared by the Planning Authority, in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), thereafter referred to as “the Act”. The Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2012-2018 was extended until 2022 under Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The making of the LAP is a reserved function of Elected Members of the Municipal District of Cappamore-Kilmallock. This LAP sets out a land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Caherconlish to 2029, whilst complying with the provisions of higher-level spatial plans.

The LAP consists of a written statement and maps indicating objectives for zoning of land, residential development, economic development, community infrastructure, built and natural heritage, open space and recreation, active travel and transport, environmental protection and climate change/adaptation and mitigation. This Plan also includes a Settlement Capacity Audit in which the quantum and location of the land zoned in the Plan, is identified.

### 1.2 Review Process

The Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), higher tier international, national and regional level plans, ministerial guidelines and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the process for the making of a Local Area Plan as outlined in Figure 1.4 below.

#### 1.2.1 Plan Making Stages

Public consultation is an important aspect of any plan-making process, in order to address local issues relating to Caherconlish, and to ensure that the final LAP acknowledges community aspirations and concerns.

During the first issues public consultation period, 13 no. written submissions were received. Two further public consultation periods were undertaken during the course of making the Local Area Plan. 23 submissions were received at Draft stage in the plan making process and a further 7 submissions were received at Material Alterations stage. These were considered in Chief Executive’s Reports, which issued to the Elected Members of Cappamore Kilmallock. Preparation of the Plan has been informed by consultations with members of the public, Caherconlish National School,



**Fig. 1.2 Schools Consultation Workshop at Issues Stage**

stakeholders, service providers, Elected Members of the Cappamore Kilmallock Municipal District, Statutory Bodies, Government Departments and with the various Directorates of Limerick City and County Council.

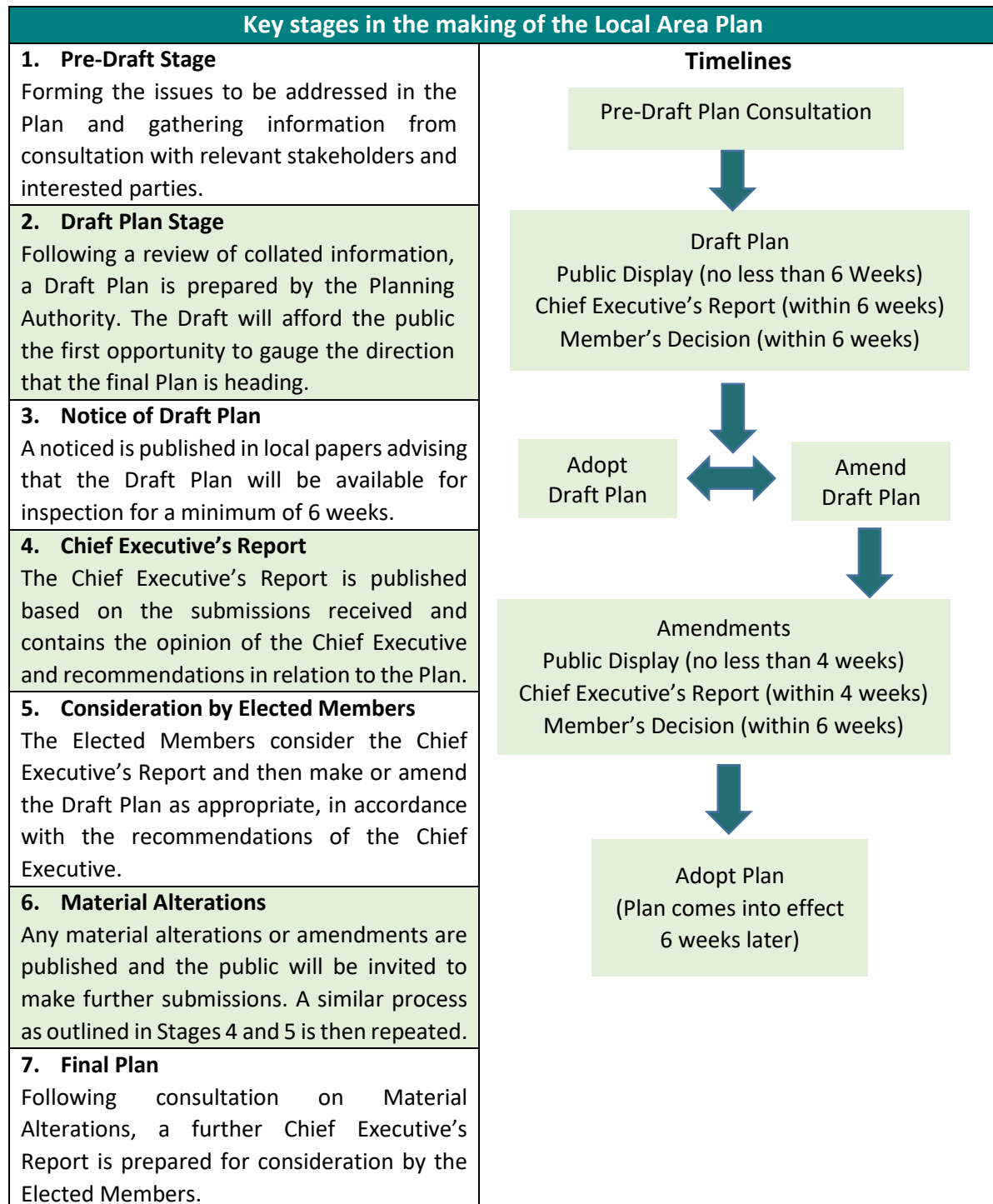


Fig. 1.4 Key Stages – LAP Process



### 1.3 Planning Context – National/Regional and Local

The LAP must be consistent with the objectives of the higher-level spatial plans, including the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) and the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. When interpreting the objectives of the Plan for Caherconlish, it is essential that both the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 and the Caherconlish LAP are read together.



**Fig 1.5 Spatial Plan Hierarchy**

#### **Objective I O1: Spatial Planning: It is an objective of the Council to:**

Ensure that the population projections and economic growth of the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023–2029 align with the policies and objectives of the higher-level spatial plans such as the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2026.

### 1.4 Plan Area

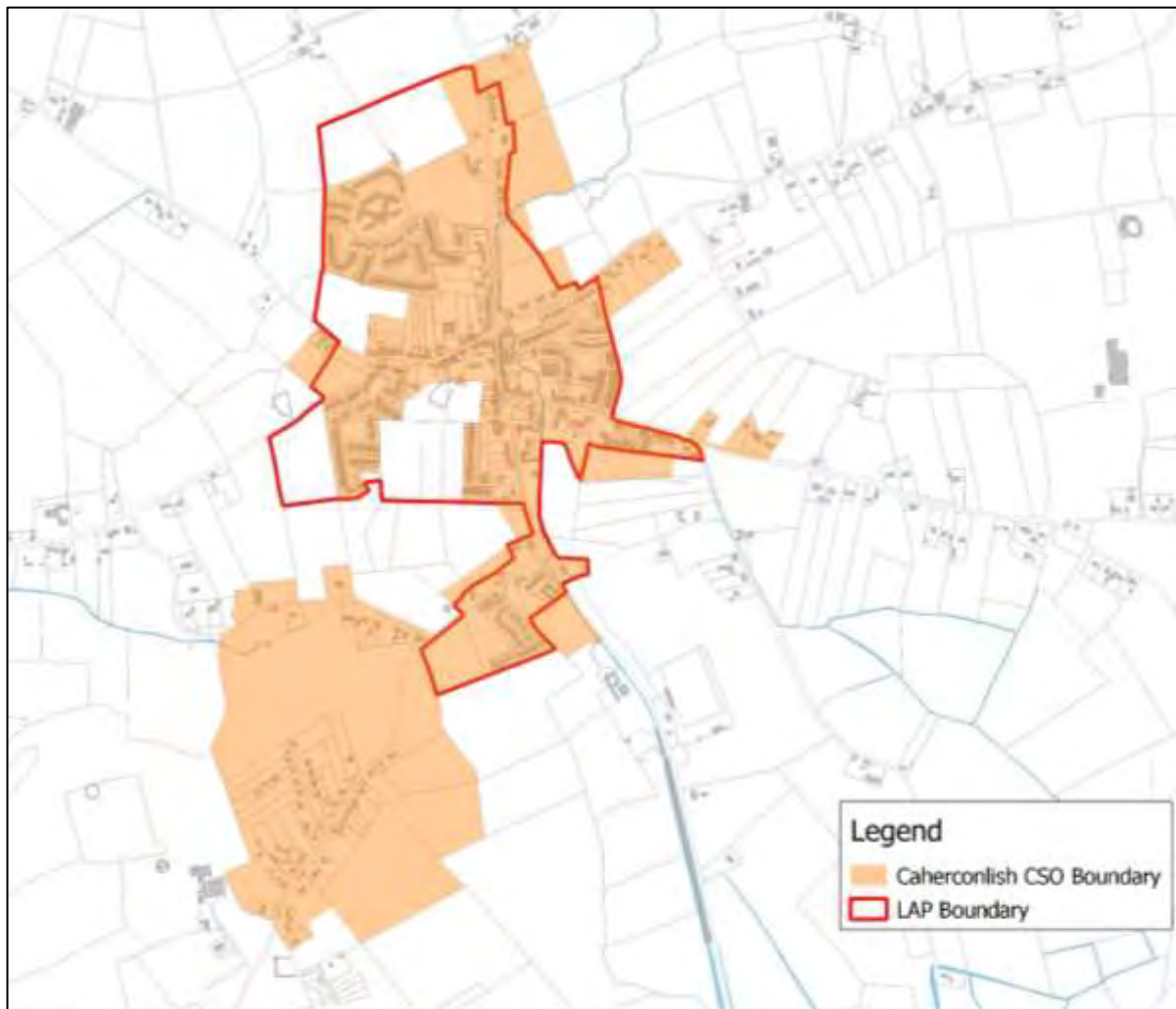
The Caherconlish LAP covers approximately 0.518 square kilometres in area and falls into the Caherconlish West Electoral Division (ED). It contains parts of the townlands of Caherconlish, Hundredacres East, Knockatancashlane, Templemichael, Boskill and Gragane.

The settlement boundary for Caherconlish is defined by the principle of a compact settlement, prioritising the development potential of the village centre, sequential development from the village centre out and maximising under-used/vacant brownfield infill sites and repurposing



vacant/derelict existing buildings. The Census CSO data boundary for the village of Caherconlish is more expansive than that of the settlement boundary of the Local Area Plan as outlined in Fig 1.6 below. However, Census Data is a crucial element of the plan making process as it provides the only robust, credible, systematic source of data available to analyse at a local level. This includes social economic trends and mobility/transport patterns available to support the policies and objectives of the LAP for the sustainable development of the village.

Considering the existing built footprint of the village and to align with national spatial policy, the settlement boundary for the LAP has been determined as per the Land Use Zoning Map in Appendix 1.



**Fig. 1.6 Caherconlish CSO Boundary and Local Area Plan Boundary**

## **1.5 Environmental Assessments**

### **1.5.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment**

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the LAP is subject to the following environmental assessments:

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening accompanies the LAP in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). This assessment is a formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan, policy or programme. The conclusion of the SEA Screening is that progression to full SEA and the preparation of an Environmental Report was not required.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required in accordance with Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of the plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in view of the site's conservation objectives. Following screening for AA, it was determined that the Caherconlish LAP is unlikely to have any impacts on an area designated as a Natura 2000 site, therefore a Natura Impact Report is not required.

As per Section 4.2 of *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities* as amended by Circular PL2/2014, a Stage 2 Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared and has informed the land use zoning objectives of the LAP.

## Chapter 2 – Settlement in Context

### 2.1 Settlement Location

Caherconlish is located approximately 10 kilometers (6 miles) southeast of Limerick City. The village is located just to the south of the main Limerick to Waterford National Primary Road, (N24) providing ease of access to Limerick City, North Cork and the southeast of the Country. The village itself is traversed by the R513 linking the village to Hospital, Ballylanders and onto Mitchelstown in North Cork. The village is sited predominantly on the east side of the Groody River, which flows in a north-south direction through the village.

### 2.2 Settlement Profile

According to the 2016 Census, Caherconlish had a population of 1476 persons, representing an increase of 15% on the 2011 population figure of 1279 persons. The 2011 Census indicated a significant population growth rate of +83% on the 2006 population figure of 700. Most of this growth occurred during a strong development phase between 2005 and 2008, however the population again continued to rise, albeit not at the same levels, between the 2011 and 2016 Census. According to Census 2016, the age profile of residents in the settlement of Caherconlish includes a high percentage of children, young people and those at work. The 0-24 age cohort makes up 37% of the population, which is higher than the national average of 33.2%. The average household size in Caherconlish, identified in the CSO is 3.02, which is relatively high in comparison to an average of 2.62 in Limerick City and a national average of 2.75 persons in 2016.

The 2016 Census recorded the working population to be just below the national average at 51.3% (53% national average). Unemployment rates are similar to those represented across Limerick in 2016, however rates are slightly higher in Caherconlish (7.4% in Limerick City and County) and 7.08% across the state.

Caherconlish has a median gross household income of €44,426. This is just below the national median average of €45,256. In terms of the Pobal Relative Deprivation Index areas, the village is divided into five small area administrative boundaries, two of which are above average, two marginally below average and one considered disadvantaged. Fig 2.1 below provides a socio-economic overview of the village.

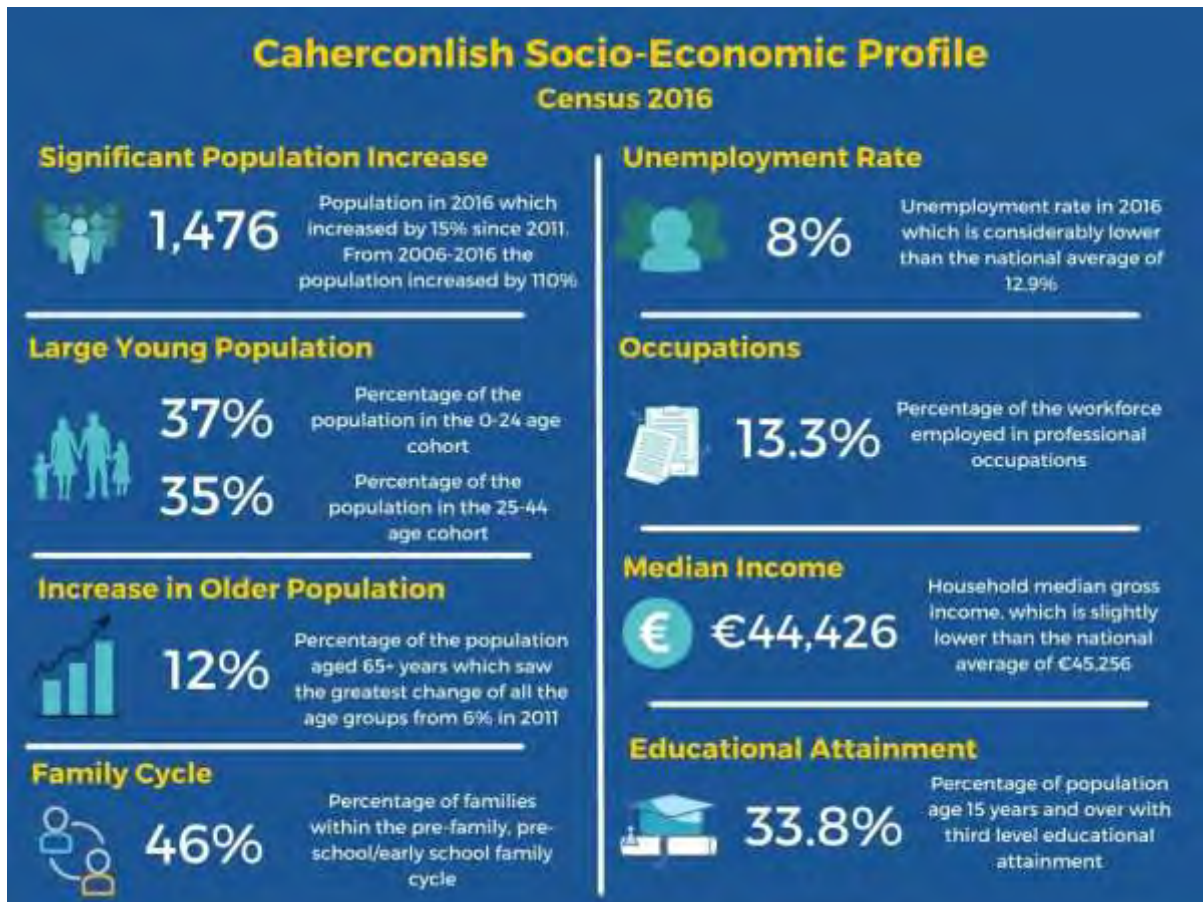


Fig. 2.1 Socio-Economic Profile of Caherconlish (Source: Census 2016)

## 2.2 Historical Context

The name 'Cathair Chinn-Lis' is interpreted as 'the stone fort at the head of the lios or earthen fort', which implies a pre-Norman origin for the settlement. A date of 1199 is given for the commencement of a castle which was held, in 1214, by Theobald Walter le Botiller. Between 1285-7 Cathair-cind-lioss, described as 'rampart-guarded solid stone' with vaulted towers and



Fig. 2.2 First Ordnance Survey Map of Caherconlish Edition 1839

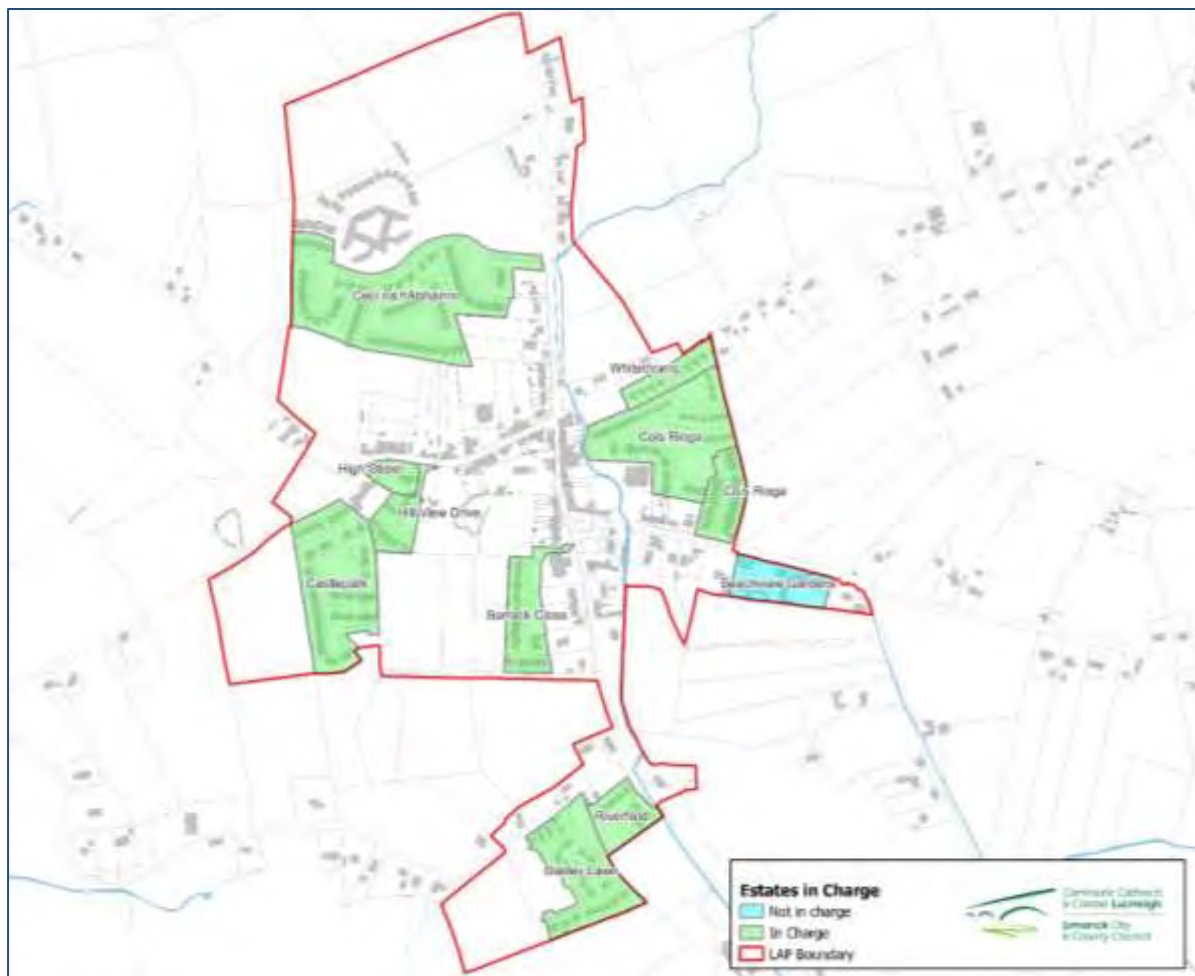
drawbridge, was stormed and burned by Turlough O'Brien. Despite this, the settlement was recorded in 1300 as among the top four assessed for taxation by Edward I in Co. Limerick. The town, at the time, received a murage grant (to build walls) for 20 years in 1358. Caherconlish was described in the 19th century as being once 'a walled town containing four castles, and an extensive college, the site of which is still called "the College Field"'. The four castles may have



been fortified town houses, or mural corner towers and/or gates. The town declined in the later middle ages.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Caherconlish profited from its position in the estate of the Wilsons. In 1780, the medieval Church was remodelled complete with a steeple and a distinctive fish-shaped weather vane and even though it is in ruins today is still a prominent feature elevated above the Main Street of the town.

While the core of the early town is centred around the cross-roads, the church and westwards, the most significant change to the town's layout came in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the current R513 was extended southwards through the Fair Green to form today's Square. This in turn, reduced the status of the former main road, now the L-5094 and enabled the town to expand southwards. During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the town expanded northwards along the Limerick road. A new national school was constructed in the 1940's and a new Catholic Church was established by the 1960's. In the 2000's, there was further considerable expansion of the village with several housing developments around the village including Ceol na Habhann, Barrack Close and Cois Rioga and in the village centre with the development of the Millenium Centre. Fig. 2.3 below provides the location of the residential estates in the village in relation to the Local Area Plan Boundary.



**Fig. 2.3 Housing Estates in Caherconlish**

## 2.3 Plan Issues and Development Challenges

Similar to many Limerick villages and towns, Caherconlish has faced challenges in relation to vacancy, declining vibrancy, transport infrastructure deficiency and enterprise and employment opportunities. This plan seeks to balance the needs of the local community, businesses, land-owners and the environment along with enabling Caherconlish to become an important local driver and self-sufficient village providing a range of functions for its resident population and the surrounding catchment.



Fig. 2.4 Image of Vacant and Derelict Site in the Village Square

On review of the existing Local Area Plan for Caherconlish, a number of key issues, considerations and challenges were highlighted which have shaped the overall policies and objectives of the Plan. This has included Caherconlish's strategic location benefiting from its close proximity to Limerick City and just to the South of the main Limerick to Waterford National Primary Road, (N24). The proximity to Limerick City however has also resulted in a large percentage of commuter travel and an extremely busy road network traversing the village centre creating daily traffic congestion. The recently constructed pathway on the L1149 connecting into the local Creamery Walk is a welcomed addition to the locality however, connectivity to other local community facilities should be supported to ensure alternative options to car usage is facilitated.

Caherconlish has a number of positive characteristics that give a distinctive sense of place, however, the quality of space, particularly in the village centre, is undermined somewhat by a combination of traffic congestion, poor public realm and property vacancy or neglect. In addition, the economy of the village is, predominantly based on the service sector, where services include retail, pubs, restaurants, community and professional services. Commuting patterns highlight the limited employment opportunities within the settlement with the evident percentage of those travelling outside the settlement for work purposes.

### 2.3.1 SCOT Analysis

The SCOT Analysis is a study of the Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats that exist in Caherconlish. Such analysis identifies both the key issues in Caherconlish and the opportunities that exist to address these issues. The SCOT Analysis provided for in Fig. 2.4 below, has helped inform the overall development strategy for the Plan Area

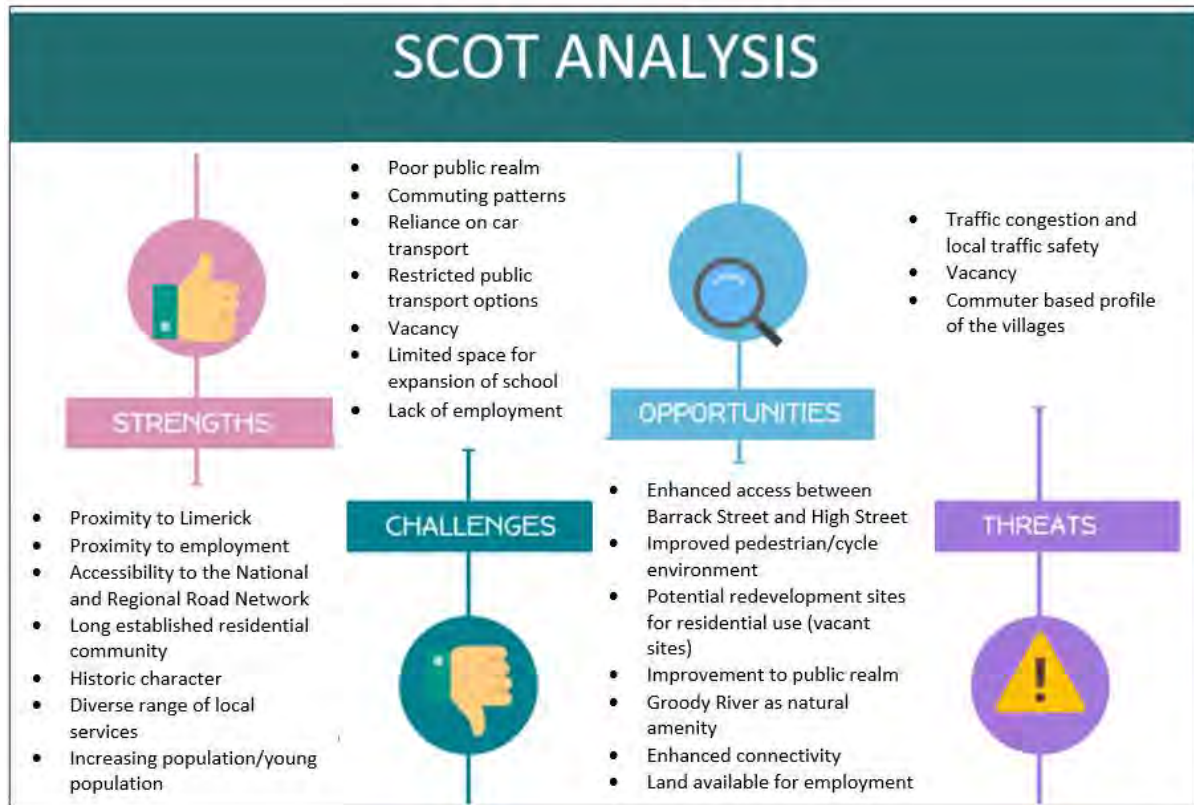


Fig 2.4 SCOT Analysis of Caherconlish



## Chapter 3 – Development Strategy

### 3.1 Strategic Vision

The purpose of the Caherconlish Local Area Plan is to set out the policies and objectives which will guide the sustainable future growth of the village between 2023-2029 and beyond and to ensure alignment with provisions of higher-level planning policy. The vision of the plan is to improve the local environment focusing on the sustainable growth of the built environment, employment generation, and the provision of community and social services together in a low carbon, compact, consolidated with a connected pattern of development.

The strategic vision statement reads as follows:

*‘The strategic vision for Caherconlish is to fulfil the role of a Level 3 settlement as identified in the Limerick Development Plan. This will include the provision for growth in population and employment through a mix of quality residential development (choice and tenure), education and employment opportunities, sustainable mobility choice, a strengthened retail/commercial village centre, community infrastructure, active lifestyles and recreation choice, and sustaining Caherconlish’s unique heritage assets. The future development of Caherconlish will provide for low carbon, sustainable and consolidated growth in a coherent spatial manner.’*

### 3.2 Spatial/Development Strategy

The overall development strategy for Caherconlish, is to grow the population of Caherconlish in line with the Limerick Development Plan as a Tier 3 Settlement, by focusing growth within the village core and in doing so, supporting in the regeneration, repopulation and development of the village. The future of Caherconlish is one where the quality of life and wellbeing of its inhabitants are enhanced, building a resilient and sustainable compact village, that supports improved local employment and economic activity, protects its local culture and heritage, while supporting the village’s transition to a low carbon society.

#### Overall Strategic Development Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

1. Seek the sustainable intensification and consolidation of the existing built environment, in accordance with the objectives for compact growth in higher-level spatial plans through appropriate infill, brownfield development, supported by the necessary physical and community infrastructure.
2. Promote sustainable economic development, enterprise and employment opportunities, prioritise the village centre, as the primary location for retail and commercial activity.
3. Promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, whilst protecting and improving existing road infrastructure.
4. Protect, conserve and enhance the built environment, through promoting awareness, utilising relevant heritage legislation and ensuring quality urban design principles are applied to all new developments, respecting historic and architectural heritage.
5. Protect, enhance and connect areas of natural heritage, blue green infrastructure and open space for the benefits of quality of life and biodiversity, capitalising on climate change adaptation and flood risk measures.

6. Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles apply to all new developments.
7. Have cognisance to the Limerick Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 - 2024, and any forthcoming climate adaptation and mitigation strategies that emerge during the lifetime of this plan.
8. Guide the future development of Caherconlish, in accordance with the Town Centre First policy approach seeking to bring people and appropriate business/services back into the heart of Caherconlish through place-making, good quality urban design, and sustainable mobility as promoted by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Rural and Community Development.
9. Ensure the future development of Caherconlish supports the transition to a low carbon society and economy, implementing national policy to reduce gas emissions, improve environmental quality and contribute to national targets for climate change

### 3.2.1 Population and Housing

The Core Strategy for Limerick, is set out in Chapter 2 of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. Section 19 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that: *“A Local Area Plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the Development Plan, its Core Strategy, and any Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy that apply to the area of the plan...”*. The Limerick Development Plan promotes development of settlements to grow at an appropriate rate, where both physical and social infrastructure keeps pace with population growth.

Caherconlish is identified for potential growth of 23%, which seeks to ensure that the development of the settlement in the village, is provided in line with the development of physical and social infrastructure. It also ensures the capacity of the village to accommodate the additional growth without damage to the settlement’s character and the carrying capacity of its environment and infrastructure.

### 3.2.2 Population Projections, Capacity and Residential Land Availability for Caherconlish

Between the period 2006-2016, the population of the village grew by 110%. The Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan makes assumptions with respect to population projections and allocation in settlements across Limerick. These assumptions include the additional residential units and zoned land requirements for each settlement, in accordance with the NPF, the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF and the RSES. The Limerick Development Plan is also informed by the Regional Demographics and Structural Housing Demand at County Level.

The following criteria was used to determine the growth allocation for Caherconlish within the lifetime of the Plan.

- As determined by the Development Plan, the assumed population growth allocation for Caherconlish is an additional 339 persons to 2028, which equates to an additional 125 units.

- The provision of 146 units is realised by taking the proposed population growth per annum (125 units/6 years = 20.83 units per year), as outlined in the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan, and multiplying this figure for a seven year period (from 2022-2029) as illustrated in Table 3.1 below.

An assessment has been carried out to examine vacancy within the settlement boundaries and included in the calculations for residential purposes in Caherconlish. This equates to 2.8% vacancy (4 units). In addition, an extant planning permission exists within the village centre for 7 units.

<b>A</b>	<b>Limerick Development Plan Additional Households Forecasted 2022-2028 for Caherconlish</b>	125 units
<b>B</b>	Forecasted households per year (A)	20.83 units (A/6 year period from 2022-2028)
<b>C</b>	Forecasted households for years 2022-2029 for Caherconlish	<b>146 units (B x 7 year period from 2022-2029)</b>
<b>D</b>	Vacancy Q2 2022 Geodirectory	2.8% (4 units)
<b>E</b>	Extant Planning Permission	7 units granted town centre (Planning Ref. 21/550)
<b>F</b>	No. of new units required 2022-2029	<b>135 units (C-(D+E))</b>
<b>G</b>	New Residential @ 22 uph	135 @85% = <b>115</b> (5.22 ha)
<b>H</b>	Residential Serviced Sites @ 10uph	135 @15%* = 20 (2.085 ha)
<b>I</b>	Additional provision +25%	29 units (G x 25%) @22uph = 1.31 ha
	<b>Total Land Required (Ha)</b>	<b>8.615 ha (G + H + I)</b>

**Table 3.1 Core Strategy Units Allocated**

\*In total, 8.615ha are zoned for residential development in the Plan, on which, housing would generally be permitted. The 2012 plan made provision for 3.52ha of Serviced Sites however, no takeup of serviced sites has progressed to date. Taking this into account, 15% of the total units allocated to Caherconlish is zoned for Serviced Sites, while 85% of the total number of units are allocated to new residential.

The *Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities* published June 2022 allows for the inclusion of additional zoned serviced land for residential uses (or a mixture of residential and other uses), than would equate to meeting precisely the projected housing demand set out in the Core Strategy for that settlement. The Guidelines outline that this approach ‘recognises that a degree of choice in development sites to be provided locally is desirable to avoid restricting the supply of new housing development through inactivity on a particular landholding or site’. The guidelines require that this “Additional Provision” is clearly set out in the Core Strategy and it is identified, quantified and explained and should not exceed 20-25% of the required quantum of zoned land and sites in the settlement for any six year period.

The Local Area Plan has identified an additional 25% of the zoned land and this requirement has been incorporated into the zoned lands for residential purposes within the plan.

Justification for additional provision is as follows:

- Two sites zoned New Residential are approved Housing Department Approved Pipeline Sites as set out under Limerick City and County Council's Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026
- New Residential site No. 1 as set out in Table 10.3 (Settlement Capacity Assessment) is identified as an 'Opportunity Site' as it presents an opportunity to create compact growth and permeability between existing estates and could provide potential passive surveillance into the Community Park.
- New Residential site No. 4 as set out in Table 10.3 presents an opportunity to create permeability and connectivity from Ceol na Habhann into the village centre, including linkages to Caherconlish National School.

Census Pop. 2016	Additional households forecasted 2022-2029	Quantum of land required	Total Land zoned Serviced Sites	Total Land zoned New Residential
1476	164	8.615ha	2.085ha	6.53ha

**Table 3.2: Projected Growth for Caherconlish**

Caherconlish has a strong service function for its inhabitants and surrounding hinterland. Its level and diversity of services, community facilities and amenities, availability of serviced and serviceable lands, coinciding with its ease of access and proximity to Limerick City and suburbs and its connectivity to the national road network, further creates a settlement suitable to attract inward investment for future population growth, in accordance with the objectives of the NPF and RSES. On this basis, the assumed scale of growth for Caherconlish is considered reasonable and will be progressed on lands including opportunity, infill and brownfield sites.

A Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) assessing the key infrastructure available to the individual sites identified as suitable for the provision of residential development has been set out in Chapter 10. The SCA identifies the infrastructure necessary to support future development on lands that are serviceable. An indicative timeframe for the delivery of critical infrastructure i.e. short, medium or long term is also included.

### 3.3 Housing and Residential Development Strategy

One of the key objectives of the NPF, RSES and the Limerick Development Plan is to focus on the sustainable development and compact growth of urban areas, optimising the use of serviced lands by focusing development on infill, brownfield, backland and vacant/derelict sites and in doing so, maximising the viability of investment in social and physical infrastructure. A key priority of the Department of Rural and Community Development's Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 is the Town Centre First Approach that supports the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages. The Town Centre First Approach focuses on creating the conditions for individuals and families to live back into

the heart of the towns and villages through place-making, good quality urban design and sustainable mobility. The Town Centre First Approach is outlined in more detail in Chapter 4.

This LAP aims to balance the provision of good quality housing, that meets the needs of a diverse population, in a way that makes Caherconlish an attractive and inviting place to live in. Caherconlish will cater for new housing to serve population growth and new household formation, in accordance with the population targets of the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan



Fig. 3.1 Image of Old School Building on Main Street.

as is outlined in Section 3.2.2. The Plan identifies a requirement for 8.615ha. of land in order to accommodate planned growth, broken down into 22 units per hectare for 85% of dwelling units and 10 units per hectare for 15% of dwelling units proposed. Adequate housing provision is essential for the creation of an environment to attract business and enterprise to Caherconlish.

**Policy DS P1: Development Strategy** - It is policy of the Council to:

Deliver new residential development in accordance with the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, supporting a choice of quality housing, mixed tenure and unit size/type universally designed for ease of adaption to the lifecycle and mixed mobility needs.

**Objective DS O1: Residential Development** - It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Require the use of Design Briefs, Masterplans, Sustainability Statements, Social Infrastructure Assessments and any other supporting documents deemed necessary to ensure the coherent planning of residential development.
- (b) No one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 10 – 15% within the lifetime of the Plan, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the settlement has adequate capacity, in terms of both physical and social infrastructure to support additional growth
- (c) Ensure all new residential layouts will prioritise walking and cycling, which are fully permeable for pedestrians and cyclists to access a range of local services and enable the efficient provision of public transport services.
- (d) Ensure new residential development provides high quality public open space and play lots proportional to the number of residential units, having cognizance to accessibility, safety, permeability and public realm.



**Objective DS O2: Residential Compact Growth** - It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure that at least 30% of all new housing development is delivered within existing built-up areas and on infill, brownfield and backland sites.
- b) Consolidate existing development and increase existing residential density, through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings and infill development schemes.
- c) Ensure that in any proposed alterations to the streetscape of the village centre, adequate consideration is given to conservation, restoration and reconstruction, where it would affect the settings of protected structures, or the integrity of the nineteenth century streetscape



Fig. 3.2 Cois Rioga Residential Housing Estate

### 3.3.2 Residential Development – Density, Housing Type and Mix

Caherconlish has experienced significant population change since 2002 and this Local Area Plan seeks to accommodate the future needs of the village in a consolidated manner. Planning policy requires Local Authorities to ensure a sequential approach to zoning land with a primary focus on the consolidation of settlement through zoning of lands within or contiguous to the village centre and within the existing built-up/zoned area of Caherconlish. This LAP places a strong influence on ensuring the delivery of sustainable communities providing high quality, universally accessible residential developments with an appropriate mix of housing type, tenure, density and size, through the redevelopment of brownfield, infill, vacant and on greenfield sites having regard to principles of placemaking, permeability and integration of community and recreation facilities.



Fig. 3.3 Stone wall on entrance to Village from Beary's' Cross Direction

To cater for the projected population growth, a mix of dwelling types and sizes will be required to meet the housing needs of all members of the community, including the increased demand for smaller unit sizes/downsizing schemes. A statement to identify how this has been considered shall be submitted as a requirement for any planning application for housing development to demonstrate that consideration has been given by the developer to meet the demand for housing in Caherconlish.

The Council will be guided by the Government policy outlined in *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DECHG, 2009) and *Urban Development and Building Heights: Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DHPLG, 2018) and any subsequent replacement Government policies. The following densities shall apply to residential zoned land in Caherconlish:

Zoning	Minimum Density
New and Existing Residential	22 units per hectare
Serviced Sites	10 units per hectare

Table 3.3 Density Standards

**Objective DS O3: Density and New Residential Developments:** It is an objective of the Council to:

Ensure that new and existing residential development complies with the residential density requirements as set out in Table 3.3.

### 3.3.3 Serviced Low-density Sites

In Caherconlish, zoning of land is included for the potential development of low-density serviced sites as alternative to the un-serviced one-off rural house in the open countryside. These individual residential plots will have access to services, such as utility connections (water and sewerage), footpaths, lighting and are within walking distance of the village centre. The density shall generally be 10 housing units per hectare. Whilst individual house design on serviced sites is encouraged, the overall design of the scheme must be consistent in terms of boundary treatments and landscaping. A quantum of land (2.085ha) north of the village settlement on the approach road on the northern of the village, has been identified as 'Serviced Sites'.

**Objective DS O4: Serviced Sites** - It is an objective of the Council to:

Permit serviced sites on appropriately zoned lands within the settlement boundary of Caherconlish, in line with requirements outlined in the Limerick Development Plan. The



Council requires a minimum net density of 10 dwelling units per hectare on lands zoned Serviced Sites.

### 3.3.4 Specialised Housing including Older Persons Housing, Assisted Independent Living and Traveller Accommodation

Specialised housing accommodates the needs of those that require specialised design and planning needs, such as older persons, disabled or mobility-impaired people. Specialised housing also includes Traveller-specific accommodation. The Local Authority will ensure that all new housing developments or retrofitting existing units, will be designed to the highest quality with respect to the principles of universal design and place making. The provision of specialist housing should be integrated into the established or planning residential areas, well served by appropriate levels of infrastructure, within walking distance of shops, services, public transport, open space and based on the principles of universal design and age friendly public realm. Consideration of the nature of the existing housing stock and existing social mix in the area will be considered and provision will be made to a range of new housing types, tenures and adaptability for all age groups and abilities.

Limerick City and County Council has an adopted Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024, which outlines the accommodation needs, policy and implementation measures to address the accommodation needs of the Traveller Community. Objective HO O15 of the Limerick Development Plan, 2022-2028 outlines Limerick City and County Council's objective to support the quantity and quality of delivery of traveller-specific accommodation with the relevant agencies, in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme and any subsequent document. The current programme does not identify a requirement for specialised traveller accommodation in Caherconlish.

### 3.3.5 Social Housing

'Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland' is the government's housing plan to 2030. The plan includes ambitious actions to address homelessness, the provision of affordable housing and accelerating the delivery of social and affordable housing schemes. Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) is one of the means through which Limerick City and County Council can seek to address demand for social housing in Limerick. The Council works in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Approved Housing Bodies to deliver and manage social housing.

**Objective DS O5: Social and Affordable Housing** - It is an objective of the Council to: Promote the provision of social and affordable housing in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act (as amended), the Limerick Housing Strategy, the Housing Needs Demand Assessment, and government housing policy 'Housing for All' (2021), Limerick City and County Council's Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026 and any subsequent replacements thereof.

## Chapter 4 – Town Centre First Approach

### 4.1 Introduction

The Limerick Development Plan acknowledges the challenges facing rural communities and the important role that towns and villages play as local drivers for their surrounding areas. The most recent government policy publication, *Town Centre First* seeks to create vibrant communities in urban settlements, including villages, such as Caherconlish, to encourage families back into living in the heart of towns and villages. The policy outlines the need for towns and villages to be climate resilient, well-connected, accessible locations where digital technology is integrated into daily commercial and social life and where urban built heritage is sustainably managed and conserved.

**Policy TCF P1: Town Centre First** - It is policy of the Council to:

Support the implementation of the Town Centre First policy in Caherconlish in creating a vibrant and attractive village centre to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community through the enhancement and development of the village's rich architectural heritage and development of public realm.



Fig. 4.1 Residential Housing on High Street

### 4.2 Town Centre First and the '10 Minute' Town Concept

The Town Centre First policy is derived from the concept of developing a 10-minute city/town/village, whereby a sustainable compact settlement, such as Caherconlish, provides access for its residents to daily needs, within easy walking or cycling distance of their homes. There is clear scope in Caherconlish to promote greater connections and linkages through appropriately designed infrastructure and through the design stage of any future development. Recent years have shown a shift in attitude towards a desire for proximity of local services and amenities. Creating enhanced walking and cycling facilities enables residents to shift to more sustainable transport modes and in doing so, reducing the carbon footprint of the settlement.

The decline of villages needs to be tackled by focusing on policies, such as the Town Centre First approach, which seeks to future proof our local towns/villages by creating attractive

public realm, while also providing an environment where people want to live and can shop and meet their needs locally.



Fig. 4.2 Residential Units on Main Street

The Plan promotes the 'Town Centre First' approach with a focus on creating a thriving village centre with a strong service and social function. Through the re-use of buildings, infill development, re-purposing of under-utilised lands within the village centre for mixed uses including residential, small local shops or creative workspaces, the Plan seeks to consolidate the

village rather than encourage sprawl. In addition, the Plan supports the investment in high quality pedestrian/cyclists friendly public realm, increased permeability and connectivity and attractive public spaces where people can gather socially to include maximising green spaces that facilitate local communities and economies.

**Policy TCF P2: Place-making Strategic Policy** - It is policy of the Council to:

Ensure that new development in the village centre and in particular the opportunity areas, comprises the highest of qualitative and design standards, complimenting the existing historical built fabric and national heritage, sustaining Caherconlish as a village in which to live, work, invest in and do business.

### 4.3 Town Centre Health Check

Vacancy in any urban centre impacts on the overall vitality and attractiveness of an area. Residential vacancy is an issue for consideration in devising a new Local Area Plan and according to the 2016 Census, 9 dwellings or 1.7% of the housing stock were deemed 'temporarily absent' and 50 dwellings were deemed 'other vacant dwelling' accounting for 9.4% of the housing stock. Data gathered from Geo directory analysis for Q2 2022 identified residential vacancy in Caherconlish at 2.8% (4 units).

Limerick City and County Council carried out a Health Check of Caherconlish village in January 2022. In total 507 units were surveyed with 3.9% deemed vacant residential (19 units) and 30% vacant commercial units (9 units). The breakdown of the units surveyed is outlined in the Health Check Map 4.1 further down the section.

There is some vacancy of properties visible throughout the village centre on High Street, Barrack Street, and around the village square. Some of these units are highly visible due to their scale, having large street frontages, or their location within the village, in particular the

Square. Collectively and even individually, these vacant buildings contribute to the village's neglected appearance.

The Council has a proactive regime in place, which aims to tackle the issues of dereliction and vacancy throughout Limerick. The active land use management tools available to the Council are underpinned by Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended), the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (for vacant sites), Residential Zoned Land Tax and key Government policies such as Town Centre First, Our Rural Future, and Housing for All. In addition, the Council is committed to working with property owners to reactivate long-term vacant homes and unused properties for sustainable productive use and promote public funding opportunities such as Croí Cónaithe. A dedicated team within the Council work on a continuous basis seeking to reduce vacancy and dereliction, through the various tools available, including compulsory purchase orders of vacant and underutilised properties. The Dereliction, Vacancy and Re-Use Team of the Council will continue to engage with property owners to advise on remedial measures and give guidance on schemes and supports available to bringing vacant and derelict properties back into productive use.

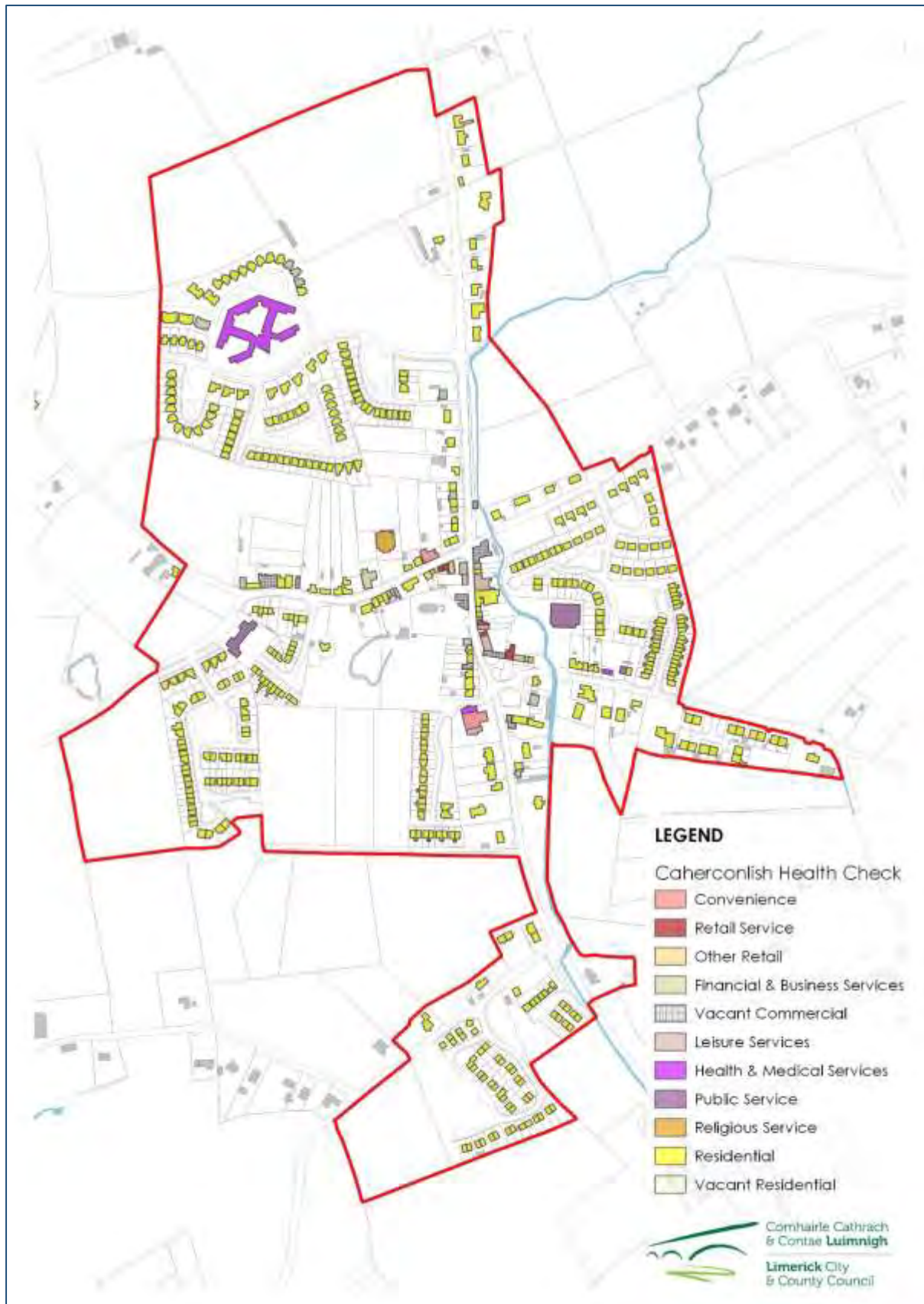
**Objective TCF O1 Town Centre Health Check:** It is an objective of the Council to: Undertake a mid-plan town centre health check survey in order to monitor vacancy in Caherconlish.

In order to realise the consolidation of Caherconlish, development will be encouraged to be delivered in a sustainable, sequential manner from the village core outwards, within the built up footprints of the village, while promoting the reuse and redevelopment of vacant and derelict sites and buildings. This Plan will provide support for continued diversification of services within the village core to sustain the residential population. Opportunities for the reuse of these buildings will be supported in the Plan as well as the provision of new services within the village. The Council will continue to monitor vacancy and work with the relevant stakeholders to address issues that exist and utilise the various tools available to implement urban regeneration.

**Objective TCF O2: Active Land Management:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Support and facilitate the reuse and revitalisation of derelict, vacant and underutilised sites and disused buildings throughout Caherconlish for residential, economic, community and leisure purposes.
- (b) Promote and facilitate the re-use of under-utilised or vacant lands/buildings in Caherconlish through the active land management mechanisms such as the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended), the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (for vacant sites), Residential Zoned Land Tax and also through key Government guidance policies such as Town Centre First, Our Rural Future, and Housing for All and any replacements thereof. The Council will continue to engage with property owners to advise on remedial measures and give guidance on schemes and supports available to bringing vacant and derelict homes back into productive use.





Map 4.1 Caherconlish Health Check Map January 2022

#### 4.4 Retail Strategy

The Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick designates Caherconlish as a Tier 4 – Large Village Level 1 Retail Centre. The Retail Strategy refers to small towns, villages and local centres role as *‘fulfilling the everyday needs of the communities they serve’* and outlines how retail development should be targeted in the centres of small towns and villages complementing existing retail provision. The development of retail services in the smaller settlements will be focused on providing support services for their respective populations and rural hinterlands.

There is a number of vacant commercial units in Caherconlish. As previously outlined, retail vacancy, as accounted for through the Health Check Survey provided a breakdown of retail/commercial vacancy of 30% (9 total units).

The Council supports the ‘Town Centre Approach’ when assessing planning applications in relation to retail development. Out-of-centre locations for retail business and services are generally not permitted in efforts to consolidate the existing retail centre and encourage vacant units use within centre. These retail developments should also be located in areas of high accessibility to the areas they serve. The LAP anticipates that additional retail development in Caherconlish will be achieved through the redevelopment of vacant commercial units in the first instance.

**Policy TCF P3: Retail Strategic Policy** - It is policy of the Council to:

To support the sustainable long-term retail growth of Caherconlish, in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick.

**Objective TCF O3: Retail Development** - It is the objective of the Council to:

Promote the vitality and viability of Caherconlish, as a retail service centre and to improve the quantity and quality of retail provision in the village by:

- (a) Emphasising the village centre as the primary retail location;
- (b) Encouraging the upgrading and expansion of existing retail units and the development of new units within the village centre;
- (c) Encourage proposals at ground floor level within the village centre to be used for retail uses. Where viable retail cannot be sustained, then alternative uses for the property/unit will be considered. Storage use will not be permitted as the primary use in this location;
- (d) Encouraging the use of upper floors in retail premises for commercial or residential use;
- (e) Enhancing the physical environment of the village centre, as a location for shopping and business through measures aimed at improving conditions for pedestrians;
- (f) Encourage the retention of traditional shop fronts to enhance the streetscape.

#### 4.5 Opportunity Sites

The Council has identified 5 opportunity areas that have the potential to sustain community vitality, contribute to a positive public realm experience, or having potential for adaptive re-use. The Council seeks to capitalise on the existing assets of these area, be that natural biodiversity and amenity, location or the historic built heritage.



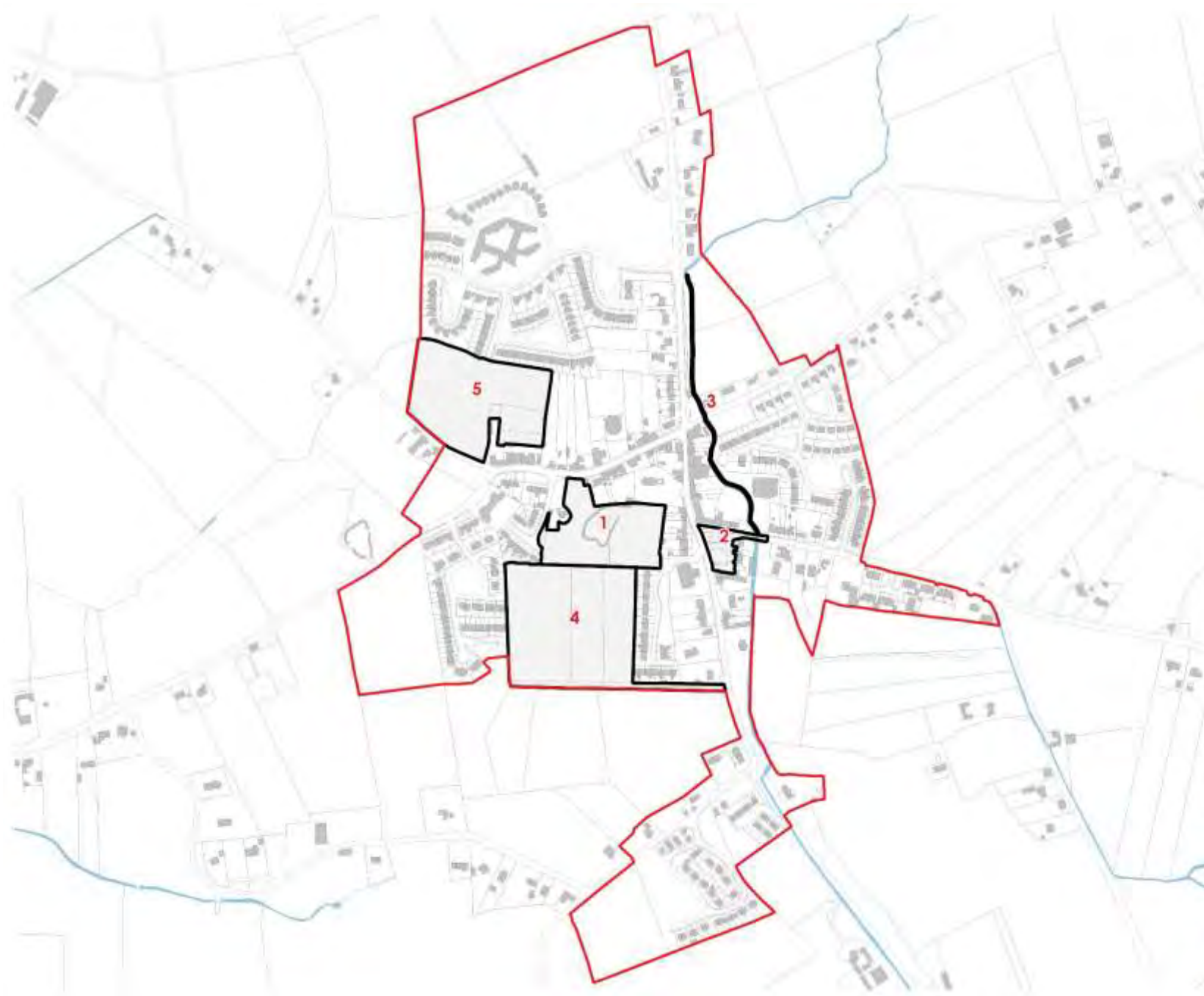
Fig. 4.2 Image of Caherconlish Village Square

**Objective TCF O4: Opportunity Sites** - It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Encourage and support the appropriate and sustainable development or redevelopment where appropriate of lands identified as opportunity sites within the land use zoning map in line with the principles set out in Table 4.2.
- (b) Ensure that new development in the village centre and in particular the opportunity areas comprises the highest of qualitative and design standards, complimenting the existing historical built fabric, or national heritage, sustaining Caherconlish as a village in which to live, work, invest in and do business.



# Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023-2029



Caherconlish  
Local Area Plan  
2023-2029

Opportunity Sites Map

## Legend

- Opportunity Sites
- LAP Boundary

Forward Planning  
Economic Development & Enterprise Directorate

Approved by the Council  
14th April 2023

April 2023 CHOS/23-29/R3

J.O. S.O.D. N/A

W. Edwards & Partners  
Planning & Development Consultants  
100-102, The Quadrant, Caherconlish, Co. Wick



Table 4.2 Caherconlish Opportunity Sites and Development Potential/Principles

Opportunity Site	Development Potential/Principles
<p><b>Opportunity Site 1:</b></p>	<p><b>Site Description:</b> Lands between High Street and Barrack Street, linking the old church site and lands to the south with High Street. The site consists of two fields, separated from each other by a mature hedgerow and is bordered on all sides except the south by buildings and their curtilages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.491ha lands zoned ‘Open Space and Recreation’.</li> <li>- The entire site has important historical and archaeological associations for the locality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is contained within the Recorded Monument LI014-079001 ‘Historic Town’</li> <li>• The site is distinguished by a pronounced earthwork some 2,500 square metres in area, which rises about 5 metres above the surrounding fields. (Recorded Monument LI014-79002).</li> <li>• The top of the earthwork is the site of another Recorded Monument (LI014-079004, a castle).</li> <li>• The eastern portion of the lands abuts the Medieval Church (RMP LI1014-079005) and Graveyard (RMPLI014-079003).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Development Potential/Principles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential to develop the lands as a community park for public use.</li> <li>- Opportunity to create a walkable and cycle friendly community park that will enhance access and improve permeability and active travel linkages to the village centre from the west of the settlement, including easy access to Caherconlish National School through a safe and attractive network of walkways and cycle paths.</li> <li>- To deliver an exemplar community park with a clear identity and character that responds to the natural and historic environment and provides a great place for play and recreation.</li> <li>- Any development proposals will be required to include the entire lands to ensure the area is developed and managed in a sustainable and coherent fashion as a public park.</li> <li>- Ensure that full consideration is given to the protection of archaeological heritage, in undertaking, approving or authorising development in order to avoid unnecessary conflict between development and the protection of archaeological heritage.</li> <li>- In addition, any proposals that may be considered to affect views and the setting of the old Church of Ireland Church, including proposals for tree planting will require prior consultation with the Council’s Archaeologist and the National Monuments Service.</li> </ul>

- The Council will seek to safeguard the amenities reasonably expected to be enjoyed amongst neighbouring land uses that the public use of this park might affect. This will require attention to how the park is to be laid out, careful consideration of uses permitted including management of the park, appropriate lighting, boundary treatment and controls on public access at entry point.
- Development principles relating to Opportunity Site 4 as outlined below will ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance with design of units positioned also to provide passive and active surveillance



**Opportunity Site 2:**

**Description:**

- Caherconlish Village Square
- The area is located in the village centre, at the junction between the regional road (R513) and a local road (L5094). The entire opportunity area is .327 hectares extending out the L5094 local road to the Millennium Centre.

- The site has a number of land use zoning including 'Open Space and Recreation' (the Square), the lands in the north and west of the Square are zoned 'Town Centre'. The area to the south and east is zoned 'Existing Residential' to reflect the dominant use there, and 'Education and Community Facilities' zoning at the Millennium Centre.
- Planning permission was granted in 2018 to Caherconlish Tidy Towns for a Heritage Project (blacksmith memorial and fountain)



**Development Potential/Principles:**

- Public realm improvement works to include tree-planting, walkways, benches and litterbins on the main green area.
- Enhanced pedestrian connectivity within the square and to the Millennium Centre.



<p><b>Opportunity Site 3:</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Groody River Walk</li> <li>- Forms Caherconlish's principal blue infrastructure asset and is a key feature of the village, adding to the amenity value and biodiversity within the settlement.</li> <li>- The Groody River is also important in that it is a tributary of the River Shannon and therefore feeds the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and it is essential that the integrity of the downstream Lower River Shannon SAC is protected.</li> <li>- The proposed river walk begins north of the village centre, with access proposed opposite the estate of Cois na Habhann on the R513. The route continues behind the former library parallel to the R513, Limerick Road through the 'Community and Open Space' zoning designation and continues east, terminating at the village centre.</li> </ul> <p><b>Development Potential/Principles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potential to develop a blue/green infrastructure amenity as a recreational/ecological resource and in doing so, providing a biodiversity corridor north of Caherconlish village centre along the section of the Groody River and in addition linking the L-5094 to the R513 at Ceol na Habhann.</li> <li>- Any proposed development will require the demonstration of a planned, integrated scheme for the area to reinforce the riparian character of the banks of the river safeguarding the natural habitat of the river and its banks.</li> <li>- Future development proposals shall provide a high quality riverside walkway alongside the Groody River.</li> <li>- Layouts, elevations and plan form must be designed to reflect a 'sense of place' and community, utilising existing site features and enhanced landscaping including the mature trees located along the corridor.</li> <li>- Proposals shall be designed in accordance with the principles of universal access for all.</li> <li>- Where possible, proposals shall include suitable landscaping and management measures to support enhanced biodiversity of the area.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Opportunity Site 4</b></p>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New residential site adjoining Barrack Close and Castle Park</li> <li>- 3.280ha site zoned 'New Residential'</li> <li>- Infill/backland development connecting into the village core</li> </ul> <p><b>Development Potential/Principles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detailed masterplan will be required showing proposed connectivity and linkages and access points as part of any development proposal. Vehicle access shall be provided via the R513 while pedestrian and cycle access shall be prioritised to create additional linkages and permeability into Opportunity Site 1, the Square, and where possible, surrounding residential estates;</li> <li>- Where possible, mature tree and hedgerow boundaries should be incorporated into the landscaping of the scheme to safeguard biodiversity corridors;</li> </ul>

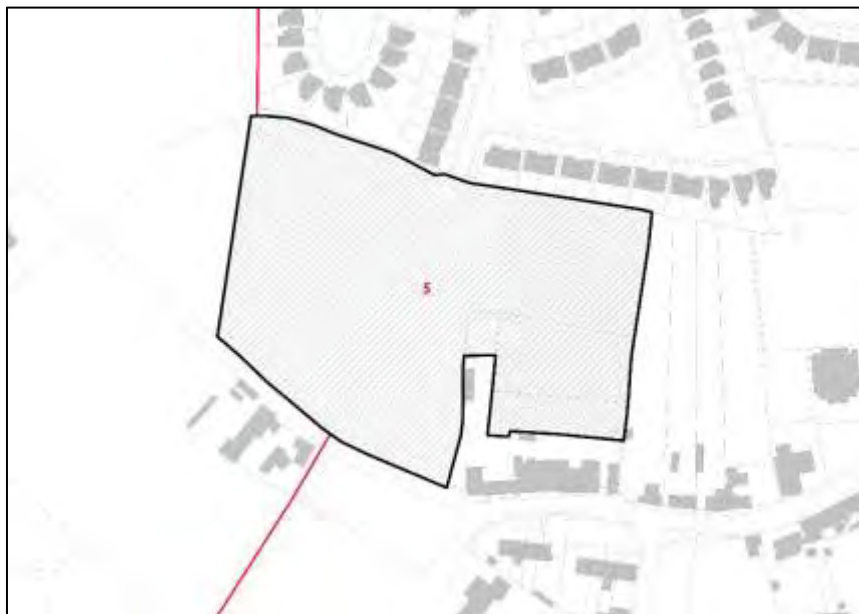
- Opportunity site in terms of the sustainable development and compact growth of Caherconlish optimising the use of serviced lands by focusing development on an infill/backland site and in doing so, maximising the viability of investment in social and physical infrastructure;
- Layouts, elevations and plan form must be designed to reflect a 'sense of place' and community, utilising existing site features and enhanced landscaping
- Good quality of private and communal open spaces;
- Variety of house types and unit size;
- Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance with design of units positioned to provide passive and active surveillance towards Opportunity Site 1 (proposed community park).
- Ensure the provision of green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout, including connections to existing or new green infrastructure assets.





<p><b>Opportunity Site 5</b></p>	<p><b>Description:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New Residential Site Adjoining High Street and Cois na Habhann</li> <li>- 2.094 ha site zoned 'New Residential'</li> <li>- Part backland and infill development north west of village centre</li> </ul> <p><b>Development Potential/Principles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity site for the sustainable development and compact growth of Caherconlish optimising the use of a serviceable landssite by focusing development on an infill/backland site and in doing so, maximising the viability of investment in social and physical infrastructure</li> <li>- The layout design will prioritise the creation of quality permeability and connectivity from Ceol na Habhann into the village centre, including to Caherconlish National School.</li> <li>- Detailed masterplan will be required showing proposed connectivity and linkages and access points as part of application.</li> <li>- Careful consideration will be required in terms of design, including connectivity between the residential estate of Ceol na Habhann to the junction of the L1149 and L5105 with provision for safe walking and cycling infrastructure. This site is a critical element in improving sustainable movement between the village centre, the school and the housing estate of Ceol na Habhann.</li> <li>- A mix of housing types and tenures will be required, in accordance with the provisions of the Limerick Development Plan.</li> <li>- Ensure that full consideration is given to the protection of archaeological heritage, in undertaking, approving or authorising development in order to avoid unnecessary conflict between development and the protection of archaeological heritage.</li> <li>- Early engagement at preplanning stage will be required to be undertaken with the Local Authority Archaeologist to promote the 'preservation in situ' of archaeological remains and settings in development.</li> <li>- Require any future proposals on these lands to be informed by the preparation of an overall masterplan, which will be prepared in conjunction with an archaeological assessment by suitably qualified archaeologists at the design stage, previous archaeological investigations in the immediately surrounding lands have identified significant archaeological remains in particular, potential town defences, which will require further investigation, which will be agreed with the National Monuments Service and the Council's Archaeologist at pre - planning stage.</li> </ul>
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- A detailed traffic assessment will be required to assess any issues with access to the lands. Any proposal should be well designed in terms of connectivity and permeability with good pedestrian, cyclist links to the village centre and public transport.



## Chapter 5 - Sustainable Communities

### 5.1 Sustainable Communities - Introduction

Community infrastructure of a social, sporting, educational, and amenity value are crucial to provide opportunities for inclusion of all community members and provides benefits to health and helps attract inward investment. Higher level spatial plans promote the 10 Minute Town Concept seeking to have all community facilities and services accessible within a 10 minute walk or cycle from homes or are accessible by public transport services connecting people to larger scaled settlements. In addition, developing the infrastructure for the development of sustainable communities is one of the best ways to address climate change enabling communities themselves to transition to a low carbon society.

High quality social and community services in an area makes for a more attractive place that encourages the establishment of new business and where people choose to live. The Local Authority is committed to the provision, upgrade and expansion of community facilities and social infrastructure in conjunction with private, public and voluntary organisations.

Limerick City and County Council's Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) performs a role in developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development, through the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021 (LECP) and any subsequent updates.



Fig 5.1 Caherconlish Playground

Ireland's aging population is also evident in Caherconlish. From 2011 to 2016, the percentage of the population of the village in the age bracket 65+ doubled from 6% to 12%. Limerick City and County Council adopted strategy "*Age Friendly Limerick 2015-2020*" which commits to improving key areas of infrastructure, services, information and an overall social response to older person's issues. The need to cater for those wishing to downsize and reside in proximity to services and amenities is anticipated to grow into the future. These facilities should be located in existing residential areas on sites with good access to a broad range of services for elderly persons.

#### **Policy C P1: Social and Recreational Infrastructure Community and Recreational Facilities -**

It is the policy of the Council to:

Ensure that planning applications for social infrastructure and recreational infrastructure demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.

**Objective C O1: Expansion of Community and Education Facilities** - It is an objective of the Council to:

Ensure provision of sufficient zoned lands to facilitate the expansion of existing and provision of new education, sports clubs, cultural facilities, healthcare facilities and community infrastructure in appropriate locations. The Council promote multi-purpose spaces and co-use of recreational facilities.

## 5.2 Community and Education Facilities

### 5.2.1 Education and Childcare

Caherconlish has a number of well-established community and social facilities and has many active community groups operating within the village involving a wide range of activities including sports, arts and culture, local history and heritage, youth, environmental and local development groups. These groups have been very successful in delivering a number of community projects, including a community playground and have recently obtained planning permission for the redevelopment of Caherconlish tennis club. In addition, the Caherconlish Tidy Towns group have been granted permission for a heritage project in the village square. The Council will seek to support community-led projects that enhance the well-being of the community and cultural projects that create a sense of place/enhance public spaces within the village.

There is currently one national school within the settlement of Caherconlish with an enrolment in 2021/22 of 114 students. Caherconlish National School has limited capacity to expand. To facilitate the provision of any future expansion, lands opposite and adjoining the existing school have been zoned for community and education use. In relation to the lands zoned for Education and Community purposes adjoining the Castlepark Estate, extensions to the foul sewer may be required to serve these lands.

There are two providers offering preschool services within Caherconlish and in addition an after school (school going age) service operated from Caherconlish Community Centre. All preschool and afterschool facilities currently operating in Caherconlish are seasonal. There is no purpose built crèche, despite the growth in the number of young children with parents availing of this service in adjoining settlements.

**Objective C O2: Childcare and Educational Facilities** - It is the objective of the Council to:

- a) Support and facilitate improvements to existing educational and childcare and facilities within Caherconlish
- b) Ensure that there are sufficient educational and community facilities to meet the needs generated by proposed developments, by requiring the completion of a Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment for residential developments of 10 or more dwellings.
- c) Ensure that childcare and education facilities are provided in tandem with new residential areas, at accessible locations, which maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport and comply with all relevant standards.

- d) Facilitate the development of lifelong learning facilities and digital capacity for distance learning.
- e) Ensure that the existing school site is protected for educational use and that lands opposite and adjoining to the school is protected for future expansion of the school, if required, subject to site suitability.

### 5.2.2 Health

There is a HSE Health Centre operating within the settlement in Templemichael. The primary role of the Planning Authority with regard to healthcare is to ensure that (a) there is an adequate policy framework in place inclusive of the reservation of lands, should additional services be required and (b) healthcare facilities would be permitted in line with planning requirements. The Council will continue to support further economic and social progress with regard to health services, including capital investment in community and continuing care services at the HSE (West) Health Clinic in Caherconlish.

### 5.2.3 Parks, Open Space and Recreation

Public open spaces and sports and recreational facilities are key elements in ensuring a good quality of life is achieved for all members of the community. The village of Caherconlish is currently served by a range of community facilities, including a soccer pitch, a playground and a health centre. The village also has a GAA ground and tennis court (albeit outside the LAP Boundary). In 2021, Caherconlish Tennis Club, located on the Ballyneety Road, received planning permission for the construction of a new clubhouse, multi-use astro turf courts and a sensory garden. In addition, the local Millennium Centre, includes a sports arena, large hall and meeting rooms. The Centre provides for a number of additional community services including a parent and toddler group, youth club, pilates, badminton and a music school.



Fig 5.2 Newly constructed section of Creamery Walk

The recently constructed 'Creamery Walk', funded through the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, connects a walking loop from the village to the Old Creamery on High Street and linking back into the village, on the R513. The funding provided for the provision of the safe pedestrian access from Caherconlish National School is a welcomed and well-used addition to the village.

**Objective C O3: Community Facilities:** It is an objective of the Council to: Support and facilitate the provision of multi-functional community facilities to meet the needs of the population of Caherconlish.



**Objective C O4: New Amenity Areas and Walkways** - It is the objective of the Council to: Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity and Sustainable Transport Map (Appendix 1) in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties over look proposed walkways.



Fig. 5.3 Opportunity Site 1

Public open space is an integral part of any residential development. A variety of types and sizes of public open space should be provided with natural passive surveillance by the residents. Residential development should incorporate appropriate provision of quality public open space and play lots, in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. The following table provides a hierarchy of Open Space within residential estates.

Table 5.1: Open Space Hierarchy within Residential Estates

Type of Public Open Space	Area	Accessibility from residential units	Note
Play lot/ pocket Park: primarily catering for play for younger children	400m <sup>2</sup> - 0.2 ha.	Every home within 100m walking distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All residential areas in excess of 50 units should incorporate a play lot provided at a rate of 4sqm per residential unit;</li> <li>- Play lot should be overlooked with sufficient passive surveillance by as many houses as possible;</li> <li>- Not permitted to side or rear of dwellings;</li> <li>- Developer will be required to provide a minimum of two permanent play low maintenance features on site. The design shall reflect nature based play solutions.</li> </ul>
Small Park	0.2 ha.- 2 ha.	Every residential unit within 400m walking distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To accommodate a small playground with a minimum of 4 play features, kick around space, and passive recreation;</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must be overlooked with passive surveillance by as many houses as is practicable;</li> <li>- Not permitted to side or rear of dwellings.</li> </ul>
Local Park	2 ha. - 20 ha.	Residences to be within 1km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To accommodate a wide range of uses including playing pitches, teenage space, passive recreation and biodiversity areas.</li> </ul>

## Chapter 6 – Economic Development and Tourism

### 6.1 Enterprise and Employment

Caherconlish acts as a service centre for its inhabitants and the rural hinterland. Its economic role includes the provision of some employment opportunities, crucial services for its residents, including shops, a post office, a Garda station, a petrol station and other community and professional services.

Section 3.4.3 of the Limerick Development Plan identifies 'Level 3 settlements as acting as important local drivers that provide a range of functions for their resident population and their surrounding catchments, including housing, employment services and retail and leisure opportunities. Objective SSO3 Level 3 Towns provides the appropriate plan support to *'consolidate the growth of these towns and focus policy on ensuring these towns become more self-sufficient, in terms of job creation and services.'* The economy of the village is predominantly based on the service sector. General service provision remains focused on Barrack Street and High Street. The village is predominantly a commuter village, with over 79% of the workforce with a fixed workplace not at their home working outside the settlement (Census 2016). There are currently no manufacturing or industrial workplaces operating within the village.



Fig. 6.1 Village Centre - local shop/restaurant/pharmacy

Settlements such as Caherconlish have capacity to accommodate community based enterprise centres on appropriately zoned lands where there is good access to regional and national roads and a pool of local skills. In this regard, the village is well placed in respect of ease of access off the N24 and links to the east of the County and North Cork. In addition, vacant

commercial units should be encouraged for redevelopment for small scale or local enterprise, creative workspaces and industry creation, subject to normal planning and environmental criteria.

**Policy ED P1: Strategic Economic Development** - It is policy of the Council to:

Promote and facilitate economic development and employment generating activities in Caherconlish in a sustainable manner, in accordance with higher-level spatial plans, including the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

**Objective ED O1: Local Enterprise** - It is an objective of the Council to:  
Encourage the redevelopment of vacant commercial units, brownfield, derelict, and infill sites for local enterprise development, subject to the normal planning criteria.



Fig. 6.2 Caherconlish Main Street

### 6.1.1 Enterprise and Employment Zoned Lands

Together with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region, the NPF places a strong emphasis on compact, smart, sustainable, appropriate and inclusive economic growth in settlements. Since the adoption of the 2012-2018 Plan, enterprise and employment within the village has largely remained unchanged with the exception of a number of change of use permissions from retail units to a restaurant, a bistro and a veterinary clinic on Barrack Street. Two significant areas of land zoned for enterprise and employment uses under the 2012-2018 Plan remain undeveloped.

A total of 5.89 hectares of land is zoned for enterprise and employment in the Plan in lands north of the village core on the R513. The LAP supports opportunities for employment creation, business and technology development in Caherconlish to facilitate economic development, in accordance with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the Limerick Development Plan.

**Objective ED O2: Enterprise and Employment Zoned Lands** - It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Support appropriate development on the 'Enterprise and Employment zoned lands in Caherconlish
- (b) Ensure the provision of a minimum 20m landscaped buffer zone between any proposed development and adjoining residential lands.

## 6.2 Tourism

Caherconlish is strategically located just to the south of the main Limerick to Waterford National Primary Road, (N24), which is one of the main tourist and traffic routes serving the east and south-east of the Country as well as other settlements in County Tipperary. High

volumes of traffic pass through the settlement daily, many accessing North Cork as an alternative route to the N20. Caherconlish should capitalise on its location and take advantage of the economic driver that tourism can play.

Caherconlish is a historic village and is well placed to develop a tourism niche in the promotion of its historic landmarks. The village square has a number of potential public realm opportunities to increase its attractiveness. Further works in the form of a public fountain and blacksmith memorial was granted planning permission in 2018 would further enhance this area.

**Objective ED O3: Tourism Development** – It is an objective of the Council to:  
Enhance the tourism potential of Caherconlish, including the promotion of new tourism products in an environmentally sustainable manner and work with relevant landowners and stakeholders to encourage new development for the tourist industry within the Local Area Plan boundary.



## Chapter 7 - Sustainable Mobility and Transport

### 7.1 Movement and Accessibility

The NPF, RSES and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 seek to reduce dependency on the private car and secure a shift towards sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport. The importance of integrating safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our local communities will play a primary role in meeting ambitious climate action targets to support the transition to a low carbon society. Caherconlish's proximity to Limerick City has resulted in a significantly proportion of commuter based car usage travelling outside the settlement on a daily basis. Its ease of access from the N24 and primary access route from Limerick to Mitchelstown and North Cork via the R513 creates traffic congestion through the main axis of the village. The R513 also serves as an important economic role for Limerick linking Limerick to Mitchelstown and East Cork.

**Policy SMT P1: Integration of Land Use and Transport Policies** - It is policy of the Council to: Support and facilitate the integration of land use and transportation policies for Caherconlish. The Council will support the development of a sustainable compact settlement, which can be served by sustainable modes of transport to reduce the need for long distance travel, as a means to reduce the impact of climate change.

**Policy SMT P2: Transport and Movement - Promotion of Sustainable Patterns of Transport Use** - It is policy of the Council to:

Seek to implement in a positive manner, in cooperation with other relevant authorities and agencies, the policies of the NPF, RSES, the Department of Transport's Active Travel and the Limerick Development Plan, to encourage more sustainable patterns of travel and greater use of sustainable forms of transport in Caherconlish including public transport, cycling and walking.

### 7.2 Public Transport

#### 7.2.1 Existing Public Transport Provision

Caherconlish is served by a number of public transport routes. These include daily provision into Limerick Bus Station and additional links to Galbally and Tipperary Town. Designated (informal) bus stops are provided for outside the former Library, outside Mace on the village Square and on Barrack Street. In addition, a Transport for Ireland (TFI) Local Link also serves the village providing an important local public transport link for the hinterland of the village directly to Dooradoyle. In line with national transport and planning policy, the Council welcomes any improvement to public transport services and infrastructure within the lifetime of this Plan and will work with transport providers to enhance provision in Caherconlish.

#### 7.2.2 Public Transport Provision

In October 2022, the National Transport Authority announced the provision of a new route serving Hospital and Mitchelstown into Limerick City. The new service is an important link that will also serve Caherconlish six times daily. Although this service has improved connectivity into the City and onto North Cork, public transport services to and from

Caherconlish are still, to a degree, limited and the times and allowance for connections limits the quality of service. Improvements to connectivity for the daily commute to the wider area are encouraged by the Council to improve accessibility to the services, employment and educational opportunities from Caherconlish. It is also important that those in the rural areas surrounding the village, are connected into the existing services. In this regard, the Plan supports the National Transport Authority's Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan, with the aim of increasing connectivity, particularly for people living outside major cities and towns.

The key public transport objectives for Caherconlish are to improve the existing bus services to encourage a shift to sustainable transport modes.

**Objective SMT O1: Public Transport Provision:** It is an objective of the Council to: Support and facilitate implementation of an integrated, multi-modal and accessible public transport network in Caherconlish and its hinterland, including any investment in public transport by service providers in Caherconlish.

### 7.3 Walking and Cycling

#### 7.3.1 Existing Walking/Cycling Infrastructure

There are currently no cycle paths in Caherconlish. Main Street experiences high levels of traffic with some on street parking, while High Street experiences high levels of on street car parking. Given the compact nature of the settlement, cycling to increase connectivity and permeability for active travel usage and additional cycling infrastructure be developed.



Fig. 7.1 Access to Village from Beary's Cross

Much of the settlement has the provision of pedestrian infrastructure. The newly established link from the School to the Creamery Walk is particularly popular with local residents. There are two pedestrian crossings within the village, one on the approach road to the village at Ceol na Habhann and a second one on the R513 at the junction at Lynch's Corner. The receiving environment, particularly on Main Street experiences a large number of vehicles and HGV's, using the road network daily creating a less attractive space for walking and cycling.

Additional infrastructural linkages and improvements to connectivity, particularly around the Village Square would create a safer environment for pedestrians. Enhancements to pedestrian facilities, such as a connection to the GAA pitch and the Millenium Centre, are supported in the plan.

### 7.3.2 Proposed Walking/Cycling Provision

The key walking and cycling objectives for Caherconlish is to create an environment conducive to active travel and enable and encourage a shift to sustainable transport modes. A number of key actions have been identified as part of the Local Area Plan to be implemented within the lifetime of the plan. These are provided for in Chapter 11 Monitoring and Evaluation.

**Objective SMT O2: Sustainable Travel Infrastructure** - It is an objective of the Council to: Maintain and expand active travel infrastructure to provide for accessible safe pedestrian and cycling routes route network in Caherconlish. This includes the following:

- (i) Support the development of an active travel connection from the village to Caherconlish/Caherline GAA pitch;
- (ii) Improved connectivity from Village Square to the Millennium Centre, including traffic calming measures and pedestrian improvements on approach road from Boskill;
- (iii) Explore the feasibility for the provision of traffic calming measures on the Old Creamery Road.
- (iv) Incorporate Sustainable Travel measures in to all new developments in the village.

### 7.4 Modal Shift and Targets

As mentioned, by nature of its close proximity to Limerick City, Caherconlish is a commuter village where the use of the private car is the predominant form of transport. Supporting and facilitating modal shift to sustainable transport options is a focus of the Plan. Active travel is the concept of travelling by walking, cycling or other non-motorised wheel based transport modes. Active Travel is usually focused on shorter trips as a natural choice for every day journeys to school, work or for social reasons. Analysis of POWSCAR data for Caherconlish highlights that 78% of the working population travel outside of settlement for work purposes, travel by car driver. Changing the behaviour of this modal group to an alternative mode will be most challenging, however there is potential for change to modes, such as carpooling or public transport through workplace travel plans/mobility management planning at destination.

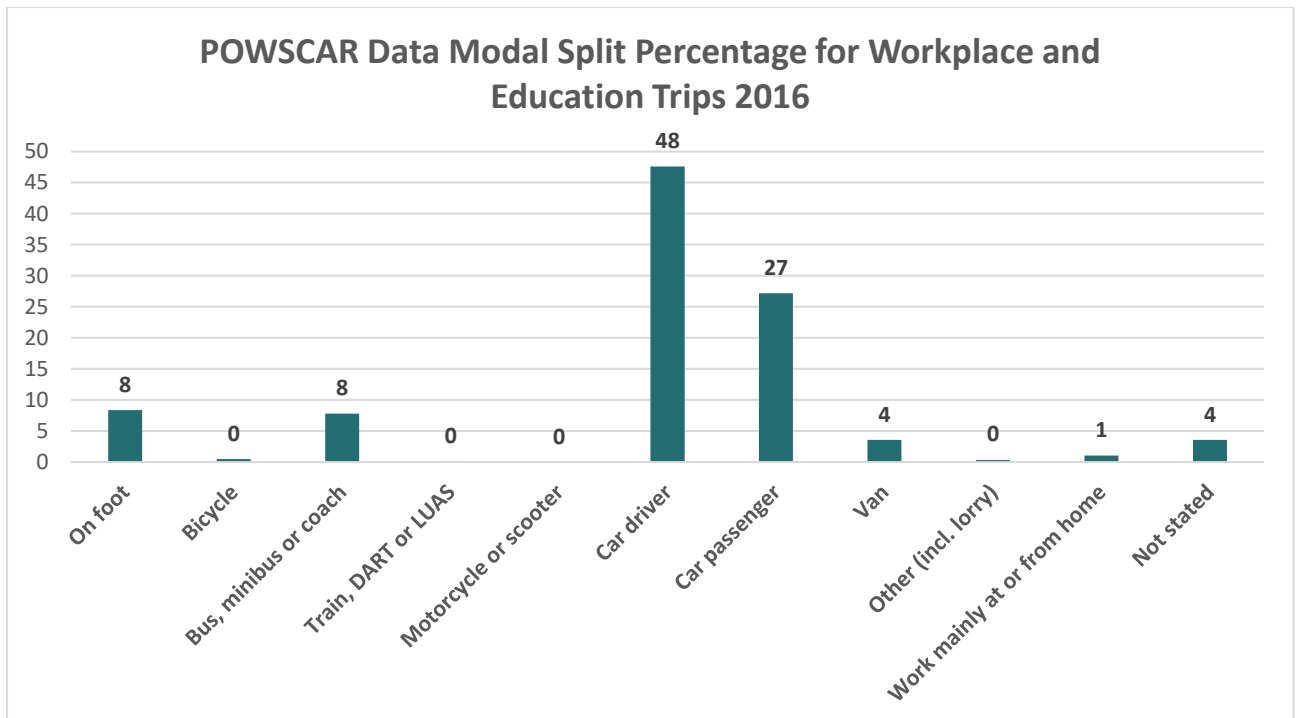


Fig 7.2: Places of Work, School or Collage Census Anonymised Results 2016

Analysis of POWSCAR Data for Caherconlish shows that car travel is also significantly high for more localised trips. For example, 37% of those travelling for work purposes with origin and destination within the settlement of Caherconlish travel by car driver (22 individuals). In addition, 50% of those travelling for educational purposes with origin and destination within the settlement travel by car (37 students) and out of the 37 students, 35 are travelling from within a 2km radius of the school. Focusing on school travel, Caherconlish National School, by nature of its location and layout experiences traffic congestion particularly at drop off and collection times. The Plan supports the measures to address traffic issues at this location and also implementation of active travel measures and changing travel behaviour for the students and staff. There are many positive health, environmental and economic benefits from participating in active travel including reduced road congestion, improved air quality, addressing climate change, increased access to employment/education and reduced social exclusion.

Whilst the current situation appears to be entrenched, there are a number of future opportunities which have the ability to address current travel trends and to examine the existing travel behaviours within Caherconlish to provide for the realisation of a more sustainable transport model.

- Safe Routes to Schools Programme: Caherconlish has been included as part of the National Transport Authority's Safe Route to Schools Programme. The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Programme was developed in partnership with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Green-Schools and aims to improve safety at the school gate, improve access routes to school by improving walking and cycling infrastructure and increase the number of students who cycle to school. It is envisaged that the school will become actively engaged with the programme within the lifetime of the plan;

- Preparation of a Traffic Management Plan for Caherconlish to manage the existing road network and its users to maximise safety, efficiency and reliability;
- Connection to Caherconlish/Caherline GAA Pitch;
- Increase permeability through future development within the settlement;
- Change of focus to town centre first policy, development of infill/brownfield sites and creation of a more compact village;
- Opportunity sites focused on improving permeability and localised access.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out targets for the modal shift for Tier 3 Settlements including Caherconlish:

Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 Modal Shift Targets Tier 3 Settlements			
Settlement	Walk	Cycle	Public Transport
Settlement Levels 3-6/Rural Areas (All Work/Education Trips)	15%	5%	12%

**Fig. 7.3 Modal Shift Targets Settlement Levels 3-6**

With the high levels of commuter-based travel in Caherconlish, there are significant challenges with regard to promoting a modal shift away from the private car usage. However, the Caherconlish Local Area Plan strives to reduce the reliance on the private car, by promoting and facilitating more sustainable modes of transport, based on the principles of the 10-minute town a compact settlement and the town-centre first approach. The Council will work closely with other relevant agencies and stakeholders, including the NTA, to address modal shift targets as above.

**Objective SMT O3: Supporting Modal Split and Behavioural Change** - It is an objective of the Council to:

- Encourage, promote and facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport in Caherconlish.
- Support and facilitate implementation of an integrated, multi-modal and accessible public transport network catering for all members of society across Caherconlish and its hinterland, including any investment in the public transport by service providers in Caherconlish.
- Improve and create additional facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, as part of a coherent and integrated active travel network, as opportunities arise as part of new developments.
- Facilitate and implement the Safe Route to Schools Programme in conjunction with relevant stakeholders, with particular focus on Park and Stride and promoting modal change in favour of active travel measures. Seek to enhance the existing arrangements for school drop off/collection, which may require reassignment of road space to maximise pedestrian and cyclist safety.

## 7.5 Roads

Caherconlish is located south of the N24, only 2km south of the junction of the R513 with the N24, the main Limerick – Waterford National Route and experiences large volumes of traffic



travelling through the village on a daily basis. The heavy volume of traffic is principally from through traffic using the R513 between Limerick and Mitchelstown, which forms the main axis of the village. The National Development Plan 2019-2027 has identified the up-grade of the N24 and improved connectivity between Limerick and Waterford as a national infrastructural priority, and the section from Limerick Junction to Cahir is progressing through the design and environmental report stages. The improved route to southeast Tipperary and the southeast of the country is hoped to have an impact on alleviating some of this through-traffic through Caherconlish. In addition, the N24 Beary's Cross Road Improvement Scheme, which includes a new roundabout junction, has commenced at Beary's Cross on the N24. This is a heavily used junction for those accessing Caherconlish, Hospital and into North Cork and for those travelling from Caherconlish into Limerick City. The Council will seek to continue to work in partnership with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and other stakeholders in the design process and the delivery of these schemes. Although some improvements have been made within the village, there is still issues with car parking.



Fig. 7.4 Directional Signage on the R513

The Council will examine the benefits in providing a bypass of the village. This will help alleviate traffic congestion in the centre of the village and along the approach roads as well as potentially serving as an access to the new development areas in the Plan.

**Policy SMT P3: Sustainable Mobility and Regional Accessibility** - It is policy of the Council to: Support sustainable mobility, enhanced regional accessibility and connectivity within Caherconlish, access to Limerick and the southeast area, in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

### 7.5.1 Proposed Road Infrastructure Provision

The key road infrastructure objectives for Caherconlish is enhanced accessibility to and within Caherconlish and to create an environment that supports sustainable travel and a better quality of life for its residents.

**Objective SMT O4: Traffic Management Plan** - It is an objective of the Council to: Facilitate the preparation of a Traffic Management Plan for Caherconlish Village.

**Objective SMT O5 Movement and Accessibility** - It is an objective of the Council to: Investigate the feasibility of a bypass for the village and to examine potential route options to allow for such infrastructure.

## Chapter 8 – Climate Action, Environment and Heritage

### 8.1 Climate Action and the Environment

Climate Change and the transition to a low carbon society has become a key consideration of all land use plans. The effects of climate change are quickly becoming the biggest challenge we face today posing a serious threat to quality of life, communities, businesses, the environment and biodiversity. Land use planning is a critical tool to mitigate and adapt to climate change and the protection of our environment.

Limerick City and County Council has prepared a Climate Change Adaption Strategy 2019-



**Fig 8.1 Groody River running south through Village**

2024, which concentrates on dealing with the effects of climate change addressing adaption to minimise the effects of climate change, such as extreme weather events and greenhouse gas emissions. Through the policies and objectives set out in the NPF and RSES, Climate adaptation and mitigation measures are embedded in the plan making process. The Local Area Plan has been prepared with the purpose of integrating and implementing these policies and provisions where relevant. The approach to density, land use, design and movement is consistent with broader measures to address climate change in the areas of sustainable travel, green infrastructure, flood risk adaption and renewable energy sources, amongst others.

There are a number of ways in which a Local Area Plan can seek to reduce the carbon footprints and mitigate against the negative impacts of climate change. These include:

- Promote the provision of blue green infrastructure (planting of trees, hedgerows, woodlands, construction of surface water retention features such as ponds, lakes or swales);
- Promote climate proofing in the design of buildings and neighbourhoods;
- Promote the use of indigenous resources and adoption of new building techniques and designs that minimize energy intensive inputs;
- Seek to improve energy performance ratings on existing and new buildings. All new homes constructed must reach an energy performance rating in accordance with Part L – Conservation of Fuel and Energy 2019, which gives effect to Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) Regulations.

**Policy CH P1: Climate Change Strategic Policy** - It is policy of the Council to:  
Protect and enhance environmental quality and implement the climate action measures through the planning process to address climate change.

**Objective CH O1: Climate Change:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure climate-proofing measures are incorporated into the design, planning and construction of all developments, including utilities and their networks. The use of green infrastructure as a mechanism for carbon offsetting and surface water management is encouraged.
- b) Ensure that all residential and commercial developments are designed to take account of the impacts of climate change, including the installation of rainwater harvesting systems, and that energy efficiency and renewable energy measures are incorporated. In the case of large industrial, commercial or newly constructed public buildings, the incorporation of renewable technologies, such as solar energy in the design will be encouraged, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria.
- c) Support and promote climate smart and the NZEB standard of building or equivalent for all new developments.
- d) Promote and support development of renewable energy sources, which will achieve low carbon outputs and promote Caherconlish as a low carbon area
- e) Support the development of low carbon and green technological businesses and industries.
- f) Promote responsible development and management of land, drainage systems and natural habitats and to encourage development at appropriate locations, which minimise the use of fossil fuels and maximises the use of local or renewable resources.
- g) Promote the appropriate adaption of built heritage to assist in addressing the effects of climate change.

## 8.2 Biodiversity and Blue Green Infrastructure

The NPF recognises the role green blue infrastructure plays in assisting with adaptation and mitigation to climate change, aiding improvements in air quality and water quality, and providing benefits to biodiversity. The Limerick Development Plan's Landscape Character Assessments describes the varied landscapes that Limerick possesses and its importance in terms of its intrinsic value and beauty but also in providing for local residents and visitors as a place to live and for recreational and tourism purposes. Caherconlish is set within the Agricultural Lowlands Landscape Character Area as defined by the Development Plan, with locally important wildlife features and habitats. The village also contains a number of open spaces, hedgerows, a playground, footpaths, an established walking route and agricultural land, all of which are valuable green infrastructure that enhances the village's identity and sense of place. There are a number of attractive mature trees, both individually and parts of larger stands and groups, to the south of the village, along the Groody River, and also in the village square. A number of field boundaries within the plan area, while lacking mature impressive trees, also form an essential part of the natural green infrastructure of the area. There are no nature designations in the village.

Existing trees and hedgerows are an important features supporting biodiversity and should be carefully considered in any planning application. Applications shall seek to retain hedgerows, landscaped areas, retention or planting of trees and preservation of natural features etc. where possible. Suitable planting new edge or buffer treatments will be encouraged as part of new developments. These areas will emphasise enhancement of local biodiversity and local surface water management, while enhancing visual amenity. Management of invasive species, prior to and during construction shall be considered.

Other areas of important biodiversity in Limerick can include graveyards, cemeteries and green spaces. Following a land use survey of the village, evidence of the protected Barn Owl was present within the Old Medieval Church in the centre of the village and further evidence of nesting was found within the curtilage of the graveyard. The Council will require all new developments, where possible to identify, protect and where appropriate, enhance ecological features by making provision for local biodiversity.



**Fig. 8.2 Groody River north off Main Street**

The Groody River forms Caherconlish's principal blue infrastructure asset and is a key feature of the village, adding to the amenity value and biodiversity within the settlement. It is a tributary of the River Shannon and therefore feeds the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) adding to its importance. The closest designated site to Caherconlish is the Lower Shannon SAC at the Mulkear River, a tributary river of the River Shannon, 3.6 km to the north of the village. However this is located downstream of the River Groody which swings westwards shortly after leaving the village, to join the River Shannon itself and the Lower Shannon SAC circa 13 kilometres downstream from the village. Although no part of the Groody River is designated as part of this SAC at any location, it is important that the Lower Shannon SAC is safeguarded to prevent ex-situ effects to the site.



**Figure 8.3: Blue Green Infrastructure Benefits (Image courtesy of Draft Limerick City and Environs Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy)**

















Limerick City and County Council have prepared a Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy, which will be used to inform and guide the planning and management of GBI within Limerick City and Suburbs, Mungret and Annacotty. Nonetheless, many of the GBI principles will be relevant to the remainder of the County where the strategy's objectives and priority actions proposed can be adapted to suit Caherconlish. GBI has far-reaching benefits, including the creation of places, which improve physical and mental health, contributes towards to the provision of space for nature, plays a vital role in climate change mitigation and adaptation and many economic benefits. The Local Area Plan for Caherconlish includes a number of policies and objectives that will guide the direction and support the delivery and enhancement of GBI within the village. These 'Enhancement Opportunities' are outlined in Table 8.1 and includes the associated key cross compatible Climate Action themes.



Fig 8.4: Image taken from Draft Limerick City and Environs Blue Green Infrastructure: Climate Change Interlinking and Cross-cutting Themes.



Table 8.1: LAP Climate Action Enhancements Opportunities

Enhancements Opportunities	Theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The creation of a community park (Opportunity Site 1) providing opportunities for both active and passive recreation, whilst creating additional linkages and connections into the village centre, local facilities/services/amenities and existing or proposed residential areas.</li> <li>Opportunity Site 1 as identified, seeks to deliver an exemplar community park with a clear identity and character that responds to the natural and historic environment while still providing a place for play and recreation.</li> </ul>	 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the benefits of the Groody River in the creation of a linear walk, utilising the amenity value of the river, whilst creating additional linkages, connections and access points to the Groody River.</li> </ul>	 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance existing public open space provision through the inclusion of three Opportunity Sites in support of public realm improvements, increased linkages and connectivity, increased accessible friendly outdoor seating and recreation provision.</li> </ul>	  
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure connectivity/linkages and open space provision is provided for in the design of any future developments in accordance with the Development Management Standards of Chapter 11 of the Limerick Development Plan.</li> </ul>	 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and expand the provision of active travel infrastructure to provide for accessible safe pedestrian and cycling routes route network in Caherconlish to minimise the need to travel via private transport and to create additional safe linkages and connections for pedestrians and cyclists. Such opportunities include the provision of additional active travel infrastructure in proximity to Caherconlish National School, connections to Caherconlish/Caherline GAA Pitch and the Millenium Centre.</li> </ul>	   
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the integration of surface water management solutions into the landscape, including nature-based SuDS.</li> </ul>	










<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Opportunity Sites identified, include the provision of tree planting in the Village Square and the protection of existing mature trees and hedgerows, where possible. Tree cover in parks, open spaces, along streets will absorb many atmospheric pollutants, filter out those pollutants, reduce water run-off, improve water quality, reduce noise and provide shading to help reduce urban heat island effects.</li> </ul>	  
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a walkable and cycle friendly settlement that will improve access and quality permeability to the village centre from the village's residential areas.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the Groody River to attract target species to enhance the ecological corridor.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure connections across any infrastructure projects for biodiversity.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance and extend established pedestrian and cycle connections improving visual amenity, sense of place and safety.</li> </ul>	 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise natural features such as the Groody River to develop a distinct character for the ecological corridor.</li> </ul>	

Table 8.2: Inventory of Blue Green Infrastructure in Caherconlish

Feature	Local name	Condition	Asset Value
<b>Groody River</b>	As indicated	Good	Opportunity Site 2 - to provide a public amenity link and wildlife corridor along the Groody River – potential biodiversity and amenity corridor, increase connectivity, active lifestyles.
<b>1.491ha site zoned 'Open Space and Community' at the back of High</b>	Site at back of High Street and Barrack Street	These lands consists of two fields, separated from each other by a mature hedgerow and is bordered on all sides except the south by buildings and their curtilages. The site is	Opportunity site as a community park – public amenity, connectivity, active lifestyle and tourism potential.

<b>Street and Barrack Street</b>		distinguished by a pronounced earthwork some 2,500 square metres in area, which rises about 5 metres above the surrounding fields. Location of Recorded Monument LI014-79002, LI014-079004. The eastern portion of the site abuts the medieval church (RMP LI014-079005) and graveyard (RMPLI014-079003).	
<b>Local walking loop</b>	Creamery Walk	Walking loop from the village to the Old Creamery via High Street and linking back into the village via the R513 – sections of footpath, local road linking to Old Creamery has carrying capacity for a shared surface for majority of the link.	Recently upgraded looped walking route for village, well used and popular among locals – public amenity value, connectivity, lifestyle
<b>Playground</b>	Caherconlish Community Playground	Relatively good condition but will need to be upgraded in coming years.	Constructed since the last plan was adopted – social interaction and active lifestyle
<b>Village Square</b>	As indicated	Grassed area in village centre with a line of three mature deciduous trees on its southern side. Needs public realm upgrade and improved pedestrian connectivity links to the surrounding road network and services.	The area is an important focal space within the village and it is therefore important to protect and enable it to work as an amenity space for the whole village – social interaction, public amenity value, connectivity.

**Objective CH O2: Blue Green Infrastructure** - It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Develop and enhance blue and green infrastructure opportunities throughout Caherconlish in line with the detail set out in Table 8.1 LAP Climate Action Opportunities.
- b) Promote the concept of blue green infrastructure and linked green/open spaces, as a means to mitigate and adapt to climate change, reduce flood risk, improve habitat/biodiversity links/corridors and improve watercourse quality, to sustain high quality robust ecosystems.

c) Promote connecting corridors for the movement of species and encourage the retention and creation of features of biodiversity value, ecological corridors and networks that connect areas of high conservation value such as woodlands, hedgerows, earth banks, watercourses, wetlands and designated sites. In this regard, new infrastructural projects and linear developments in particular, will have to demonstrate at design stage, sufficient measures to assist in the conservation of and dispersal of species.

**Objective CH O3: Conservation of Local Species-** It is an objective of the Council to: Require all developments, where there are species of conservation concern, such as the Barn Owl, to incorporate from design stage, elements that will assist in the conservation of these species.

**Objective CH O4: Designated Sites and Nature Conservation-** It is an objective of the Council to: Ensure no projects which will be reasonably likely to give rise to significant adverse direct or indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives arising from reduction in species diversity, shall be permitted on the basis of this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

**Objective CH O5: Tree Protection and Nature Conservation-** It is an objective of the Council to: Seek to protect natural stone boundary walls, ponds/wetlands, other natural features of local importance and mature trees where possible. Development that requires the felling or harming of such trees will not generally be permitted, unless supported by a tree survey establishing that the subject trees are of no ecological or amenity value. Such report shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and competent person.

### 8.2.1 Water Framework Directive

The European Union Water Framework Directive (WFD) was signed into law in October 2000. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) brings an integrated approach to managing water quality on a river basin (catchment) basis, in order to protect and enhance both ecological and chemical quality of rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters.

The WFD is implemented through River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) in three six-year cycles. Each cycle providing an opportunity to assess water conditions at different stages and set out actions to achieve water quality objectives. The third cycle runs from 2022-2027. Local Authorities are responsible for the development and implementation of RBMPs at a local level.

**Policy CH P2: Water Framework Directive Policy -** It is policy of the Council to: Implement changes to the management of water bodies, taking account of all aspects of the Water Cycle, in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and the principal objective of the WFD to achieve good status in all waters and to ensure that status does not deteriorate in any waters.

### 8.3 Natural Heritage and Designated Sites

Local natural and built heritage enriches and nurtures community life. As custodians for future generations, the Council seeks to safeguard and protection of the natural and built heritage as a priority. In doing so, the Local Area Plan has a significant role in ensuring the conservation and enhancement of Caherconlish's natural and built heritage and the natural resources of wildlife and landscape. As a settlement develops, the demands on the environment, both natural and manmade, become greater. The role of the Council is to balance the two – preservation of a high quality environment, while satisfying economic and social needs.



Fig. 8.5 Image of RPS 1046 Medieval Church

#### 8.3.1 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage is comprised of all material remains of past societies with the potential to add our knowledge of such societies. Caherconlish is classified as a historic town (LI014-079001) in the Record of Monuments and Places. There are a further 9 individual monuments within the village as well as another five which are historically documented, but whose precise location has been lost. The RMP also includes a roadway known as King William's Road, which is located just outside the boundary of the LAP. The structures/monuments include earthwork, a water mill, church, castle, graveyard, road/trackway, mill, memorial stone, enclosure and the historic town. Evidence that survives in and around these sites is extremely valuable. The Local Authority will consult with the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and other Statutory Consultees when considering applications for planning permission for development on, or in the vicinity of archaeological sites and/or monuments. Appendix 3 provides a list of structures in the Sites and Monuments Records for Caherconlish.



Fig. 8.6 Gravestone within the grounds of old Church ruins

Under the provisions of the National Monuments Act Section 12, 1994 Amendment, a person proposing any works (including exempted development) 'at or in relation to such a monument' must give two months' notice to the National Monuments Service. As sites continue to be discovered, some of those found subsequent to the publication (1997) have been included in the Historic Environment Viewer, which is available on the website. There are certain sites in state ownership or guardianship, or have been served with temporary preservation orders. Under the 2004 Amendment to the National Monuments Act, any of these sites or sites deemed National



Monuments in the care or guardianship of the Local Authority will require Ministerial Consent for works in their vicinity.

**Objective CH O6: Record of Monuments and Places** - It is an objective of the Council to: Seek the preservation of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest. This includes all the sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places, as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

### 8.3.2 Architectural Heritage

#### 8.2.2.1 Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

Limerick City and County Council is obliged to compile and maintain a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Under the Act, Local Authorities objectives for the protection of structures, or parts of structures of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest are mandatory to include in the development plan. The complete list for Limerick is available as Volume 3 of the Limerick Development Plan. Appendix 2 of this document provides the Record of Protected Structures located within the settlement of Caherconlish. There are 7 Protected Structures in Caherconlish, 5 of which are also listed on the NIAH. The diversity of structures include a Constabulary Barracks, Medieval Church and Graveyard and two shop fronts.



Fig. 8.7 Image of Medieval Church from Main Street

When considering works, including minor works to a Protected Structure, owners/occupiers are advised to contact the Conservation Officer of Limerick City and County Council, to ascertain obligations in terms of the proposed development to avoid damage to the integrity of the historical built fabric of the structure.

**Objective CH O7: Protected Structures** - It is an objective of the Council to: Preserve, protect and enhance the character of Caherconlish, including all Protected Structures and attendant grounds in accordance with the best conservation practice and relevant heritage legislation.

## 8.4 Protected Views

There are a number of important views within and on the main approaches into the village that contribute to the character and visual amenity of Caherconlish. Such views are mostly of the former Church of Ireland ruins that has a special landscape and heritage context in the centre of the village. Views of the landmark buildings, such as the Church Ruins are of particular importance in terms of appreciating the special architectural and historical significance of the buildings. The Local Authority will ensure that any development in the village will seek to safeguard views of this historic monument are protected and enhanced by any development proposals.



Fig. 8.8 View from Catholic Church of Protected Structure No. 1047 from High Street

**Objective CH O8: Protected Views** - It is an objective of the Council to: Safeguard scenic views and vistas, most particularly of the Old Church of Ireland building and spire and views along the Groody River. There will be a presumption against any development that would adversely affect the views and prospects and would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area.

## Chapter 9 - Infrastructure and Utilities

### 9.1 Infrastructure and Utilities

The sustainable social and economic growth of Caherconlish is dependent on adequate provision of high quality infrastructure associated with the provision of services for new developments. Key infrastructural provision, undertaken in a plan led manner will support the development of the village and ensure the development of good quality place making, where health and wellbeing is safeguarded, while also protecting the environment. The provision of high quality infrastructure networks and environmental services is fundamental to ensuring the long-term physical, environmental, social and economic development of the village.

### 9.2 Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Collaborating with national, regional and local bodies is crucial to safeguard the protection of existing water and wastewater infrastructure assets in the village. The responsibility for water service provisions now rests with Irish Water. The Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP) published in 2015 by Irish Water sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over a 25-year period and a context for investment and implementation plans. At present, there is some capacity in the public water supply and wastewater treatment plant to cater for additional demand created during the lifetime of this LAP.

Caherconlish has a combined water supply which is currently provided from an existing local groundwater source (Caherconlish Spring), to the northeast of the village and a main water supply pumped from Limerick City (Clareville WTP). The Caherconlish waste water plant was upgraded in 2007. The treatment plant was designed for a population equivalent of 2,500.

**Policy IU P1: Infrastructure and Utilities** - It is policy of the Council to:  
Ensure compliance for infrastructure led-growth in accordance with the DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

**Objective IU O1 - Wastewater Infrastructure:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Support the implementation of the Irish Water Investment Plans, in accordance with the settlement strategy of the RSES and MASP.
- b) Ensure adequate wastewater infrastructure is available to cater for existing and proposed development, in collaboration with Irish Water, avoiding any deterioration in the quality of receiving waters and ensuring discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. This includes the separation of foul and surface water through the provision of sewerage networks and nature based rainwater management measures.

**Objective IU O2 - Water Infrastructure:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Facilitate improvements to the existing water supply system to cater for the needs of an expanding population.
- b) Ensure that development proposals provide adequate water infrastructure to facilitate proposed developments.

- c) To promote water conservation and demand management measures among all water users, and to support Irish Water in implementing water conservation measures, such as leakage reduction and network improvements, including innovative solutions in specific situations.

### 9.3 Surface Water Management and SuDS

Adequate storm water drainage and retention facilities are necessary to accommodate surface water runoff from existing and proposed developments. Rivers, streams and ditches containing watercourses are important blue green infrastructure corridors and habitats in Caherconlish, providing multi-functional eco-system services, such as land drainage, recreational amenity, and clean/cool air and wildlife corridors. In the past, surface water management has tended to focus on intervention with the use of methods such as piping, culverting and installation of underground attenuation tanks. Using natural solutions to manage surface water can be cost effective and yield results that improve environmental quality. The use of natural drainage systems at surface level through utilisation of existing drains, natural slopes and existing ponds and natural wetland areas should be considered in the first instance. Approaches to manage surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution), biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity are collectively referred to as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). SuDS can contribute to surface water retention and a reduction in the potential for flooding by acting as natural drainage. Regard will be had to the Government's best practice guidance document, Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas (December 2021).

**Objective IU O3: Surface Water Management and SuDS** - It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater, including reducing the discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters in accordance with the Proposed Ireland River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 (DHPLG) and associated Programme of Measures.
- b) Require all planning applications, to include surface water design calculations to establish the suitability of drainage between the site and the outfall point;
- c) Require all new developments to include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to control surface water outfall and protect water quality, and where possible, a nature-based approach should be considered and incorporated.
- d) Require applicants to investigate the potential for the provision of porous surfaces, where car parking and hard landscaping is proposed.
- e) Protect the surface water resources of the plan area and in individual planning applications request the provision of sediment and grease traps, and pollution control measures, where deemed necessary.
- (f) To maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water, the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers is not permitted.

## 9.4 Flood Risk Management

To comply with the EU Floods Directive and to align with National Guidance ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines’, 2009, the Caherconlish LAP has taken flood risk into consideration when determining land use zoning and objectives. The Plan is also informed by the OPW – the government organisation leading flood risk management and responsible for flood relief investment nationally.

The Council ensures that proper flood risk identification, assessment and avoidance are integrated within the planning system to safeguard the future sustainable development of Caherconlish. The land use zoning in the LAP has been determined by applying the principles of the 2009 Guidelines that: (a) flood risk is avoided where possible; (b) where avoidance is not possible, less vulnerable uses have been substituted for more vulnerable ones, and; (c) risk is mitigated and managed where avoidance and substitution are not possible.

A Stage 2 Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out and is provided in the Environmental Reports that accompany this Plan.

**Objective IU O4: Flood Risk Management** - It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Manage flood risk in accordance with the requirements of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DECLG and OPW (2009) and any revisions thereof and consider the potential impacts of climate change in the application of these guidelines.
- (b) Require applications in areas at risk of flooding to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment. All flood risk assessments should have regard to ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ (DEHLG and OPW, Nov.2009)
- (c) Ensure that future developments in flood prone areas are generally limited to minor developments in line with the Circular PL 2/2014 and the Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.
- (d) Demonstrate that future development will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow paths, where compensatory storage / storm water retention measures shall be provided on site.
- (e) Ensure future development of lands within Flood Risk Zone A/B is in accordance with the plan-making Justification Tests in the SFRA.
- (f) Ensure that any future development preserves access requirements for the maintenance of Arterial Drainage Schemes and Drainage Districts.

**Objective IU O5: Flood Risk and Blue Green Infrastructure** - It is an objective of the Council to:

Promote integration and delivery of blue green infrastructure in new developments, public realm and community projects, as a means of managing flood risk and enhancing the natural environment.



**Objective IU O6: Buffer Zone:** It is an objective of the Council to:

Provide an appropriate set back from the edge of watercourses to proposed developments to project the integrity of the Groody River and to ensure access infinity for channel clearing, and/or maintenance. Any proposed development shall have cognisance to the contents of the Inland Fisheries Ireland document 'Planning for Watercourses in Urban Environments' and in addition allow for access to and maintenance of existing Irish Water Infrastructure such as outfalls or pipelines.

## 9.5 Energy Generation

Caherconlish is served by the ESB Network and Gas Network and the village is served by overhead 110kV transmission lines. The higher-level spatial plans indicate there is significant potential to use renewable energy to achieve climate change emission reduction targets through electricity and gas networks. With costs actively driven down by innovation in solar, onshore and offshore wind in particular, the renewable industry is increasingly cost competitive.

According to Census 2016 data, 75.5% of households have broadband internet services in Caherconlish. According to the National Broadband Plan 96% of the village is covered by high speed broadband. The focus now on home working requires enhanced broadband connections to allow for the environments that cater for internet-based business, the facilitation of working from home and the creation of smart homes and smart buildings. Public WiFi hotspots are available in Caherconlish as part of the [WiFi4EU](#) initiative, National Broadband Ireland and the Vodafone Business Continuity Plan initiative at O'Sullivan's Centra and Service Station and The Millennium Centre.

**Objectives IU O7: Energy Generation:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Support the providers of national gas and electricity grid infrastructure by safeguarding existing infrastructure from encroachment by development that might compromise the efficiency of the networks.
- b) Facilitate cooperation between utility and service providers to ensure their networks are resilient to the impacts of climate change, both in terms of design and ongoing maintenance.
- c) Facilitate improvement of telecommunications, broadband, electricity (including renewables) and gas networks infrastructure on an open access basis subject to safety requirements and proper planning and sustainable development
- d) Seek the undergrounding of all utility cables, where possible.
- e) Facilitate delivery of E-Charge Points for electric vehicles at suitable locations and in new developments in line with the Limerick Development Plan.
- f) Promote and encourage the use of renewable energy technologies and sources in existing and proposed developments subject to consideration of environmental, conservation, residential and visual amenity.
- g) Support the development of Smart Homes and Smart Buildings and facilitate the foundation for Smart Limerick in accordance with the Limerick Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020.

- h) Support and promote the NZEB standard of building or equivalent for all new developments

### 9.6 Waste Management and Circular Economy

The Circular Economy and Ireland's Waste Management policy is part of the waste hierarchy established by the EU's Waste Framework Directive, which sets out to prioritise waste prevention, followed by re-use, recycling, recovery and finally disposal into landfill. The Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 and any subsequent update, is a framework for the prevention and management of wastes in a safe and sustainable manner. The Waste Management Plan provides the framework for the prevention and management of waste in a safe and sustainable manner and includes the promotion of resource efficiency and the concept of the circular economy as one of its strategic objectives. Refuse collection is carried out by a number of private contractors in Caherconlish. The Council supports individual and community circular economy initiatives. This can include reducing resource consumption through sharing, repair and reuse, recycling and consumption avoidance.

**Objective IU O8: Waste Management and Circular Economy:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- (i) Support the Regional Waste Management Office in implementation of the EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy – Closing the Loop, to ensure sustainable patterns of consumption and production.
- (ii) Require all commercial and residential development to provide an adequate internal and external space for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials.

## **Chapter 10 – Land Use Framework and Settlement Capacity Audit**

### **10.1 Land Use Zoning and Implementation**

The purpose of land use zoning sets out the development objectives for lands within the settlement boundary of Caherconlish. The overarching policies and objectives of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 apply, as does the policies and objectives of this Local Area Plan. All development requiring planning permission must adhere to the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

The purpose of zoning is to indicate to property owners and the public the types of development, which the Planning Authority considers most appropriate in each land use category. Zoning is designed to reduce conflicting uses within areas, to protect resources and ensure that land suitable for development is used to the best advantage of the community as a whole. The Land Use Zoning Map should be read in conjunction with the Land Use Zoning Objectives below, and the Land Use Zoning Matrix set out under Appendix I.

### **10.2 Land Use Zoning**

There are 9 land use categories in the Plan differentiated by colour. Refer to Map 1 Land Use Zoning in Appendix 1. The purpose of each land use is outlined in Section 10.2.1 below. Section 10.5 contains the zoning matrix, which should be read together with Map 1. It should be noted, the matrix acts as a generally guideline and the list is not exhaustive. Table 10.1 below indicates the extent of consideration when assessing planning application.

## 10.2.1 General Objectives and Purpose of Land Use Zones and Extent of Consideration

Land Use Zoning	Objective and Purpose
Village Centre	<p><b>Objective:</b> To protect, consolidate and facilitate the development of Caherconlish's commercial, retail, educational, leisure, residential, social and community uses and facilities.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> To consolidate Caherconlish's Village Centre through densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure, residential uses and urban streets, while delivering a high-quality urban environment, which will enhance the quality of life of residents, visitors and workers alike. The zone will strengthen retail provision in accordance with the Retail Strategy for Limerick-Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick, emphasise urban conservation, ensure priority for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, while minimising the impact of private car-based traffic and enhancing the existing urban fabric.</p>
Existing Residential	<p><b>Objective:</b> To provide for residential development, protect and improve existing residential amenity.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> This zoning reflects established housing areas. Existing residential amenity will be protected while allowing appropriate infill development. The quality of the area will be enhanced with associated open space, community uses and where an acceptable standard of amenity can be maintained, a limited range of other uses that support the overall residential function of the area, such as schools, crèches, doctor's surgeries, playing fields etc.</p>
New Residential	<p><b>Objective:</b> To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of social and physical infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> This zone is intended primarily for new high quality housing development, including the provision of high quality, professionally managed and purpose built third-level student accommodation. The quality and mix of residential areas and the servicing of lands will be a priority to support balanced communities. New housing and infill developments should include a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, to cater for all members of society. Design should be complimentary to the surroundings and should not adversely impact on the amenity of adjoining residents. These areas require high levels of accessibility, including pedestrian, cyclists and public transport (where feasible).</p>

	This zone may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to facilitate the development of new residential communities such as open space, schools, childcare facilities, doctor's surgeries and playing fields etc.
<b>Residential Serviced Sites</b>	<p><b>Objective: To offer an alternative to the rural one-off house, providing an opportunity for people to design a house to their individual needs</b> and supported by existing services.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Provides an element of housing choice within the settlement boundary, and facilitate an element of housing choice on serviced lands within Caherconlish, supporting the principle of compact growth and sustainable development.</p>
<b>Education and Community</b>	<p><b>Objective: To protect and provide for education, training, adult learning, community, healthcare, childcare, civic, religious and social infrastructure.</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Protect existing community facilities and allow for expansion if required to sustain a thriving community.</p>
<b>Enterprise and Employment</b>	<p><b>Objective: To provide for and improve general enterprise, employment, business and commercial activities.</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Provides for enterprise, employment and general business activities and acknowledge existing/permitted retail uses. This land use zone may accommodate light industry, low input and emission manufacturing, logistics and warehousing and office developments. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location, having regard to surrounding uses and scale. A proliferation of retail uses will not be permitted. Proposals may generate a considerable amount of traffic by both employees and service vehicles and traffic assessments may be required. Sites should be highly accessible, well designed and permeable with good pedestrian, cyclist links to the town centre and public transport. The implementation of mobility management plans will be required to provide important means of managing accessibility to these sites.</p>
<b>Open Space and Recreation</b>	<p><b>Objective: To protect, provide for and improve open space, active and passive recreational amenities.</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Provides for active and passive recreational resources including parks, sports and leisure facilities and amenities including greenways and blueways. The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a substantial loss of open space. Linked green spaces/corridors are encouraged.</p>



<b>Utilities</b>	<p><b>Objective: To provide for the infrastructural needs of transport and other utility providers.</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Preserves land for the provision of services such as electricity and gas networks, telecommunications, the treatment of water and waste water etc. Such proposals shall demonstrate resilience to climate change.</p>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<p><b>Objective: To protect and improve rural amenity and provide for the development of agricultural uses.</b></p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> Protect rural amenity and agricultural lands from urban sprawl and ribbon development and provide a clear demarcation to the adjoining built up areas. Uses which are directly associated with agriculture or rural related business activities which have a demonstrated need for a rural based location, and which would not interfere with rural amenity are open for consideration. Compliance is required with the criteria for Small Scale Home Based Businesses In Rural Areas as set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 or any replacement thereof. One off dwellings will only be considered on agriculturally zoned land outside of Flood Zones A and B for the permanent habitation, subject to the terms and conditions of the rural housing policy as set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. Limit future development within Flood Risk Zone A/B to water compatible development.</p>

The approach of Limerick City and County Council to various types of developments is determined by the zoning objective for the area in which the site is located. This approach is set out in the following Land Use Zoning Matrix, and should be read in tandem with the Land Use Zoning Map.

The Land Use Zoning Matrix outlines the types of developments considered appropriate or otherwise in each land use zone and are indicated as below.

<b>Extent of Consideration</b>	
<b>Generally Permitted indicated as /</b>	A generally permitted use is one the Council accepts in principle in the relevant zone, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria, including applicable policies, objectives, development management standards and Section 28 Guidance.
<b>Open for Consideration indicated as O</b>	A use open for consideration by the Council and the Council may permit where it is satisfied that the suggested form of development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, will not conflict with existing uses or the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

<b>Generally Not Permitted as X</b>	A use incompatible with the zoning policies or objectives for the area, would conflict with the permitted/ existing uses and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
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**Table 10.1: General Objectives and Purpose of Land Use Zones and Extent of Consideration**

Non-Conforming Uses are uses, which do not conform to the zoning objective for the area in which they are located. Where legally established, extensions or improvements to these uses shall be considered on their merits, on a case-by-case basis where they do not adversely affect the amenities of properties in the vicinity, and are not prejudicial to proper planning and sustainable development.

### 10.3 Advice when Submitting a Planning Application

The Planning Authority encourages applicants to avail of pre-planning meetings to discuss policy issues regarding their proposal prior to submitting a planning application. Such meetings are of particular value if specific assessments are required given the sensitivity, type of development and location of the site in Caherconlish. Refer to [www.limerick.ie](http://www.limerick.ie) to avail of a meeting. Applications are advised to avail of pre-connection enquiries with Irish Water to ascertain if connection to the public mains and sewer is feasible prior to submitting a planning application.

Zoning	Total Area Zoned in 2023 LAP - ha	Total Area Zoned in 2012 LAP - ha
Agriculture	1.624	19.74
Enterprise and Employment	5.892	8.06
Education and Community Facilities	5.234	7.67
Utilities	No designation	0.29
New Residential Total	6.866	7.1
Phase 1	No designation	3.85
Phase 2	No designation	2.7
Existing Residential	24.832	27.70
Residential Serviced Sites	2.085	3.52
Phase 1	No designation	2.09
Phase 2	No designation	1.74
Open Space and Recreation	5.621	9.06
Village Centre	2.461	2.15

**Table 10.2: Total Zoned Lands**

## 10.5 Land Use Zoning Matrix

Land Use Zone	Village Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Utilities	Agriculture
Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
Advertising and Advertising Structures	/	X	X	X	O <sup>1</sup>	/ <sup>1</sup>	/ <sup>1</sup>	O	X
Aerodrome/Airfield	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O
Agricultural Buildings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/
Agricultural Supplies/Machinery Sales	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Allotments	X	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	O
Amusement Arcade/Casino	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bank/Credit Union	/	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
Bed and Breakfast/Guesthouse	/	/	/	/	X	X	X	X	/ <sup>2</sup>
Betting Office	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	/ <sup>2</sup>
Bring Banks/Bring Centres	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	/	X
Builders Providers/Yard	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Burial Grounds	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	/
Campsite/ Caravan Park - Holiday Use	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Car Park	/	X	X	X	/ <sup>1</sup>	/ <sup>1</sup>	/ <sup>1</sup>	/	X
Childcare Facilities	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X
Civic Recycling/Waste Facility	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	/	X
Community/Cultural/Tourism Facility	/	/	/	/	/	X	/	X	X
Conference Centre	/	X	X	X	O <sup>1</sup>	O	X	X	X
Dancehall/Nightclub	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

<sup>1</sup> Ancillary to the primary use only<sup>2</sup> Where the use is ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a main residence

Land Use Zone	Village Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Utilities	Agriculture
Education/Training Facility	/	/	/	/	/	/	X	X	X
Enterprise Centre	/	X	X	X	O <sup>1</sup>	/	X	X	X
Extractive Industry/Quarry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
Fast Food Outlet/Take-Away	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Food Drink Processing/Manufacturing	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	/ <sup>1</sup>
Fuel Depot/Storage	O	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Funeral Home	/	O	O	O	X	/	X	X	X
Garden Centre	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	O
General Public Administration	/	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Hair and Beauty Salons	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Halting Site	X	O	O	O	X	X	X	O	X
Health Centre	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X
Health Practitioner	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X
High Technology Manufacturing	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Hospital	/	X	X	X	/	O	X	X	X
Hotel	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Industry - Heavy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Industry - Light	O	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Leisure/Recreation Facility*	/	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X
Logistics	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Nursing Home/Residential Care or Institution/ Retirement Village	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X	X
Offices	/	X <sup>2</sup>	X <sup>2</sup>	X <sup>2</sup>	X	/	X	X	X
Park and Ride Facilities	/	O	O	O	/ <sup>1</sup>	O	X	/	X



Land Use Zone	Village Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Utilities	Agriculture
Petrol Station <sup>3</sup>	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Place of Worship	/	O	O	O	/	O	X	X	X
Plant Storage/Hire	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Professional Services*	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Public House	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Renewable Energy Installation	O <sup>1</sup>	O <sup>1</sup>	O <sup>1</sup>	O <sup>1</sup>	O <sup>1</sup>	/	X	/	O
Research and Dev./ Science and Technology	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	/ <sup>4</sup>
Residential	/	/	/	/	X	X	X	X	/ <sup>5</sup>
Restaurant/Café	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Retail	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Retail - Warehouse	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Scrap Yard	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Sports Facility	O	/	/	/	/	O	/	X	X
Telecommunications Structures	/	X	X	X	/	/	O	/	/
Vehicle Sales Outlet	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Vehicle Servicing/ Maintenance/ Repairs	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Veterinary Clinic	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X <sup>6</sup>
Warehousing	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Waste Disposal and Recover Facility	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	/	X
Wholesale - Cash and Carry	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X

<sup>3</sup> Petrol station shops shall not exceed 100m<sup>2</sup> (net) as per the Retail Planning Guidelines

<sup>4</sup> Rural related research and development only

<sup>5</sup> Subject to compliance with the Rural Housing Policy

<sup>6</sup> Only where the need to locate in a rural environment has been demonstrated because of the nature of the clinic required

**\*Comparison** - Goods including Comparison Goods: clothing and footwear; furniture, furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods); medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment; educational and recreation equipment and accessories; books, newspapers and magazines; goods for personal care; goods not elsewhere classified; bulky goods;

**\*Convenience** - Goods including food alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages; tobacco; nondurable household goods;

**\*Leisure/ Recreation Facility** - Cinema, Theatre, Concert Halls, Bingo Halls, Bowling Alley, Commercial Play etc.;

**\*Professional Services** - Including for example accountants, architects, solicitors etc.

### 10.6 Settlement Capacity Assessment

In accordance with Appendix 3 of the National Planning Framework (NPF), the tiered approach to zoning has been applied to zoned lands as laid out in Table 10.3 below. Tier 1 refers to lands that are adequately serviced and can connect to existing services (road, path, public lighting, water supply and surface water drainage). Tier 2 lands refer to lands that have constraints in terms of connecting to one or more services but have the potential to become fully serviced over the lifetime of the Plan.

The Settlement Capacity Assessment sets out the sites identified for new residential development, serviced sites and enterprise and employment with respect to availability of key infrastructure to ensure that these lands are developable over the lifetime of the plan. The sites are identified as being serviced (utilities), served by public transport and community infrastructure and satisfies the principles of the Town Centre First policy and compact growth, all promoted by higher level spatial plans. Where existing infrastructure is located in close proximity to a site and can potentially be extended to service the site, these services have been indicated as available. It should be noted that the table below is for information purposes only and developers are advised to avail of pre-planning consultation with the service providers regarding development of these lands prior to submitting a planning application.

Table 10.3: Settlement Capacity Assessment: Caherconlish

Site No.	Zoning	Area (ha)	Density	Lighting	Footpaths	Public Transport	Road Access	Water	Foul	Surface Water	Flood Risk	Infill/ Brown-field	Timeline/Cost	Comments if applicable	Tier
1	New Residential	3.584	22 units/ha	✓	✓	●	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity Site No. 4 (refer to Section 4.5 Opportunity Sites for Development Potential and Guidance)</li> <li>- Infill site &lt;150m from Village Centre</li> <li>- Existing 150mm diameter sewer must be protected/diverted, as necessary. Network upgrades may be required.</li> </ul>	1
2	New Residential	0.439	22 units/ha	✓	✓	●	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LCCC Housing Department Approved Pipeline Site under LCCC Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026.</li> <li>- The Gragane area is served by a 75mm diameter watermain, which may require upgrade to facilitate development. Consultation with Uisce Eireann will be required throughout design stage of any development proposed.</li> </ul>	1
3	New Residential	.234	22 units/ha	✓	✓	●	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LCCC Housing Department Approved Pipeline Site under LCCC Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026.</li> <li>- The Gragane area is served by a 75mm diameter watermain, which may require upgrade to facilitate development. Consultation with Uisce Eireann will be required throughout design stage of any development proposed.</li> </ul>	1
4	New Residential	2.094	22 units/ha	✓	✓	●	✓	✓	!	!	✗	✓	M €314K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity Site No. 5 (refer to Section 4.5 Opportunity Sites for Development Potential and Guidance)</li> <li>- Part of site is backland/infill site &lt;350m from Village Centre in close proximity to the Primary School, access and infrastructural works with be required to be delivered by the developer</li> <li>- Active Travel funding application sought for safety works outside Caherconlish National School – works proposed at junction with High Street.</li> <li>- Stormwater Infrastructure in Ceol na hAbhainn estate (to the North of the site) and on High Street (to the East of the site).</li> </ul>	2
5	Residential Serviced Sites	2.085	10 units/ha	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infill site &lt;320m from village centre</li> </ul>	1
6	Town Centre	.22	22 units/ha	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 7 units granted town centre (21550)</li> </ul>	1
7	Enterprise and Employment	5.89	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lands located &lt;700m from village centre. Applicants will also have to provide walking/cycling infrastructure to connect with the village centre. A Masterplan shall be prepared for the overall lands.</li> </ul>	1

Legend			
Serviced/Yes	✓	Serviceable/ Investment required	!
Not required/No	✗	Located within a 500km walk	●
Short term: 1-2 year delivery	<b>S</b>	Medium term: 3-4 year delivery	<b>M</b>



## Chapter 11 – Monitoring and Evaluation

### 11.1 Implementation of the Local Area Plan

The Plan sets out the Council’s vision and strategy for Caherconlish, including specific policy and objectives to provide a framework for the sustainable development of the village over the period 2023-2029. Regular monitoring of the progress made in relation to ensuring the effective delivery of the objectives set out in the Plan will take place. This will include a review of identified actions to be implemented within the timeframe of the plan.

Coordination between other key departments in the Local Authority will be critical in ensuring that those objectives relating to issues such as roads, housing and community development are achieved.

### 11.2 Local Area Plan Actions

The implementation of the Local Area Plan requires the cooperation and participation of all stakeholders. The Council will continue their leadership role in progressing and securing the policy and objectives of the Plan. The Council will also continue to foster a collaborative approach with citizens, communities, stakeholders, sectoral interests, government and non-government agencies to achieve collective support and successful implementation of the Plan. Table 11.1 below outlines the identified actions and associated lead responsibility, in implementing identified actions within the plan timeframe. Some of these actions are outside the control of the Local Authority and will be dependent on private bodies (such as private housing) to be delivered.

Table 11.1: Caherconlish Local Area Plan – Plan Actions

	Action	Lead Responsibility/LCCC Directorate	Timeline
<b>Action 1</b>	Monitor the type of developments permitted in Caherconlish, including the number of residential units constructed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the Core Strategy of Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028	LCCC	Ongoing
<b>Action 2</b>	Opportunity Site 1 – Community Park	LCCC Rural, Culture & Community Development LCCC Planning, Environment and Place-making Directorate	Medium Term
<b>Action 3</b>	Opportunity Site 3: Groody River Walk	LCCC Rural, Culture & Community Development LCCC Planning, Environment and Place-making Directorate	Medium Term
<b>Action 4</b>	Opportunity Site 2 - Village Square	LCCC Planning, Environment and Place-making Directorate	Medium Term
<b>Action 5</b>	Traffic Management Plan	LCCC Transportation and Mobility Directorate	Medium Term
<b>Action 6</b>	Feasibility Study – Village Bypass	LCCC Transportation and Mobility Directorate	Medium Term
<b>Action 7</b>	Feasibility project for a design project for the R513	Department of Transport	Medium Term
<b>Action 8</b>	Provision of a pedestrian link to Caherconlish/Caherline GAA Pitch	LCCC Transportation and Mobility Directorate	Short Term
<b>Action 9</b>	Improved active travel connectivity from Village Square to Millennium Centre	LCCC Transportation and Mobility Directorate	Short Term
<b>Action 10</b>	Safety works outside Caherconlish National School – works proposed at junction with High Street.	LCCC Transportation and Mobility Directorate	Short Term
<b>Action 11</b>	Safe Route to School Project – identification of additional safety measures and identification of park and stride locations. Behavioural Change project.	LCCC Transportation and Mobility Directorate	Short Term

<b>Action 12</b>	Improvements to Old Creamery Road - Examine possibility of creating shared space with reduced speed limit.	LCCC Transportation and Mobility Directorate	Short Term
<b>Action 13</b>	Undertake a mid-plan Health Check Survey in order to monitor commercial and residential vacancy throughout Caherconlish.	LCCC Planning, Environment and Place-making Directorate	Medium Term

Timeline Legend			
<b>Short Term</b>	1-2 years	<b>Medium Term</b>	3-5 years

## Appendix 1: Maps



Caherconlish  
Local Area Plan  
2023-2029

Zoning Map

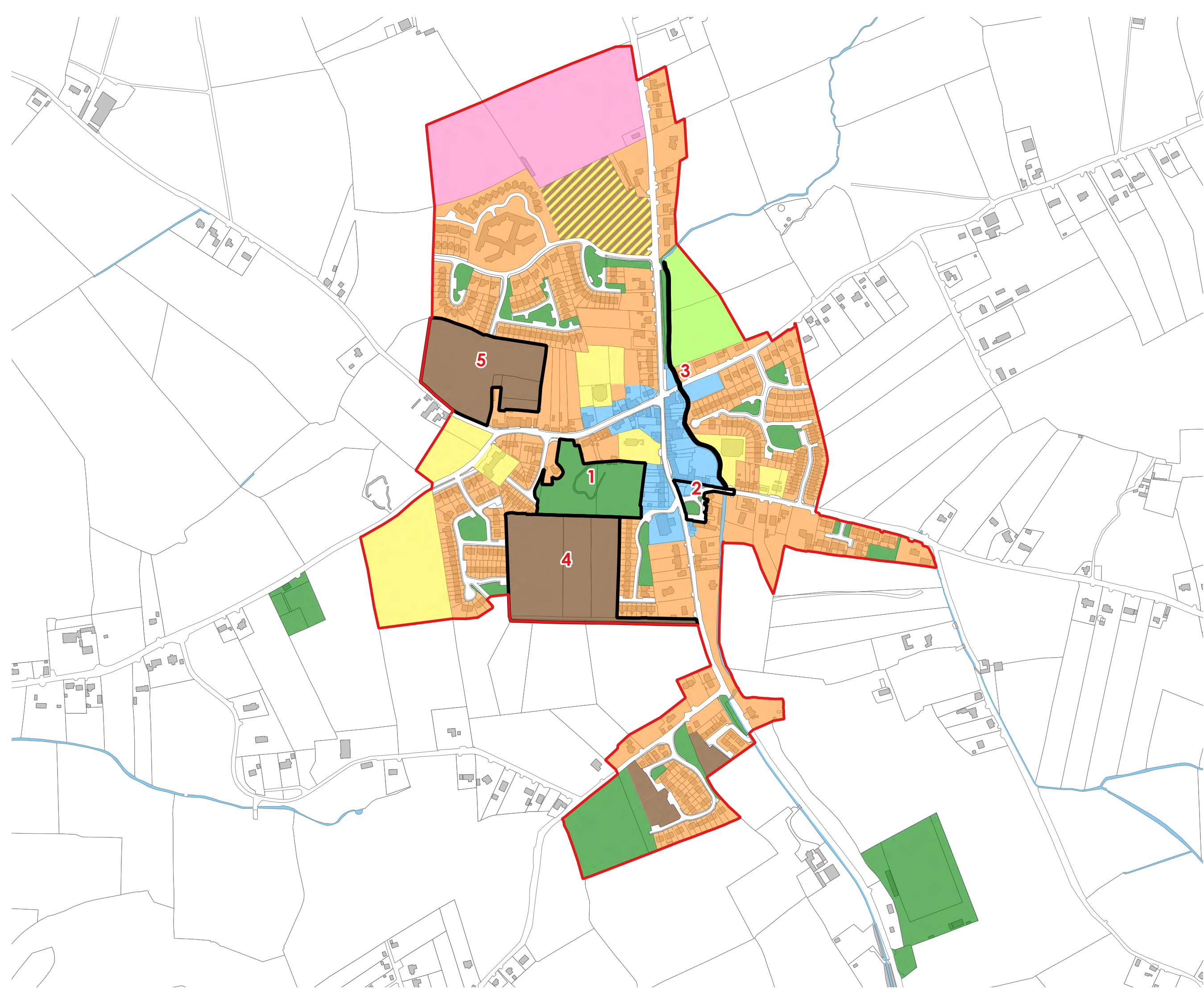
Legend

- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Residential
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Village Centre
- Opportunity Sites
- LAP Boundary

Forward Planning  
Economic Development and  
Enterprise Directorate

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DATE: April 2023		DWG. No. CHZN/23-29/R13
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Caherconlish  
Local Area Plan  
2023-2029

Flood Map

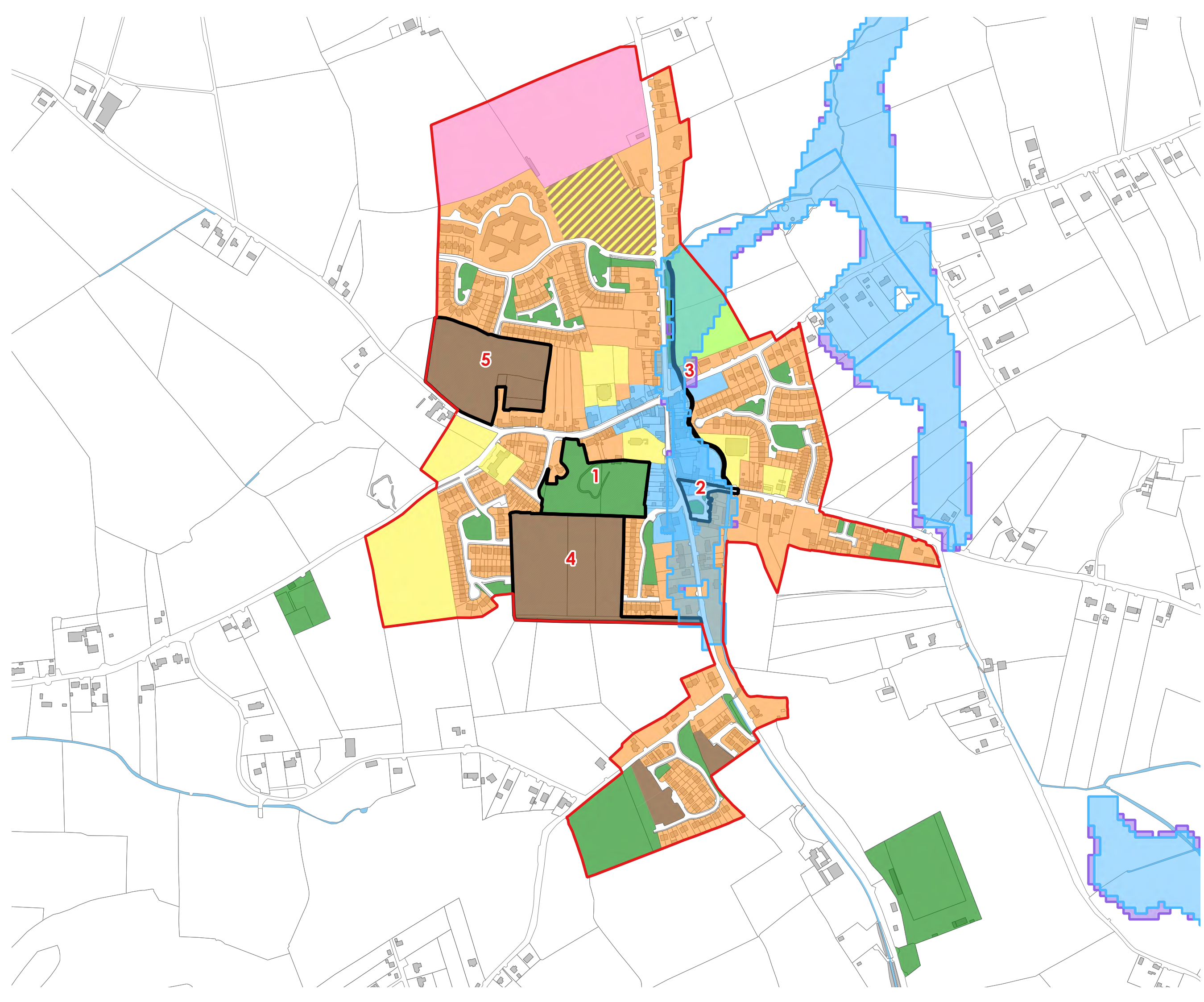
Legend

- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Residential
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Village Centre
- Opportunity Sites
- Flood Zone A
- Flood Zone B
- LAP Boundary

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Caherconlish  
Local Area Plan  
2023-2029

Amenity and Sustainable  
Transport Map

Legend

- ★ Playground
- Existing Pedestrian Routes/Links
- - - Proposed Pedestrian Routes/Links
- Open Space and Recreation
- Caherconlish LAP Boundary

Forward Planning  
Economic Development  
and Enterprise Directorate

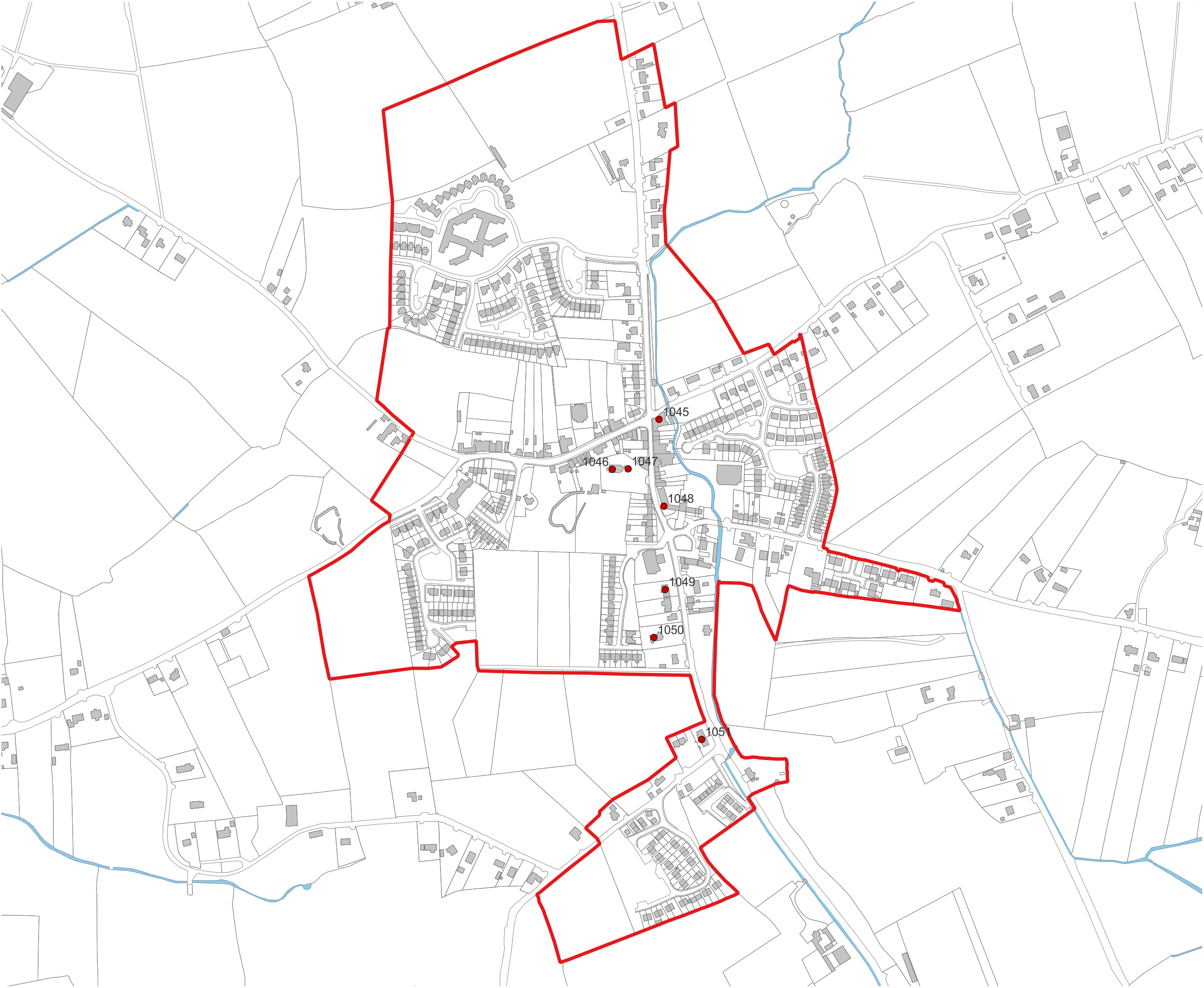
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**Caherconlish  
Local Area Plan  
2023-2029**

**Protected Structures Map**

- Legend**
- Record of Protected Structures
  - LAP Boundary

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Economic Development & Enterprise Directorate

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Legend

- National Monuments
- Zones of notification
- LAP Boundary

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Settlement Capacity  
Audit Map

Legend

-  Settlement Capacity  
Audit Sites
-  LAP Boundary



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## Appendix 2: Record of Protected Structures

RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.			Name	Location	Description	Photo
1045	21805007	Michael Lynch	Barrack Street, High Street, Caherconlish			End of terrace 2 storey building. Built c1830. Notable features include rendered walls, quoins and stringcourse, square headed display openings having render rope moulded surrounds, timber sash windows, cast iron rainwater goods	
1046	21805004	Caherconlish Church of Ireland Church	Barrack Street, Caherconlish			Old Church of Ireland, graveyard and boundary wall. Built 1770 incorporating fabric from earlier period. Many notable features including octagonal spired and cut limestone details, distinctive cast-iron weather vane on apex, cut limestone architrave to tower, pointed arch windows and door, limestone sills.	



1047	None	Caherconlish Church of Ireland Church	Caherconlish	Original east gable wall and chancel of medieval church, within forms the curtilage of the Old Church of Ireland church.	
1048	21805011	O'Connell's Pharmacy	The Square, Barrack Street, Caherconlish	Semi-detached 6 bay building built c.1800 with two rendered shops fronts on south and west elevations. Many notable features including cast-iron rainwater goods, terracotta ridge tiles, finials and timber bargeboards, rendered wall with quoins and stringcourse, sliding sash windows, pillasters, fluted consoles with pedimented caps, fascia and moulded cornice, half-glazed timber double doors.	
1049	None	Unknown	Old Barrack Road, Caherconlish	Single storey three bay dwelling. It is believed, this building was one of the first of bungalows built in East Limerick.	

<b>1050</b>	21805018	Caherconlish Church of Ireland Church	Old Barrack Road, Caherconlish	Detached single cell, Gothic Revival style church, built c.1866. Many notable features including hipped and pitched slate roof with cast iron ridge creastings and rainwater goods, limestone copings and eaves course wrought iron finial, buttresses, quoins, tooled limestone block –and-start surrounds and stain glass windows, pointed arches, timber battened double leaf doors	
<b>1051</b>	21805019	Constabulary Barracks	Old Barrack Road, Caherconlish	Detached 5 bay two-storey building built c.1865. Simple façade, notable features include hipped slate roof with overhanging eaves, roughcast rendered walls and render plinth course, square headed openings with stone sill, sliding sash windows.	

## Appendix 3: Sites and Monuments Records

Archaeological sites are included in the Sites and Monuments Record under the provisions of Section 12(1) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

Section 12(3) of the Act states “When the owner or occupier...of a monument or place which has been recorded under subsection (1) or any person proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such monument or place, he shall give notice in writing of his proposal to carry out the work to the [Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government] and shall not, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the [Minister] commence the work for a period of two months after having given the notice.”

Section 16 of the Act prohibits the use or possession of detection devices “in, or at the site of, a monument recorded under Section 12.”

The following table lists the Recorded Monuments and Places located in Caherconlish:

SMR Ref. No.	Classification	Townland
LI014-079001-	Historic Town	Caherconlish, Hundred Acres East, Templemichael, Boskill
LI014-079002-	Castle - Ringwork	Caherconlish
LI014-079003-	Graveyard	Caherconlish
LI014-079004-	Castle - Towerhouse	Caherconlish
LI014-079005-	Church	Caherconlish
LI014-079006-	Castle - unclassified	Caherconlish
LI014-079007-	Castle - unclassified	Hundredacres East
LI014-079008-	Town Defences	Caherconlish (not located; murage grant 1358)
LI014-079009-	Tomb - Chest tomb	Caherconlish 17 <sup>th</sup> C Maunsell
LI014-079010-	Wall monument	Caherconlish 17 <sup>th</sup> C Bourke
LI014-079012	Tomb - Chest tomb	Caherconlish 17 <sup>th</sup> C Goold
LI014-080	Road - road/trackway	Boskill (just outside LAP area)
LI014-099	Mill - unclassified	Caherconlish (not located recorded as near the RIC Barracks)
LI014-111	Water mill -unclassified	Hundredacres East
LI014-149	Excavation	Hundredacres East

**Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023-2029**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Appropriate Assessment Screening and Natura Impact Report for the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023-2029**

## Part A – Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

### 1.0 Introduction

This Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening accompanies the Caherconlish Local Area Plan (LAP) 2023 – 2029, in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). The SEA screening assessment is a formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan, policy or programme and any amendments to same. Written submissions on both the Plan and the screening report have been considered by the Council to inform the adoption of the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023–2029 by the Elected Members of Cappamore – Kilmallock Municipal District in mid-2023.

The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 - 2011 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004, SI 201 of 2011) require case by case screening of individual plans and programmes based on the criteria in Schedule 2A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). These criteria must be taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise.

The Caherconlish LAP, as adopted by the Elected Members of Cappamore-Kilmallock Municipal District will replace the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2012-2018 (as extended). The Council is statutorily required to review the existing Caherconlish LAP at this time to ensure the policies and objectives align with current regional planning policy and higher level plans, in particular the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

Caherconlish is located approximately 10 kilometers (6 miles) southeast of Limerick City. The village is located just to the south of the main Limerick to Waterford National Primary Road, (N24) providing ease of access to Limerick City, North Cork and the southeast of the County. The village itself is traversed by the R513 linking the village to Hospital, Ballylanders and onto Mitchelstown in North Cork. The village is sited predominantly on the east side of the Groody River, which flows in a south-north direction through the village. The Caherconlish LAP covers approximately 54.593ha in area and falls into the Caherconlish West Electoral Division (ED). According to the 2016 Census, Caherconlish had a population of 1,476 persons, representing an increase of 15% on the 2011 population figure of 1,279 persons. The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 identifies Caherconlish as Level 3 settlement in Limerick. These settlements provide local retail and business services for their surrounding areas. Fig. 1.1 below outlines the location of Caherconlish relative to Limerick City and the Groody River.



**Fig. 1.1:** Location of Caherconlish

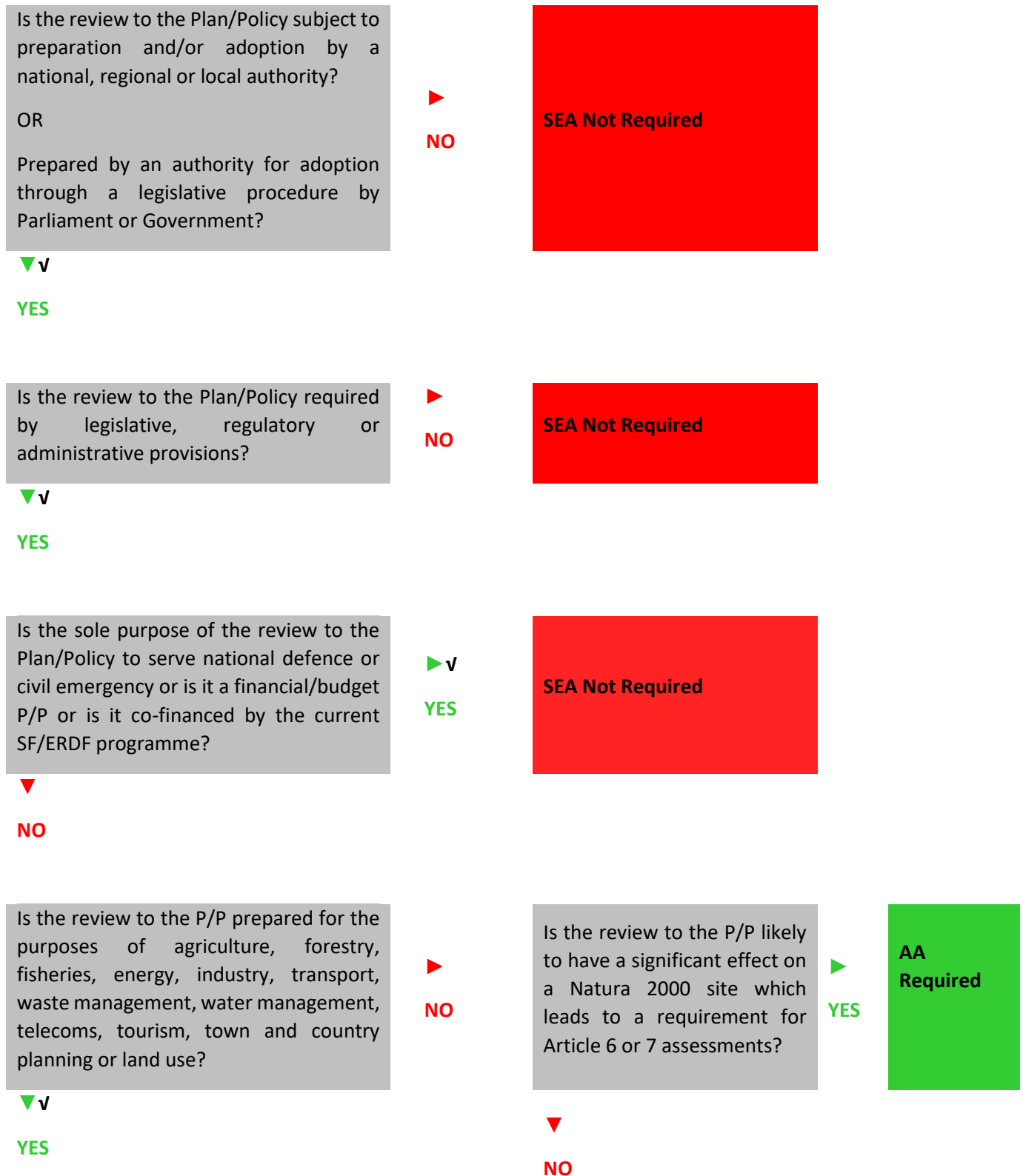
### 1.1 Stage One - Pre-Screening

The first step in determining whether the review to the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029 would require an SEA, involves a pre-screening check. It allows for the rapid screening-out of reviews of plans and policies that are clearly not going to have any environmental impact and screening-in of those that definitely do require Strategic Environmental Assessment.

It is necessary to conduct screening to determine if a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the review of the Local Area Plan (LAP) is required. The review of the Plan will provide a framework for development. It is necessary to determine whether an SEA would be required by testing the plan review against environmental significance screening criteria. Under the updated SEA regulations (2011), the thresholds for mandatory SEA is 5,000 persons and an area of 50km<sup>2</sup>. The zoned area of the Caherconlish Plan is 54.593 hectares and the population was recorded as 1,476 in the 2016 census. The projected population growth for Caherconlish, as outlined in the Plan, is that the village will grow to 1,915 by 2029, which remains below the SEA threshold. Policies and objectives set out in the Local Area Plan, will ensure that growth occurs in a controlled manner and in line with the provision of services and infrastructure. These population and zoned area figures are below the thresholds for statutory SEA, which are 5,000 people and 50km<sup>2</sup> respectively.



Figure 2 Pre-Screening Decision Tree



Do the changes to the P/P provide a framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive? Are there flooding issues in the area?



NO

SEA  
Required



YES

Will it determine the use of small areas at a local scale only and/or is it a minor modification of a P/P?



YES



NO

SEA Required  
Go to Stage 2

Does it provide a framework for development consent for projects?



YES



NO

SEA Not Required

SEA may be  
required

## 1.2 Stage Two - (A) Environmental Significance Screening

The application of environmental significance criteria is important in determining whether an SEA is required for Plans/Policies or modifications to Plans/Policies. Annex II (2) of Directive 2001/42/EC sets out the “statutory” criteria that should be addressed when undertaking the screening stage.

### Criteria for Determining the Likely Significance of Environmental Effects

#### Characteristics of the Plan/Programme

(i)	<b>The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources</b>
	<p>The Local Area Plan guides development within the settlement boundary of Caherconlish as defined by the plan. By allocating zoning to different land uses in accordance with Section 28 guidelines and the requirements of the higher tier guidance, the plan guides the amount and type of development that will take place in Caherconlish. The review of the plan will ensure that the population projections and hence the zoning patterns of the plan will reflect the policy guidance and population figures of the core strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. This, in turn, has been informed by the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), which have been prepared since the last plan was adopted.</p> <p>The Local Area Plan will guide the amount and type of development that will take place in Caherconlish, over the lifetime of the plan. The different zoning categories will permit developments within the appropriate zoning, in accordance with the zoning matrix for each land use. The review of the existing Local Area Plan will ensure that the population projections and hence the zoning patterns of the plan will reflect the policy guidance and population figures of the NPF and RSES and the contents of the core strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.</p> <p>The SEA Directive supports the use of brownfield and infill sites and also the development of “vibrant city, towns and village centres”. So too does the NPF, RSES and the Limerick Development Plan. The Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines from May 2009, also states that “new development should contribute to compact towns and villages” (DEHLG, 2009 p.48). By encouraging the re-use of vacant or infill sites, particularly those located close to the settlement centre, will help to achieve a compact settlements.</p> <p>The Plan places emphasis, as outlined in Chapter 4 – on the Town Centre First Approach, the importance of development of brownfield and infill sites, which reflects the recent government policy document Town Centres First, encouraging the revitalisation and reoccupation of towns and villages.</p>

(ii)	<b>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;</b>
	<p>The Local Area Plan is set within the context of the National Planning Framework (NPF), Regional Spatial and Economic Plan for the Southern Region (RSES), and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, and the provisions of relevant planning guidelines, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. These influence and shape the contents of the Caherconlish LAP. The Plan will influence and guide individual projects and planning decisions within the LAP boundary, through the zoning mechanism and the policy content of the Local Area Plan.</p>
(iii)	<b>The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;</b>
	<p>The existing Caherconlish LAP is being reviewed under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to update its policy content as it nears the end of its extended statutory time frame. It will be updated to take into account the need to incorporate the Limerick Development Plan core strategy, policies and objectives. Circular PSSP 6/2010 Core Strategies issued under the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and the accompanying Guidance Note on Core Strategies November 2010 (pp. 2-3), highlights that the incorporation of the core strategy “must integrate relevant EU directive related considerations that development plans must comply with”, amongst them the SEA Directive, Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive and relevant environmental legalisation</p> <p>The inclusion of policies ensuring growth takes place in parallel with the provision of adequate waste treatment facilities, means that the possibility of ex-situ effects on the Groody River, a tributary of the River Shannon that feeds into the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC), is reduced.</p> <p>The new Town Centre First, A Policy Approach for Irish Towns as outlined above, is also a significant policy document published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Rural and Community Development in 2022. The Policy document supports the revitalisation of existing settlements, by supporting their redevelopment and repopulation, which will provide a viable alternative to more scattered rural populations and reduce both the cost of service infrastructure and reduce the need for travel.</p>
(iv)	<b>Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;</b>
	<p>The underlying environmental issues of the Caherconlish LAP remain the same as the previous plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sensitive development of the historic village scape of Caherconlish;</li> <li>▪ Avoidance of pollution to the Groody River;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preservation of key features of the village's natural environment and protected structures and listed buildings;</li> <li>▪ The protection of existing views and vistas in Caherconlish, particularly of the Old Church of Ireland building and spire and views along the Groody River.</li> </ul>
(v)	<p><b>The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).</b></p> <p>The LAP has been prepared to align with the significant changes in the higher-level spatial plans referred to above. The Caherconlish LAP places greater emphasis on climate change than what was provided in the Caherconlish LAP 2012 – 2018 (as extended). The National Climate Action Plan 2021, the latest in a series of guidance and legislation, provides a detailed plan to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021.</p> <p>The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, with its updated policy content is the immediate higher tier plan which informs the content of the LAP. In addition, the Caherconlish LAP was prepared in accordance with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, which takes cognisance of community legislation and guidelines in relation to environmental issues.</p> <p>The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, as the parent plan and the Caherconlish Local Area Plan provide a number of policies and objectives in support of reducing Limerick's and Caherconlish's carbon footprint and mitigate against negative impacts of climate change, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policy support to deliver compact growth, supporting the development of brownfield and infill sites, reuse of derelict and vacant buildings and zoning of lands in a sequential manner;</li> <li>- Policy support in the provision of green/blue infrastructure, in new developments and the greening of the existing settlement, for example planting of trees, hedgerows, woodlands, construction of surface water retention features such as ponds, lakes or swales;</li> <li>- Policy support with regards to climate proofing the design of buildings and neighbourhoods;</li> <li>- Policy supporting modal shift towards more sustainable travel patterns;</li> <li>- Policy support in the use of indigenous resources and adoption of new building techniques and designs that minimize energy intensive inputs;</li> <li>- Policy support in improving energy performance ratings on existing and new buildings. All new homes constructed must reach an energy performance rating in accordance with Part L – Conservation of Fuel and Energy 2019, which gives effect to Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) Regulations.</li> </ul>

**Characteristics of the Effects and of the Area Likely to be affected**

<b>(i)</b>	<b>Probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects</b>
	<p>Changes are likely as the zoning mechanism guides both the amount and location of development. Changes to the built environment are generally permanent in nature and are difficult to reverse. As indicated above by rationalising the zoning pattern, it is expected that the overall effects of development would be much more controlled, both in terms of reduced areas proposed for development, also through consolidation of the village core, which will try and address issues of under use of buildings in the settlement core.</p> <p>Changes to the built environment are generally long term (with perhaps a 50 plus year lifespan), however, the zoning template and the emphasis on centre out development allied to the use of core strategy figures will ensure that the village will not be overwhelmed by such development and will grow at an appropriate rate relative to the availability of services.</p>
<b>(ii)</b>	<b>Cumulative nature of the effects</b>
	<p>Cumulative negative environmental effects are likely to be localised within the plan boundary and limited in nature. As outlined above, with the use of guidance, such as the core strategy and robust planning policies, it is considered that the scale of development will integrate well into the existing settlement, thereby reducing adverse cumulative effects.</p> <p>Growth will now be managed through updated planning guidance and will ensure that the capacity of the existing waste water infrastructure will not be exceeded.</p>
<b>(iii)</b>	<b>Trans-boundary nature of the effects</b>
	There are no trans-boundary effects.
<b>(iv)</b>	<b>Risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)</b>
	<p>None. The wastewater treatment plant has a population equivalent of 2,500 (Irish Water 2022), the current load is identified as 1,640, as per the Irish Water Register. The projected population growth for Caherconlish, as outlined in the Plan, is that the village will grow to 1,915 by 2029. The Council will continue to work with Irish Water to safeguard existing infrastructure and upgrade existing infrastructure as required.</p> <p>There are no Seveso sites within the plan area.</p>
<b>(v)</b>	<b>Magnitude and spatial extent of the affects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</b>
	The area that will be affected is that within the development boundary of Caherconlish (see zoning map in Appendix 1 of the Caherconlish Local Area Plan). The Census population data for 2016 is 1,476 and as such is well below the 5,000 Population threshold for SEA. The total area zoned within the plan boundaries for the Plan is 54.596



ha. This is also below the 50km<sup>2</sup> area that is the mandatory SEA threshold. The zoned area is likely to be altered as zoning patterns are changed following review of the plan.

**6. Value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:**

**Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage:**

The Development Plan and the Local Area Plan identify the following protected areas/elements of the natural/cultural heritage:

- Protected Structures;
- Architectural Conservation Areas;
- Sites of Archaeological Significance;
- Areas with natural history designations;
- Tree protection in the plan.
- Proposed Landscape Structure and Reinforcement Policies.

The village of Caherconlish is of particular architectural interest. Of particular note is the streetscape and the built environment contributing to the creation of a series of unique views and prospects both along and beyond the streets of the village. Policies in the Plan's Chapter 8 regarding Protected Views (Section 8. Objective CH O7: Protected Views), Archeology (Objective CH O5: Record of Monuments and Places) and Architecture (Objective CH O6: Protected Structures) in the Plan will ensure that cultural heritage are safeguarded. It is recommended that all of these objectives are important to protect the character of Caherconlish. The church ruins which is mentioned in Section 8.3.2 (Architectural Heritage) was found to be a nesting site for barn owls during one of the land use surveys carried out as part of the Plan preparation. Unfortunately, it was found that two of the brood from 2022 died.



**Figure 3:** The remains of a dead barn owl in the Church ruin

<b>7.</b>	<b>Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values:</b>
<p>It is not expected that any environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas, will be impacted, as a result of the review, it is recommended that policies which conserve aspects of both the built and natural environment are carried forward and reinforced in the review. Other policies, such as Policy CH P2: Water Framework Directive Policy in Chapter 8 of the Plan, sets out the need to achieve good water quality, in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. The population level is still approximately 900 population equivalent below the capacity of the waste water treatment plant.</p> <p>Retention of policies regarding views, archaeology and the environment (Chapter 8 of Plan) will also ensure that local environmental quality is safeguarded.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Intensive land-use</b>
<p>The zoning patterns of the plan has been reviewed and has resulted in consolidation of the development boundary and a rationalisation of the zoning. This seeks to reduce the impact on land use by limiting the amount of land used for development by concentrating development in core areas, including brown field/infill sites, while protecting environmentally sensitive areas from development.</p> <p>The emphasis on the village centre first policy is designed to encourage reuse of existing building stock particularly the village core, which is intended to result in revitalisation of this part of the village.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</b>
No effects, none located within the development boundaries of the plan area.	

### 1.3 Stage Two – Summary, Conclusions and Recommendation

At this stage in the plan process, no strategically significant environmental problems are identified in relation to the above issues, however the following should inform policies/objectives to be included in the Plan to safeguard the environment of Caherconlish:

- The Irish Fisheries Ireland document, 'Planning for Watercourses in Urban Environments' is now in its second edition and has a series of standard recommendations which apply to all water courses in urban areas. It is recommended that the Plan, retain the buffer zone, where it exists, along the river to protect the Groody River and to avoid encroachment of unsuitable development on the river. Objective shall include the following: Provide an appropriate set back from the edge of watercourses, where possible, to proposed developments to protect the integrity of the Groody River and to ensure access infinity for channel clearing, and/or maintenance. Any proposed development shall have cognisance to the contents of the Inland Fisheries Ireland document 'Planning for Watercourses in Urban Environments'

and in addition allow for access to and maintenance of existing Irish Water Infrastructure such as outfalls or pipelines.

- The inclusion of policies that ensure that growth takes place in parallel with provision of adequate waste treatment facilities will mean that the possibility of ex-situ effects on the river and downstream designated sites such as the Lower River Shannon SAC (c 12km downstream) is much reduced. The following to be included:
  - Ensure compliance for infrastructure led-growth in accordance with the DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities;
  - Support the implementation of the Irish Water Investment Plans, in accordance with the settlement strategy of the RSES and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028;
  - Ensure adequate wastewater infrastructure is available to cater for existing and proposed development, in collaboration with Irish Water, avoiding any deterioration in the quality of receiving waters and ensuring discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. This includes the separation of foul and surface water through the provision of sewerage networks;
  - Facilitate improvements to the existing water supply system to cater for the needs of an expanding population;
- Ensure that development proposals provide adequate water infrastructure to facilitate proposed developments.
- With the architectural sensitivity of Caherconlish, it is recommended that policies and objectives in relation to the preservation of its built heritage are included, as well as objectives relating to views and prospects in the village.
- That the zoning patterns are in line with new emphasis on more compact developments and Town Centre First Initiative.
- In the protection and conservation of local species, it is proposed to include the following:

Require all developments, where there are species of conservation concern, such as the Barn Owl, to incorporate elements that will assist in the conservation of these species from design stage.

Following the screening process whereby the specific context of the review to the Caherconlish Local Area Plan has been assessed against the environmental significance criteria as contained in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive, **it is concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required at this stage for the Caherconlish Local Area Plan.**

## Part B – Appropriate Assessment Screening

### 2.0 Introduction

The following section provides the Appropriate Assessment Screening for the Caherconlish LAP, in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The Local Area Plan is, as a requirement of the above legislation, screened for ‘Appropriate Assessment’. Based on the *Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, a ‘Screening Matrix’ and a ‘Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix’ have been completed. The conclusions of these assessments has found that the revision to the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2012-2018 (as extended) and preparation of the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023-2029 does **not require** an Appropriate Assessment.

The principal consideration for an Appropriate Assessment would be if the LAP were likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site – Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas (SACs and SPAs). There is no SAC or SPA within the boundaries of the Caherconlish LAP. The LAP has been formulated to ensure that land uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura sites, having regard to their conservation objectives.

The following text will be added to the plan: *No projects which will be reasonably likely to give rise to significant adverse direct or indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives arising from reduction in species diversity, shall be permitted on the basis of this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).* This provides additional safeguards for areas of natural history significance.

This policy together with the requirement that infrastructural capacity, such as sewage infrastructure is not exceeded should help to prevent ex-situ effects on the Lower River Shannon SAC site. In addition, it is proposed the area along the Groody River is retained as ‘open space’. This will facilitate the passage of otters, a species of conservation concern generally and is important in the specific context of the Lower River Shannon SAC site that lies 12km to the east. Policy CH O4 of Chapter 8 – Climate Action, Environment and Heritage of the Plan, emphasises the protection of the downstream Lower River Shannon SAC site.

The conclusion is at this stage is that the Caherconlish LAP 2023 – 2029, as currently prepared **does not require** an Appropriate Assessment. Zoning for agriculture (within Flood Zone A and B) lessens the intensity of land use patterns within the plan area and in addition, the population is within the levels that can be catered for by the waste water treatment plant (see SEA screening above) and having regard to the policies and objectives set out in the Plan to regulate the growth and development of Caherconlish in a sustainable manner. This removes the possibility of ex situ effects from untreated wastewater on the downstream Lower River Shannon SAC site.

## 2.1 Screening Matrix

### Brief description of the project or plan:

This LAP is intended to provide for a framework for the planning and development of Caherconlish for the duration of six years, unless amended. The plan is aimed at regulating development while providing sufficient zoning for the land uses designed to respond to the needs of the village.

The desirable outcome of the implementation of the Plan is a village that:

- Has a sustainable level of development appropriate to the character, heritage, amenity and strategic role of Caherconlish as a Level 3 settlement in the settlement strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, and that allows for the preservation and enhancement of the village character, services and amenities;
- Supports and protects the environment, heritage, character and amenity of the village, and in particular the setting of the Groody River and the architectural and archaeological heritage of the village centre;
- Has a high quality built environment with a well-developed public realm and appropriate building forms, materials, heights and associated landscaping that complement and enhance the distinctive character of the village;
- Has a suitable range of community and educational facilities and amenities to serve the local community, the wider rural catchment area and visitors to the village;
- Has a safe network of amenity walks within and through the village and linking the various community facilities, as well as natural and heritage features;
- Has an adequate level of service infrastructure to support existing and future populations in a manner that protects and complements the environment, including adequate road network, traffic management and parking facilities, improved public transport and safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists, and adequate wastewater disposal, water supply and surface water drainage.

### Brief description of the Natura 2000 sites:

There are no Natura sites within the village. The Lower River Shannon SAC site is approximately 12km to the north of the village. This SAC site has been selected because of a range of riparian habitats and species, such as wet woodlands, tidal mudflats, estuaries and for species, for example, otter, salmon and lamprey. Maintenance of high water quality is an important factor in ensuring the preservation of these habitats.



**Figure 4:** Location of the Lower River Shannon site (orange) and the Slieve Felim SPA (purple) relative to Caherconlish which is indicated by a blue arrow

**Describe the individual elements of the plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site:**

The main way in which ex-situ impacts could be created is through pollution, which could affect water quality downstream in the Lower River Shannon SAC site. The addition of text referred to above which takes into account the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive seeks to minimise any chances of ex-situ impacts lessens the possibility of such effects on the designated sites. This text is as follows:

No projects which will be reasonably likely to give rise to significant adverse direct or indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives arising from reduction in species diversity, shall be permitted on the basis of this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

Given the distance from the Slieve Felim Special Protection Area and other Natura 2000 sites it is not considered that the plan review would have any effects on them. Census 2016 population figures, indicates a population of 1,476 are within the capacity limits of the waste water treatment plant. The assumed population growth for Caherconlish allocates an additional 1,915 persons to 2029 which would be still within this capacity.

The LAP includes a number of Opportunity Sites as part of the Town Centre First policy approach and a regeneration strategy for the village centre. Opportunity Site 3 (Chapter 4 Section 4.2 Opportunity Sites) outlines the potential to develop a blue/green infrastructure amenity as a recreational/ecological resource and in doing so, providing a biodiversity corridor north of Caherconlish village centre, along a section of the Groody River and linking the L-5094 to the R513 at Ceol na Habhann. This proposal has been looked at in terms of whether such a proposal could give rise to effects on the downstream Lower River Shannon SAC site.



It is likely that the effects would be greatest during the construction phase where pollutants and sediments could make their way into the Loobagh River and onwards further downstream. The route of the proposed walkway is shown in Figure 5. The Groody River, at its widest point is 3m wide and has been canalised and heavily modified, thereby reducing its structural diversity from the point of view of habitats. It could be classed as a depositing lowland river, due to its shallow gradient and slow flow speed. Riparian vegetation was variable with species such as Reed Canary Grass, Yellow Flag Iris and Creeping Bent present.



**Figure 5:** Route of proposed walkway (Opportunity Site No. 3 LAP)

The works are within the LAP boundary which would already have a degree of human activity and disturbance on going. The Groody River is not designated at this point. There were no sign of otters though they might use it occasionally, however, since they are largely crepuscular, human disturbance might not be so much of an issue. There were no signs of Dipper nests under the bridge in the village centre and any small bird usage of the river is likely to be the Grey Wagtail which is a common resident.

There are obstructions to fish passage in the river, particularly during low flow conditions. These include piping behind the old Library building on the R513 north of the village centre and a stepped concrete apron below the bridge in the village centre, both of which would reduce the value of the Groody River for instream life in this general area. If these could be removed or modified during any potential works in developing the walkway, this would create an ecological gain as it would enable the movement of instream life, particularly during low flow conditions as

seen on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2022. For instance, works such as sloping the concrete apron would benefit the ecological value of the River.



**Figure 6:** The eastern arch of the Bridge in village – neither arch had visible nesting species such as Dippers (*Cinclus cinclus*) visible



**Figure 7:** Bridge in the village centre, close to the Millennium Centre

The proposal under Opportunity Site 3 would create some ecological losses at construction phase including the removal of trees and bankside vegetation. Although the trees are common species such as Ash and Sycamore, they do contribute to local biodiversity along the course of the river. None of these are designated. There are choke points along the route and these may compromise



the creation of the walkway. Engineering works such as structures suspended over the river to allow for a continuous walk could be used, however this would be an engineering issue which would be considered at design stage, It is likely that it is during the construction phase that ecological effects will be greatest, however, these would be examined in greater detail at design stage and managed.



**Figure 8 The Groody River in the village centre**

Overall, due to the distance from the SAC site and the fact that the walkway is proposed within the village only, it is considered that the effects will be minor and not significant in terms of the downstream SAC site. The river is already subject to human disturbance along its length in the village. To the north of the village outside of the built up area, cattle have access to the Groody which also contributes to disturbance and the removal of bankside vegetation which lessens its ecological value.

**Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:**

#### **Size and scale**

There are no designated sites within the village boundary. Ex-situ impacts are taken into account by including policies that ensure that development takes place in tandem with the establishment of appropriate facilities, including wastewater infrastructure. As outlined above the proposal outlined under Opportunity Site 3 in the Plan (the riverside trail) may have downstream effects, but due to distance from the SAC site, the dilution factor of the intervening waters and the use of standard good practice measures in the construction of the walkway, it is not considered that there would be any significant effects. It is also noted that the route of the proposed trail is

entirely within the boundaries of the development plan and is already subject to human disturbance along its length.

#### **Land-take**

It is not proposed to further expand the development boundaries of the Local Area Plan. There are no Natura 2000 sites within or immediately adjacent the plan area, so direct land take will not arise. There are Natura 2000 site designations approximately 12km from the settlement boundary. See Figure 3 above and next paragraph below.

#### **Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site**

The River Shannon SAC site lies approximately 12km to the north west and the Slieve Felim Mountains 18km to the north east.

#### **Resource requirements (water abstraction etc.)**

No policies within the plan indicate the need for abstraction of water from the Groody River.

#### **Emission (disposal to land, water or air)**

In the Plan, policies are included to ensure that the pace of development does not over-reach the capacity of the available treatment systems.

#### **Excavation requirements**

Any excavation which may be permitted under the scope of the plan will take place within the LAP boundaries. The LAP boundary is a sufficient distant from any designated sites so as to ensure that there will be no effect on the sites.

#### **Transportation requirements**

It is not envisaged that any of the transport policies put forward in the Plan will have an effect in terms of encroachment on any designated sites.

#### **Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.**

No construction projects within the plan area will encroach upon designated sites.

#### **Other**

None

#### **Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:**

- **reduction of habitat area:**

As indicated above, it is intended to retain the buffer area along the Groody River. This open space will be retained and the buffer will prevent encroachment on the river. It is considered that the concentration of development within the plan boundaries, in an area that has access to infrastructure, is preferable to more scattered development in the open countryside.

- **disturbance to key species:**

No projects giving rise to disturbance to key species for Natura 2000 sites is likely within the boundaries of the plan as no such sites exist. The inclusion of policies that ensure that development takes place only in step with provision of wastewater treatment systems helps to ensure that no ex-situ effects through water pollution issues will take place.

- **habitat or species fragmentation:**

The absence of designated sites, and the presumption in the plan against development that would cause ex-situ effects will help to prevent fragmentation of non – designated habitats and the species that are contained within them.

- **reduction in species density:**

As outlined above, the Local Area Plan area is a significant distance from any Natura 2000 site network and as a result, is not anticipated to have effects on density of the specific species for which the designations have been put in place.

- **changes in key indicators of conservation value:**

No projects giving rise to significant adverse changes in key indicators of conservation value for Natura 2000 sites are likely given that policies are in place to control possible ex-situ effects and the absence of Natura sites within the plan boundaries.

- **climate change:**

The consolidation of development within the boundaries of the LAP, while at the same time recognising the importance of the conservation sites outside the plan boundaries is not expected to result in climate change issues that would affect the sites.

**Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:**

**Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site:**

None-see policies regarding improvement of sewage facilities to reduce chances of ex-situ effects

**Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site:**

With the consolidation of development a focus of the Plan and the overall conservation objectives set out by the Limerick Development Plan, it is not expected that the various factors that help designated sites function as particular habitats will be affected.

**Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:**

**Loss:** Not applicable.

**Fragmentation:** Not applicable.

**Disruption:** Not applicable.

**Disturbance:** Not applicable.

<b>Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.):</b> Not applicable.
<b>Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts are not known:</b> Not applicable.

## 2.2 Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix

<b>Name of Project or Plan:</b>	Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029
<b>Name and location of Natura 2000 sites:</b>	Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code 002165) 12 km to the north. Slieve Felim to Silvermines SPA 16km to the north east.
<b>Description of the Project or Plan</b>	As given in Screening Matrix above.
<b>Is the Project or Plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details)</b>	No. The LAP is intended to provide support for the proper planning and sustainable development of Caherconlish and includes policies and objectives to protect and manage development in a suitable manner, in order to protect the natural heritage of the village.
<b>Are there other projects or plans that together with the project of plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?</b>	The LAP has been formulated to ensure that the uses, developments and effects arising from proposals and/or permissions based upon the policies and objectives of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives.
<b>The Assessment of Significance of Effects</b>	
<b>Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 sites:</b>	Effects are not likely as the plan area has sufficient Waste Water Treatment Capacity to deal with current population and any projected increases, removing pollution risk to the downstream SAC site. It is at sufficient distance from other sites in the Natura 2000 network to ensure that they would not be affected.
<b>Explain why these effects are not considered significant:</b>	No Natura 2000 sites exist within the plan boundaries and policies, including those set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 for the prevention of pollution, nuisance or other environmental effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.



		Due to separation distance (12km) from the SAC site and the level of disturbance already in place along it's length it is not considered that the proposals for the creation of a riverside walkway would have an effect on the downstream SAC site or on species which are of conservation importance such as the otter.	
List of Agencies Consulted: Provide contact name and telephone or email address:		AA Screening Reports were sent to: The Manager, Development Applications Unit Newtown Road, Wexford.	
Response to consultation		Completed	
Data Collected to Carry out the Assessment			
Who carried out the Assessment?	Sources of Data	Level of assessment Completed	Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed
Heritage Officer, Forward Planning Section, Limerick City and County Council.	Existing NPWS Site Synopses  Site visits during plan preparation process.	Desktop study, site visits	With plan documentation on request.

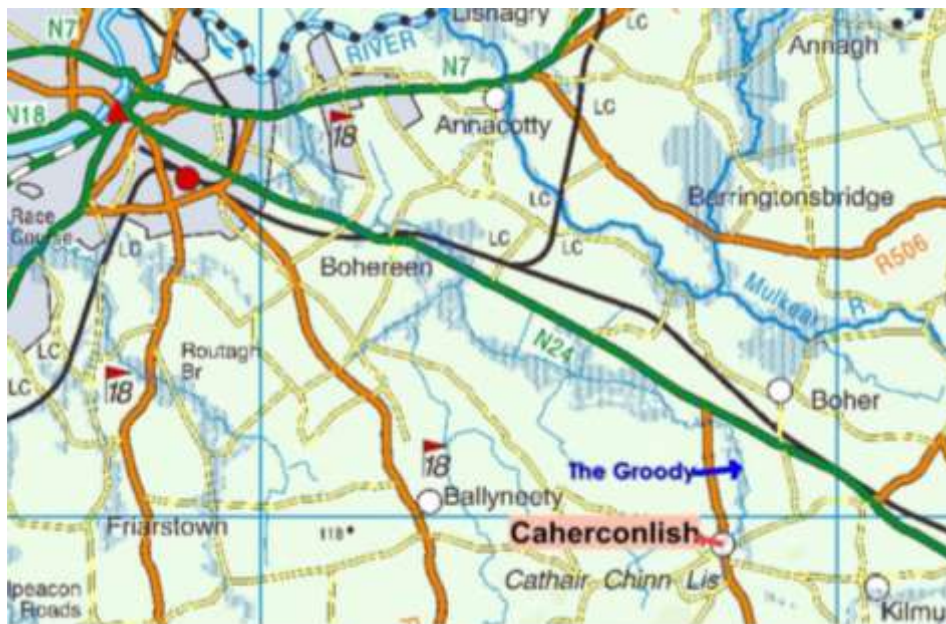
## Part C Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

### 3.0 Introduction

The preparation of the Caherconlish Local Area Plan has been subject to a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Office of Public Works, 2009) and Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Circular PL 2/2014. The SFRA provides an assessment of flood risk and includes mapped extents of Flood Risk Zones. This report considers flood extents to inform the preparation of a land use plan.

The Local Area Plan is a land use plan and provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of the village of Caherconlish over the six-year period 2023 – 2029. The principles on which the plan has been developed upon is compact growth, promotion of a self-sustaining settlement supported by sustainable transport, to promote the growth of the village, in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Caherconlish is located approximately 10 kilometers (6 miles) southeast of Limerick City. The village is located just to the south of the main Limerick to Waterford National Primary Road, (N24) providing ease of access to Limerick City, North Cork and the southeast of the County. The village itself is traversed by the R513 linking the village to Hospital, Ballylanders and onto Mitchelstown in North Cork. The village is sited predominantly on the east side of the Groody River, which flows in a south-north direction through the village. The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 identifies Caherconlish as Level 3 settlement in Limerick. These settlements provide local retail and business services for their surrounding areas. Fig. 1 below shows the location of Caherconlish relative to Limerick City and the Groody River.



**Figure 1:** Caherconlish village located on the banks of the Groody River

### 3.1 Flood Risk Management Policy

#### 3.1.1 EU Floods Directive

The European Directive 2007/60/EC provides the overarching European legalisation, in relation to managing flood risk, it seeks to reduce and manage the risks that flooding pose to humans, the environment, cultural heritage and the environment. The legalisation applies to both inland and coastal water sources and requires EU states to:

- Carry out a preliminary assessment in order to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas, where potential significant flood risk exists;
- Prepare flood extent maps for the identified areas;
- Prepare flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness. These plans are to include measures to reduce the probability of flooding and its potential consequences.

Implementation of the EU Floods Directive is required to be coordinated with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive and the current National River Basin Management Plan.

#### 3.1.2 National Flood Policy

In line with evolving European legalisation and evolving national legalisation, the government in 2004 established a Flood Policy Review Group and carried out a interdepartmental review of national flood risk management policy and carried out and approved a Flood Policy Review Report. The recommendations of the Report included appointment of the OPW as lead agency for co-ordinating delivery of flood risk management policy. The OPW carries out this role by co-ordinating the implementation of flood risk management policy and measures across three strategic areas:

- Prevention - avoiding construction in flood-prone areas;
- Protection - taking feasible measures to protect areas against flooding.
- Preparedness - planning and responding to reduce the impacts of flood events.

The review also identified a number of key measures for implementation in relation to flood risk management, most relevant to plan preparation is the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management" Guidelines published in 2009, which provide guidance to Local Authorities on plan formulation and decision making in areas at risk of flooding. The review also resulted in an enhancement of the availability of data on flood risk and reporting on flood events, which assists in decision making in relation to land use planning.

### 3.1.3 National CFRAM Programme

The OPW undertook the National Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme in consultation with the Local Authorities and supported by external engineering consultants. The objectives of the CFRAM Programme was to:

- Identify and map the existing and potential future flood hazard and flood risk in the areas at potentially significant risk from flooding, called Areas for Further Assessment (AFAs);
- identify feasible structural and non-structural measures to effectively manage the assessed risk in each of the AFAs, and
- Prepare a set of Flood Risk Management Plans, and associated Strategic Environmental and Habitats Directive (Appropriate) Assessments that set out the proposed feasible measures and actions to manage the flood risk in these areas and their river catchments.

No CFRAM mapping was undertaken for Caherconlish. The CFRAM Programme is being implemented through CFRAM studies that have been undertaken for each of the river basin districts in Ireland. The CFRAM Programme includes a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) mapping exercise, which was completed in 2012, and to which has since been superseded by the national indicative fluvial, coastal and groundwater mapping;

### 3.1.4 Flood Risk Management Guidelines

In 2009, the OPW and the Department of the Environment and Local Government (DEHLG) published Guidelines on flood risk management for Planning Authorities - **The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities**. These Guidelines seek to establish a regime to assist with flood risk identification, assessment and management and embed this into the planning process.

The core objectives of the Guidelines are to:

- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding;
- Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface water run-off;
- Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains;
- Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth;
- Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders; and
- Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management.

The Guidelines follow the principle that development should not be permitted in flood risk areas, particularly floodplains, except where there are no alternative and appropriate sites available in lower risk areas that are consistent with the objectives of proper planning and sustainable development.

One of the key areas identified in the Flood Guidelines is around identifying flood risk, which is an expression of the combination of the flood probability or likelihood and the magnitude of the potential consequences of the flood event. It is normally expressed in terms of the following relationship:

**Flood risk = Likelihood of flooding x Consequences of flooding**

Likelihood of flooding is normally defined as the percentage probability of a flood of a given magnitude or severity occurring or being exceeded in any given year.

Consequences of flooding depend on the hazards associated with the flooding (e.g. depth of water, speed of flow, rate of onset, duration, wave-action effects, water quality) and the vulnerability of people, property and the environment potentially affected by a flood (e.g. the age profile of the population, the type of development and the presence and reliability of mitigation measures).

Flood zones are geographical areas within which the likelihood of flooding is in a particular range and they are a key tool in flood risk management within the planning process as well as in flood warning and emergency planning.

There are three types of flood zones defined for the purposes of the Flood Guidelines:

- Flood Zone A – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding);
- Flood Zone B – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding and between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 year and 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding); and
- Flood Zone C – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding).

Flood Zone C covers all other areas that are not in zones A or B.



### 3.2 Flood Risk Identification

#### 3.2.1 Introduction – Stage 1 Flood Risk Identification

Flood risk identification was undertaken in order to identify whether there may be any flooding or surface water management issues within or adjacent to zoned lands and consequently whether Stage 2 SFRA (flood risk assessment) should be proceeded to. Stage 1 SFRA is based on existing information on flood risk indicators based on available flood detail.



**Figure 2:** Groody River in the southern part of the plan area.

The Groody is the river that runs through Caherconlish and is at this stage of its development a depositing river, i.e. a river with a shallow gradient flowing through a relatively flat landscape. It is the only water course in the village with the exception of drainage ditches and as such is the main source of any potential flood risk. As part of the review of the Limerick Development Plan, JBA Consultant Engineers carried out an assessment of the existing risk in Caherconlish, no flood modelling has been complete.

While on other locations, CFRAMS provides for project-level development and zoning, the OPW submission dated 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2022 mentions that there “are few data sets available for Caherconlish”. No CFRAM mapping has been carried out for Caherconlish.

### 3.2.2 Flood Risk Indicators

Discussions regarding drainage and flooding issues took place with council engineers, which indicated the location of past flooding events in Caherconlish. Flood info.ie confirmed these locations with reports on hand from the Mulkear Drainage society (1991) and Limerick County Fire Service (2005). The flood maps (Figure 5), have been used as first step, supplemented with site visits and walkovers. It has informed the new zoning extent so that in these areas new zoning is for uses compatible with flood risk, such as agricultural uses.



**Figure 3:** Taken from Floodinfo.ie, this shows the concentration of Flood events in Caherconlish.

Another possible indication of flooding patterns is that of benefitting lands, i.e. lands that would benefit from flood defence to improve agricultural production.



**Figure 4:** Benefitting lands shown in light blue in the north east of the plan area. This area is currently zoned agricultural.

### **3.2.3 Conclusion of SFRA**

The information detailed above indicates elevated levels of flood risk in various locations across the Plan area; therefore, a Stage 2 SFRA has been proceeded to.



### 3.3 Stage 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

Stage 2 SFRA is being undertaken to:

- Confirm the sources of flooding that may affect zoned and adjacent areas;
- Appraise the adequacy of existing information as identified by the Stage 1 SFRA; and
- Scope the extent of the risk of flooding through the preparation of a Flood Zone Map.

#### 3.3.2 Assessment of information outlined above and Delineation of Flood Zones

In order to inform the Stage 2 assessment, the village of Caherconlish was inspected, which involved numerous site visits in order to examine, the potential source and direction of flood paths from fluvial sources, locations of topographic features that coincide with the flood boundaries and to identify vegetation associated with a high frequency of flood inundation.

Three factors influence the zoning decisions in relation to these areas. The first is the existence of the flood risk as presented by historic flood reports and discussions with Local Authority personnel, the second is the presence of benefitting lands in the plan area and the third is the JBA flood assessment, carried out in 2021, as part of the review of the Limerick Development Plan. Flood modelling did not take place as the on the ground survey supported, both the historic flood reports and the benefitting lands.



**Figure 5:** JBA flood mapping indicating Flood Zone A (Orange) and Flood Zone B (purple)

#### 3.3.3 Flooding from Other Sources

Pluvial flood risk has not featured to great degree in flood risk assessment in Caherconlish. To date such development that has occurred in the village, has not tended to rely on attenuation or nature friendly measures to try and control water flow and run off and local rain fall events can generate considerable volumes of water. The amount of impermeable surfaces and local topography can contribute to local flood events. In the case of Caherconlish, the steep gradient of High Street leading down towards the village centre can

cause rainwater to be directed quickly towards the cross roads in the village centre and the area zoned for village centre. The plan does take this issue into account and in Objective IU O4 addresses this issue, in so far as it states that “future developments in flood prone areas are generally limited to minor developments in line with Circular PI2/2014 and the Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”.

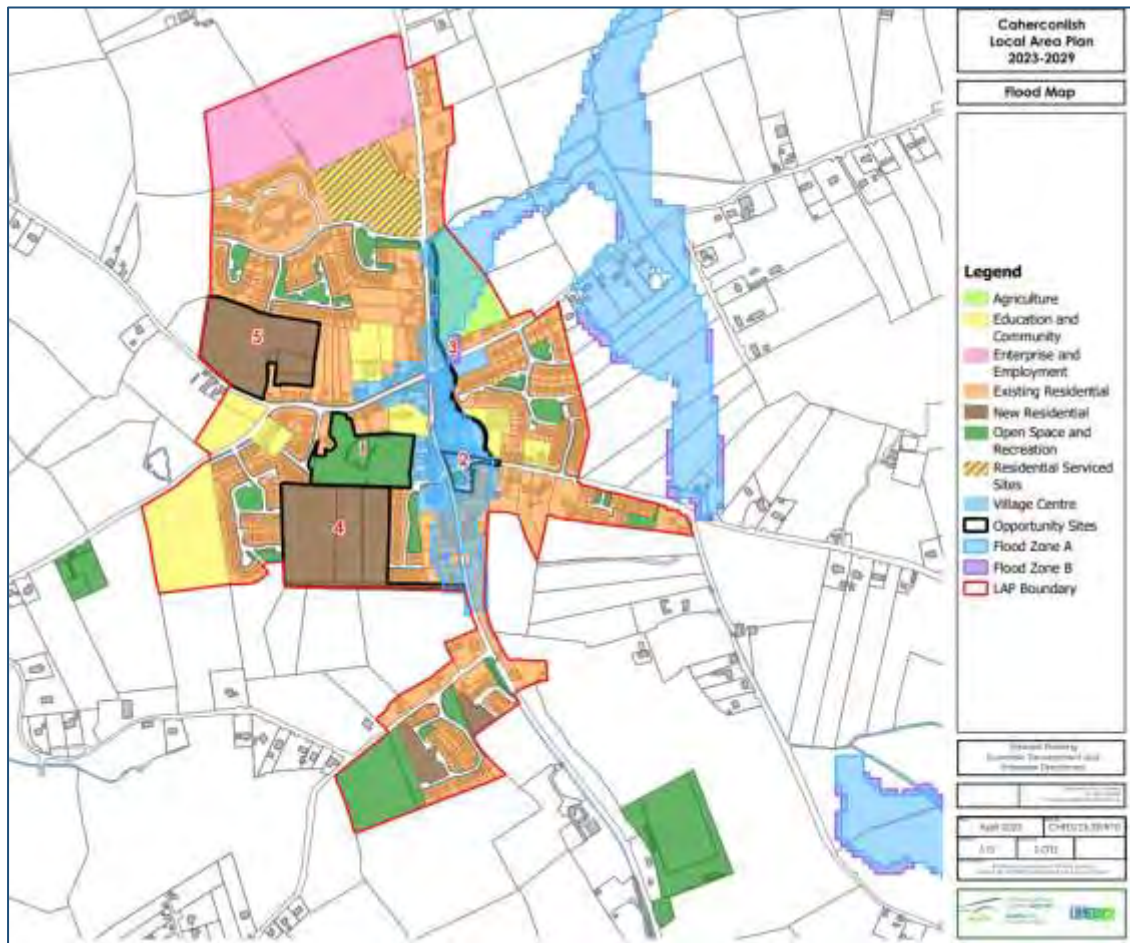


**Figure 6:** Illustrating the gradient from the top of high street towards the village centre.

Ground water flooding is identified on the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) ground water mapping as occurring close to but not in the boundaries of the Local Area Plan.



**Figure 7:** The area shown in blue shows ground water flooding from the GSI website (Historic Ground Water Flood maps, 2015)



**Figure 8:** Flood map for Caherconlish, this also shows the groundwater flooding, to the south east, that is on the GSI map in Figure 7.

From the above it can be seen that local changes in development patterns and intensification of land usage can have an effects on overland flow and surface water movement in particular. This can exacerbated when the drainage of channels and storm water routes can be blocked by debris or when the Groody river channel might itself get blocked at a narrow points by debris. There is a narrow point behind the old library building on the southern entrance to the village and there is also the probability of the eyes of the bridges in the village getting blocked by debris.

To reduce the amount of run off in the first instance the insertion of policies which promote nature based solutions and Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDs) have been included in the plan. This is dealt with further in Section 9.3 of the plan entitled Surface Water Management and SuDS.



### 3.3.4 Flood defences

There are no flood defences in Caherconlish.

### 3.3.5 Flood Risk Zone Mapping

A Flood Risk Map has been produced taking into account the findings of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 SFRA as detailed above. The map is illustrated below identifies Flood Zone A (darker blue) and Flood Zone B4 (lighter blue). As per the Guidelines, the flood zones in Caherconlish are as follows:

- Flood Zone A – where the probability of flooding from the River Shannon and its tributaries is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding);
- Flood Zone B – where the probability of flooding from the River Shannon and its tributaries is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding); and;
- Flood Zone C – where the probability of flooding from the River Shannon and its tributaries is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for river flooding).

### 3.3.6 Climate Change Considerations

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Technical Appendices, 2009 recommends that a precautionary approach to climate change is adopted due to the level of uncertainty involved in the potential effects. In this regard, the Guidelines recommends:

- Recognising that significant changes in the flood extent may result from an increase in rainfall or tide events and accordingly adopting a cautious approach to zoning land in these potential transitional areas;
- Ensuring that the levels of structures designed to protect against flooding such as flood defences, land raising or raised floor levels are sufficient to cope with the effects of climate change over the lifetime of the development they are designed to protect (normally 85-100 years); and
- Ensuring that structures to protect against flooding and the development protected are capable of adaptation to the effects of climate change when there is more certainty about the effects and still time for such adaptation to be effective

Advice on the expected impacts of climate change and the allowances to be provided for future flood risk management in Ireland is given in the OPW Draft Guidance on Assessment of Potential Future Scenarios for Flood Risk Management (2009) and the Flood Risk Management – Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan 2019. Two climate change scenarios are considered. These are the Mid-Range Future Scenario (MRFS) and the High-End Future Scenario (HEFS). The MRFS is intended to represent a "likely" future scenario based on the wide range of future predictions available. The HEFS represents a more "extreme" future scenario at the upper boundaries of future projections.

In addition to considering climate change factors in the SFRA, the Council have embedded the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Nature Based Solutions (NBS) into the Local Area Plan, which not only has climate benefits, but also a range of

environmental benefits to support the delivery of sustainable development. The approach taken in the proposed Local Area Plan, in line with the recently adopted Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, is to seek to adopt SuDS and nature based solutions as appropriate, not just on key development sites. The Council will work with developers to promote SuDS and nature based solutions on a case by case basis and tailor solutions to the specific sites. It is suggested that the following will be placed in the plan; Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Nature Based Solutions (NBS): The approach taken in the proposed Local Area Plan, in line with the recently adopted Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, is to seek to adopt SuDS and nature based solutions as appropriate not just on key development sites. The Council will work with developers to promote SuDS and nature based solutions on a case by case basis and tailor solutions to the specific sites. The approach taken in the proposed Local Area Plan, in line with the recently adopted Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, is to seek to adopt SuDS and nature based solutions as appropriate, not just on key development sites. The Council will work with developers to promote SuDS and nature based solutions on a case by case basis and tailor solutions to the specific sites. In the plan there is a requirement to provide new spaces as part of developments. Though part of standard planning practice, the requirement for minimum open space provision will ensure new permeable surfaces within new developments. Similarly Section 9.3 of the Plan, *Surface Water Management and SuDS* will ensure the adoption of nature friendly solutions to the issue of surface water management. The contents of the publication *Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas Water Sensitive Urban Design Best Practice Interim Guidance Document*, will be very useful in this regard.

### 3.4 Recommendations and Integration with Local Area Plan

#### 3.4.1 Introduction

In order to comply with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Circular (PL 2/2014) and contribute towards flood risk management within the Plan area, the recommendations below have been made by the SFRA process.

- Previously undeveloped lands within Zones A or B should not be zoned for incompatible uses, unless a Justification Test is passed (including a planning conclusion that there are no alternative locations available for accommodating such uses). With respect to previously developed lands, the potential conflict between zonings and highly vulnerable development will be avoided by applying a limiting land use policy approach, as outlined in Objective IU O4 shall be applied on these lands. Full details of all flood justification tests are included in Appendix 1.
- Incorporate policies and objectives to manage surface water in line with Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and nature based solutions.

As rain fall events are likely to become more frequent this places more importance on elements of surface water management such as SuDS. With this in mind it is considered that all new residential areas zoned in the plan, will from the outset, incorporate nature based approaches to surface water management solutions as part of planning applications. This is already reflected in text in the plan dealing with Opportunity sites in the Plan. In addition the area zoned for Education and Community and the proposed park area are to remain zoned as such with the proviso that any appropriate development in them maximise the amount of permeable surfaces should paths and play grounds be constructed.

It also considered that the flood benefitting lands located to in the north east part of the land through their agricultural zoning could function as a possible flood residence area. This land is 0.6m below the road level and below the level of existing residential zoned lands to the west. As such it would be useful as spill-over area for possible flooding from the Groody River and would have adequate area to fulfil this function. This would become more important over time as due to climate change, flood events are likely to become more frequent and more severe.



**Figure 9:** Agricultural lands in the north east of the Plan area.

### 3.4.2 Integration of Provisions of Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Management into the Local Area Plan

In the formulation of the Local Area Plan to date, the Council have sought to ensure that appropriate integration of the recommendation of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Caherconlish Local Area Plan has taken place, in order to comply with the Flood Guidelines and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Objectives as follows are critical to complying with the relevant legalisation:

- Objective IU O3 – Surface Water Management and SuDS – which relates directly to surface water management and protecting surface water resources
- Objective IU O4 – Flood Risk Management – which seeks to comply with the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL2/2014;

Coupled with key policies and objectives in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, which are as follows:

- Policy CAF P5 – Managing Flood Risk - It is a policy of the Council to protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate lands, in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 (or any subsequent document) and the guidance contained in Development Management Standards and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).
- Objective CAF O20 – Flood Risk Assessments – It is an objective of the Council to require a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for all planning applications in

Flood Zones A and B and consider all sources of flooding (for example coastal/tidal, fluvial, pluvial or groundwater), where deemed necessary.

- Objective IN O12 – Surface Water and SuDS – The Development Plan sets out that there are many approaches to management of surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution), biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity and these are collectively referred to as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). The use of SuDS to address surface water and its diversion from combined sewers is encouraged, in particular, in infill/brownfield sites and higher density areas as appropriate.

It is considered that the approach outlined above and the policies and objectives of the Limerick Development Plan and the Caherconlish Local Area Plan, provide a robust approach to support the Plan making process.

### 3.4.3 Conclusion

Stage 2 SFRA has been undertaken as part of the Plan-preparation process and the SFRA has informed the preparation of the Plan. The SFRA has mapped boundaries identifying areas at risk of flooding, taking into account many factors to determine the extent of flooding. In the preparation of this Local Area Plan, significant rationalisation of the zoning pattern has been carried out, the Council have, in so far as possible sought to avoid zoning of lands at flood risk or have zoned lands for water compatible uses. The Council have also sought to incorporate nature based solutions and blue green infrastructure measures into the plan, as a means of dealing with surface water, while also benefitting climate action.



### Appendix I - Flood Justification Tests

As per Section 4.2 of Flood Guidelines, Flood Justification Tests has been undertaken for lands zoned in the LAP, which are identified as liable to flooding, according to the information available for Caherconlish. These lands are in the main are developed or unsuitable for development and where unsuitable for development have been zoned for purpose of agricultural use or Open Space and Recreation, which will generally only permit water compatible uses.

#### (a) Lands located in the village core zoned Village Centre

1	<p><b>The urban settlements is identified for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans prepared under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.</b></p>
	<p>Caherconlish is a Level 3 Settlement in the settlement hierarchy, identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 settlements, as development centres for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities supporting its hinterland. In line with National Policy Objective 3c, 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the village. Part of the lands within the village centre, are identified as being risk as flooding, however, the lands are also the core of the village and in line with national, regional and local planning policy critical to the overall development of the village centre, will facilitate consolidation and by in large is brown field or infill lands.</p>



2	<p>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</p>	
(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	<p>The lands are proposed to be zoned village centre, reflecting their existing uses. The lands are essential to facilitate regeneration and expansion of the centre of the settlement.</p>	
(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	<p>These lands are already developed and currently occupied by existing uses as per their proposed zoning objective.</p>	
(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	<p>The lands are zoned village centre and located in the core of the village.</p>	
(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	<p>The redevelopment on these lands will contribute to compact urban growth aligned to higher-level spatial policy.</p>	

	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	The lands are currently developed.
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	The extent of Flood Zone A/B across the village centre zoning follows the line of the Groody River.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposed zoning of these lands as village centre for development is appropriate subject to more detailed site-specific flood risk assessment to be submitted as supplementary information with planning applications on these lands, which may be made in the future. Any developments in these areas are to be limited to developments that are minor in nature and will not result in in increased risk of flooding elsewhere in line with Section 5.28 of the Flood Guidelines and PI2/2014.		

**(b) Existing Residential**

1	The urban settlements is identified for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans prepared under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Caherconlish is a Level 3 Settlement in the settlement hierarchy, identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 settlements, as development centres for population growth sustaining a wide

range of functions, services and employment opportunities supporting its hinterland. In line with National Policy Objective 3c, 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the village. Part of the lands within the village centre, are identified as being risk as flooding, however, the lands are also the core of the village and in line with national, regional and local planning policy critical to the overall development of the village centre, will facilitate consolidation and by in large is brown field or infill lands.



- 2 The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:

	<b>(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement</b>	The lands are already developed and the zoning reflects their existing uses. They are a reflection of the historical development of the village, in particular that of the central part of the village. Given the emphasis of the NPF and the RSES on the use of existing development sites, these areas are essential to the viability of the settlement.
	<b>(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands</b>	These lands are already developed and currently occupied by existing uses as per their proposed zoning objective.
	<b>(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement</b>	The lands are existing residential and located in the centre of the village.
	<b>(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth</b>	The redevelopment and continued use of these lands will contribute to compact urban growth aligned to higher-level spatial policy.
	<b>(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement</b>	The lands are currently developed.
<b>3</b>	<b>A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.</b>	The extent of Flood Zone A/B across much of this zoning is largely along the route of the Groody River and risks can be managed by limiting development to minor developments in areas at risk of flooding as per Section 5.28 of the Planning and Flood Risk guidelines and Circular PL2/2014.
<b>4</b>	<b>Conclusion of the Justification Test</b>	



Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposed zoning of these lands as existing residential for development is appropriate subject to the provisions of Section 5.28 of the Planning and Flood Risk Guidance and Circular PL2/2014, limiting the extent of development on these lands.

**(c) Lands zoned Agriculture, which is at flood risk within the Plan boundary**

**1 The urban settlements is identified for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans prepared under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.**

Caherconlish is a Level 3 Settlement in the settlement hierarchy, identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 settlements, as development centres for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities supporting its hinterland. In line with National Policy Objective 3c, 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the village. For the main part lands zoned, which is at risk of flooding, is zoned for non-vulnerable uses, such as Agricultural and Open Space and Recreation.





2	<b>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</b>	
	<b>(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement</b>	The lands are proposed to be zoned Agriculture and development will be limited in terms of the uses permitted to water compatible uses.
	<b>(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands</b>	Having regard to the location of the lands, only development appropriate to its location would be considered, subject to an appropriate level of assessment.
	<b>(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement</b>	The lands are located within the Plan boundary.
	<b>(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth</b>	Only limited development will be considered, subject to an appropriate level of assessment.
	<b>(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement</b>	Suitable alternative lands are available for vulnerable development elsewhere in areas outside of any flood risk. Agricultural use is considered a less vulnerable use in the Flood Guidelines.
3	<b>A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.</b>	These lands zoned agricultural are at flood risk is nearly entirely within Flood Zone A and B, as identified above. Agricultural use is consider a low vulnerability use, however only water compatible uses will be considered on this land use zoning.
4	<b>Conclusion of the Justification Test</b>	

Part 2 of the Justification Test has not been passed and the site is at risk of flooding, lands will on be considered for water compatible uses in accordance with the Flood Guidelines.