

# **Proposed Amendment No. 1 to the Extended Hospital Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018**

**To amend the zoning matrix to allow for hotel and petrol station on  
lands, which are zoned Residential Serviced Sites**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and  
Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Report**



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**Limerick** City  
& County Council

Limerick City and County Council,  
Forward/Strategic Planning,  
Economic Development,  
Merchant Quay,  
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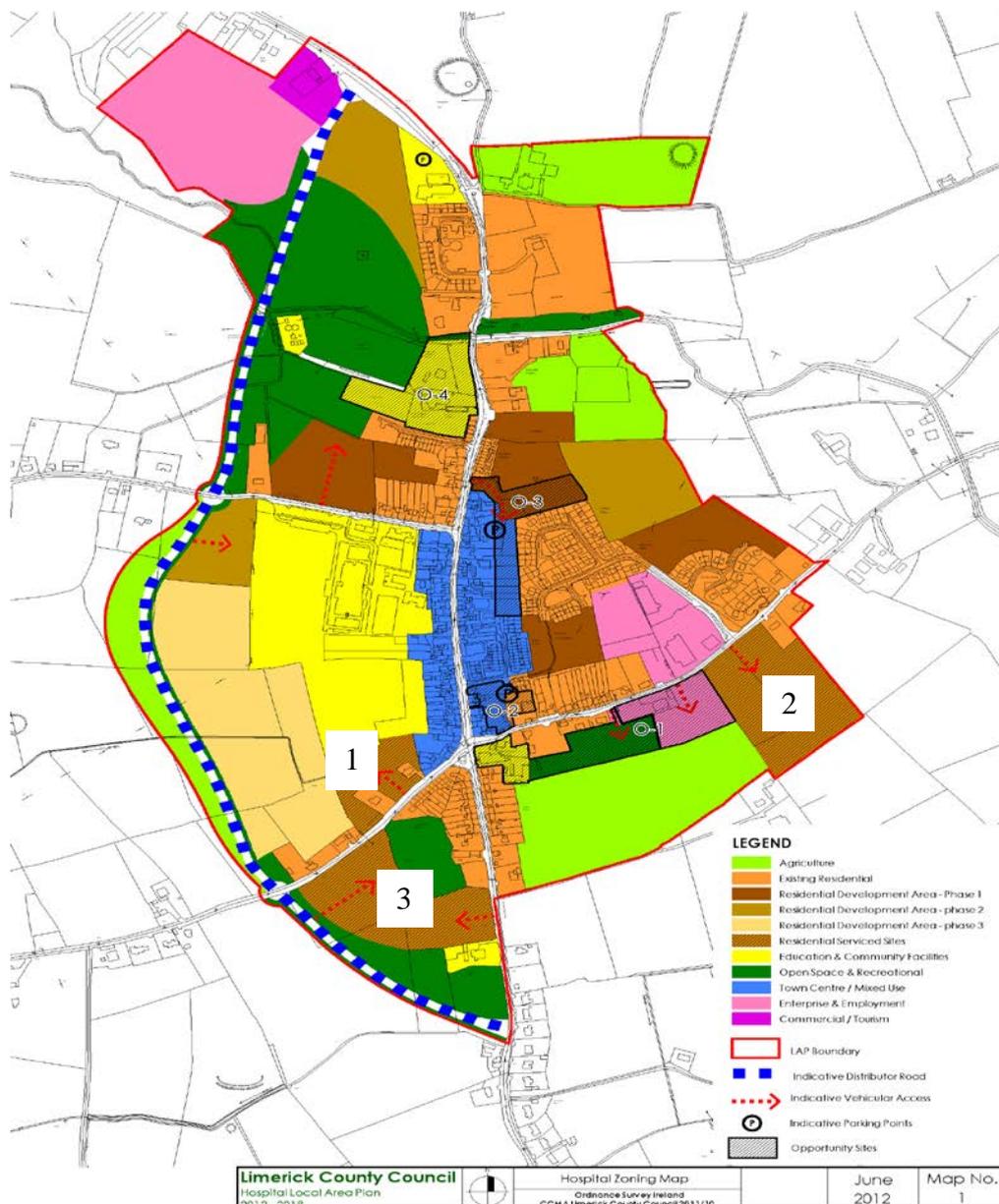
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**Appendix 1**

# 1. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING:

## 1.1 - INTRODUCTION:

This screening document is prepared for the proposed amendment to the Hospital Local Area Plan 2012 - 2018 (As Extended). The amendment to the plan is to alter the zoning matrix on page 68 of the Hospital Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018 (As Extended). The time frame of the plan has been extended until 2022. This change allows the potential development of hotel and petrol station in areas which are zoned as Residential Serviced Sites. See Figure 1. There are no changes to the zoning in the plan. There is a change to the zoning matrix, which defines the type of uses, which are generally permitted within zoned lands. Please see revised zoning matrix in Appendix 1 with the changes proposed.



**Figure 1:** Locations of Residential Serviced Site Zoning set out in the Local Area Plan 2012 - 2018 (As Extended)

## **SCREENING STATEMENT**

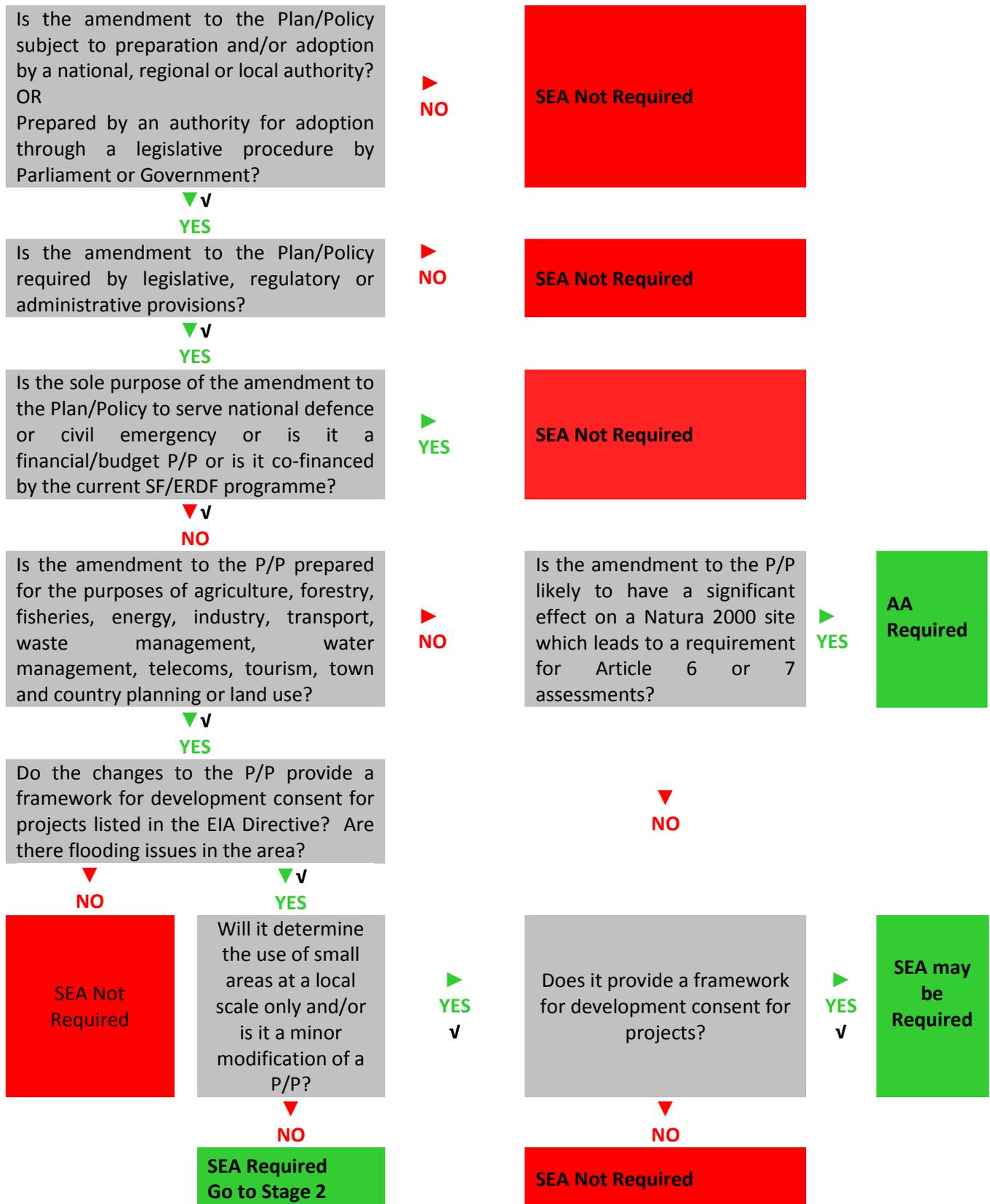
The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 - 2011 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004, SI 201 of 2011) require case by case screening of individual plans and programmes based on the criteria in Schedule 2A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (Amended). These criteria must be taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise. The current population of Hospital is 653 (Census 2016). The area within the development boundary is 111.6 ha. This is below the thresholds for mandatory SEA.

### **Stage One - Pre-Screening**

The first step in determining whether the amendment to the Hospital Local Area Plan would require an SEA involves a pre-screening check. It allows rapid screening-out of amendments of plans and policies that are clearly not going to have any environmental impact and screening-in of those that definitely do require SEA.

It is necessary to conduct screening to determine if a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the proposed amendment to the Local Area Plan is required. The Plan will provide a framework for development. Therefore it is necessary to determine whether an SEA would be required by testing the amendment against significance screening criteria. The screening assessment is based on the information drawn from the Hospital Local Area Plan and subsequent analysis carried out for the extension of the LAP in April 2017.

**Figure 2 Pre-Screening Decision Tree**



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

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

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

#### ***Characteristics of the Plan/Programme***

- i. 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;*

The Local Area Plan guides development within the settlement boundary of Hospital as defined by the plan. By allocating zoning to different land uses in accordance with Section 28 Guidelines and the requirements of the Regional Planning Guidelines. The plan guides the amount and type of development that will take place in Hospital until 2022. The amendment of the plan will allow the development of a hotel and/or petrol station on lands zoned Residential Serviced Sites, however the Local Area Plan had previously excluded these uses on this zoning. The amendment will not have any effects on population projections and hence the zoning pattern of the plan, and will continue to reflect the policy guidance and population figures of the Regional Planning Guidelines and the contents of the Core Strategy.

- ii. the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;*

The Local Area Plan, (As extended), is set within the context of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended), the Mid - West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and the provisions of relevant planning guidelines issued by the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government and the National Spatial Strategy. The plan will of course influence and guide individual projects and planning permitted within the town, both through the zoning mechanism and the policy content of the Local Area Plan.

The LAP provides a framework for the specific local development of Hospital within the policy context of the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended) and the Regional Planning Guidelines. In this regard it should be noted that the current LAP (p.36) mentions “that it is incumbent on the Planning Authority to make adequate provision for tourist accommodation proposals in appropriate locations”. The alteration of the zoning matrix will assist in achieving this objective.

- iii the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;*

The proposed amendment of the Hospital LAP 2012 - 2018 (As Extended) is being prepared under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) and takes into account relevant environmental considerations. The plan takes into account the need to incorporate the Development Plan Core strategy. The Circular letter PSSP 6/2010 *Core Strategies under the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010* and the accompanying Guidance Note on Core Strategies November 2010, mentions 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. In addition the Planning Act states that a development plan shall include objectives for:

*“The conservation and protection of the environment including, in particular, the archaeological and natural heritage and the conservation and protection of European sites and any other sites.”*

The Mahore River runs through the town and though not a designated site, is important from a fishing perspective. While much of the area within the development boundary through which the river flows is already developed, the open space zonings that exists to the north east of the town as the river runs through the town core have been retained as have the agricultural zonings to the north east. The Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation site lies 36km downstream and the retention of the open space or agricultural zonings would, by preventing the encroachments of development on the river, help to preserve water quality. On page 50 of the existing plan it says that *“the semi-natural open space of the flood plain of the Mahore reflects the potential of this area to develop interesting habitats.”* This area has been included in Objective EH4 (a) for protection and also included in Amenity and Objectives Map 3. (See AA screening documents).

*iv. Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;*

The underlying environmental issues of the Hospital LAP relate to the following:

- Sensitive development of the historic townscape of Hospital
- Avoidance of pollution to the Mahore River and development of the flood plain
- Preservation of key features of the town’s natural environment and protected structures and listed buildings.

The proposed amendment to the plan amends the land use zoning matrix to allow the development of a hotel and petrol station on the Residential Serviced Site zoned areas. In the previous plan review an area “representing the historical centre of the town” has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (Objective EH1 in the existing Plan, page 47). The ACA is retained in the proposed amended plan, ensuring that the character of the area is preserved. The retention of the agricultural zoning to the immediate north east of the town centre is important to preserve the setting of the historic core. As there is no change to the zoning this pattern is to be retained in the plan amendment.

*v. 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).*

The proposed amendment to the LAP is considered under the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended). In addition the amendment is being prepared with the Regional Planning Guidelines as a backdrop, which themselves take cognisance of Community legislation and guidelines in relation to environmental issues, which in turn are emphasised by the Guidance Note on Core Strategies referred to in (ii) above.

### ***Characteristics of the Effects and of the Area Likely to be Affected***

*i. The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects*

Changes and effects are likely as the zoning matrix guides both the amount and location of development and by allowing consideration of hotel and petrol station provision these may have visual effects greater than residential development which is already present. To counteract this it will be necessary for any proposals to be well designed in order to allow them to integrate as well as possible into the existing townscape. Changes to the built environment are generally permanent in nature and are difficult to reverse. The presence of the ACA policy (EH1 above) is expected to minimize visual intrusion and direct disturbance of the historic core.

*ii. the cumulative nature of the effects*

Cumulative negative environmental effects are likely to be localised within the plan boundaries and limited in nature. As outlined earlier, policy changes placing an emphasis on phasing and the need for flood risk assessment would generally tend to better coordinate development which would lessen overall cumulative negative effects. The proposed amendment does not expand the development footprint of the town plan as there is no expansion of the zoned area.

*iii. the trans-boundary nature of the effects*

There are no trans-boundary effects likely.

*iv. the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)*

None anticipated. There are no Seveso sites within the LAP boundary. The Waste Water Treatment Plant in its current state has limited ability to cater for further growth. It is currently at capacity and with a population equivalent of 500 and requires upgrading. In addition the drinking water supply servicing the plan area is currently on the Environmental Protection Agency's most recently published remedial action list due to inadequate treatment for cryptosporidium. These issues will have an impact on the further development in Hospital.

- v. *The magnitude and spatial extent of the affects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)*

The area that will be affected is that within the development boundary of Hospital, map attached. The population is 653. This is below the 5,000 threshold for mandatory SEA as laid down in the 2011 SEA Regulations. The area of the zoned lands include up to 111.6 ha.

- vi. *The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to*

- *Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;*

The County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended) and the Hospital Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018 (As Extended) 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
- Proposed Tree preservation Orders.
- Proposed Landscape Structure and Reinforcement.

The continued presence of the Architectural Conservation Area will help protect the built and archaeological heritage of the town.

- *exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;*

It is not expected that any environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas limited as a result of the amendment. It must be acknowledged that the Wastewater Treatment Plant is at capacity. Upgrading of the plant will be required to accommodate any expansion of development. In 2016 Irish Water in its *Assessment of Wastewater Treatment Plants in Limerick 2016*, stated the following:

*“The town of Hospital is served by a wastewater treatment plant with secondary treatment consisting of a primary settlement tank, trickling filters and humus tank. The plant is in poor structural condition and is both organically and hydraulically overloaded. The treatment plant is presently unable to meet its licence discharge emission limit values. The outfall discharges into the Mahore Stream which in turn discharges to the Camogue River which is a tributary of the Maigue River. The dilution factor in the receiving water is approximately 0.25 based on the 95 percentile flow in the stream. Analysis of the receiving water indicates that the plant is adversely affecting the water quality in the Mahore Stream which is an important feeder and spawning stream in the Maigue River catchment”.*

The inclusion of policies to maintain this upgrade as a priority (see Chapter 7), and ensure that growth takes place only in tandem with sufficient capacity in the wastewater treatment plant will reduce any pollution risks. Objective IN2 (LAP, p, 41) is specific in this regard as it says that it is “an objective of the council to ensure that wastewater infrastructure will keep

pace with development that takes place to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters.” It also goes on to say that “permission will not be granted for developments where there is any uncertainty that the developments might be premature with respect to the existing or committed capacity of existing services”.

- *Intensive land-use;*

The existing plan has already taken into account the core strategy that has resulted in rationalisation of existing zoning patterns through measures such as phasing and de-zoning. This has lessened the impact of land use by limiting the amount of land used for development by concentrating development in core areas, including brown field sites while protecting environmentally sensitive sites from development. The possible location of a hotel and petrol station would not involve any intensification of land use in that it is these central locations that are most suitable for these potential developments. It should be noted that the amendment does not call for any expansion of the development boundary or any increase in zoned lands.

*vii. The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.*

No effects anticipated, none located within the development boundary of the plan area. The retention of the Architectural Conservation Area policies has already been referred to above.

## **Stage Two – Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

At this stage in the plan amendment process, only one strategically significant environmental problem can be identified in relation to Hospital. This is the lack of capacity in the Wastewater Treatment Plant which will require upgrading in order to service any future development. Policies exist in the plan to ensure that any development takes place only in tandem with the provision of appropriate infrastructure.

Following the screening process whereby the specific context of the proposed amendment to Hospital LAP 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 for the proposed amendment to the Hospital LAP at this stage in the plan process.**

## Part 2 - FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

### 2.1 - Introduction:

This is the Stage 1 flood risk identification following the preparation of the proposed amendment to the Hospital Local Area Plan 2012 - 2018 (As Extended). It should be read in conjunction with the zoning map set out in the Plan.

### 2.2 Stage 1: Flood Risk Identification:

The Technical Appendices of the *Planning and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (November 2009 p.9)* identify the following sources of information:

- OPW Preliminary flood risk assessment indicative fluvial flood maps
  - National Coastal Protection strategy study flood and coastal erosion risk maps
  - Predictive and historic flood maps and benefiting land maps
  - Predictive flood maps produced under CFRAM studies
  - River Basin Management Plan and reports
  - Indicative assessment of existing flood risk under Preliminary flood risk assessment
  - Previous flood risk assessments
  - Advice from Office of Public Works
  - Internal consultation with Local Authority personnel, in particular water services engineers
  - Topographical maps in particular LIDAR
  - Information on flood defence condition and performance.
  - Alluvial deposition maps
  - Liable to flood markings on old 6 inch maps. In addition these maps particularly the first edition, contain information on landscape features and infrastructure such as mills and weirs that can indicate hydrological features
  - Local Libraries and newspaper reports
  - Local consultation e.g. Local groups
  - Walkover surveys to assess potential sources of flooding and likely routes of flood waters and flood defences
  - National, regional and local spatial plans and previous planning applications
- *OPW preliminary flood risk assessment indicative fluvial flood maps*

These maps do not show any flooding issues for Hospital. However maps and additional analysis were commissioned from JBA, a company that specialises in flooding matters. These indicated that part of the central portion of the village and extending along the Mahore River to the north west of the village is in 'Flood Zone A'. The more recent CFRAM mapping shows that Hospital is not at risk from flooding and it is these that are the basis of this assessment as they are more recent in origin (2016).

- *National Coastal Protection Strategy Study flood and coastal maps*

Maps for this study would not be of any assistance in dealing with specific flooding issues in Hospital.

- Predictive and historic flood maps and benefiting land maps (flood maps.ie)

These maps were consulted. Areas that are more likely to flood were identified. Benefiting lands i.e. lands that would benefit from drainage works, can be co-related to river flood plains.

- Predictive flood maps produced under CFRAM studies

These are broadly similar to the JBA flood maps that have been mentioned above and do not indicate any additional areas of concern. The zoning pattern as laid down in the current plan is sufficient to avoid any additional flood risk.

- River Basin Management Plan and reports

These do not indicate any additional flood risk information that has not already been presented in the CFRAM mapping or the JBA maps referred to above.

- *Indicative assessment of existing flood risk under Preliminary flood risk assessment*

Existing areas of flood risk as indicated above are the areas along the river and in the north western portion of the plan area. It was necessary to re-examine the zoning pattern of the plan and this was done in the review of the plan which was completed in 2012. This was done in the preparation of the current plan. The importance of the open space close to the river has already been highlighted in the plan as adopted in 2012 and the policy content of the plan in relation to flood risk updated.

- Previous flood risk assessments

Those that were submitted as part of earlier planning applications are outdated as they do not take into account the 2009 guidelines and the JBA or CFRAM studies.

- *OPW advice*

This will be sought as the amendment progresses.

- *Internal consultations with Council personnel:*

Discussions regarding drainage and flooding issues took place with Local Authority engineers, which indicated the sensitivity of the area along the river.

- *LIDAR Survey*

The Council has purchased LIDAR mapping. This has been used in the JBA study to provide more accurate information.

- *Information on flood defences and condition*

No flood defences exist within the plan area.

- *Alluvial deposition maps*

Alluvial soils are those deposited by rivers. Their extent helps to indicate the extent of historic flood events. These allied to benefiting areas in addition to historic maps (first and later editions of the six inch maps) show areas prone to flooding. The soils maps show alluvial soils in a corridor of varying width on either sides of the river as it runs through the plan area. This corridor varies in width from 50 to 200m.

- *Liable to flood markings on old 6 inch maps*

Areas liable to flood are shown on the older first edition 6 inch maps and the editions revised between 1920 and 1924. These have been imported into the local authority's GIS system. The area shown as being prone to flooding is on the northern bank of the river to the west of the town centre.

- *Local libraries and reports*

Flooding reports from the OPW website were consulted in the preparation of this assessment, these related to flood events 2.5km from the town. No flood reports were available for incidents within the plan area.

- *Local consultations*

These discussions took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2017. No additional information gathered.

- *Walkover surveys*

Walk over surveys were an important part of the groundwork associated with the plan. Such surveys helped to indicate the extent of vegetation associated with wetter ground conditions such as yellow flag iris, *juncus* spp. and creeping buttercup. Such plants are not necessarily indicative of flooding but could also be a result of poorly drained soils. Surveys also gave indications of surface ponding of water. The preliminary walkover (29<sup>th</sup> May 2017) indicates the sensitivity of the area along the river which corresponds to a great degree with the alluvial soil maps referred to above, particularly in the north western portion of the town. Part of this area has vegetation which indicates poor drainage.

- *National, regional and local spatial plans*

Insufficient detail was present in other plans or strategies in order to inform the current survey.

- *Previous planning applications*

No relevant information was found in planning application files. A flood impact assessment was submitted with a 2006 application but in the light of the new 2009 *The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidelines* and the JBA predictive flood maps, the information contained in it is judged to be outdated.

### **2.3 Conclusions:**

The zoning system within the plan has been updated in 2012 as has the policy contents of the plan. An additional area of open space and recreational use has been zoned to allow an additional buffer between development and the river. It is important that this is retained.

Future flood impact studies on the effects of the indicative distributor road (See Map 4 in the LAP) will be required when the road reaches design stage.

## Part 3 - Appropriate Assessment Screening

### 3.1: Introduction

This is an Appropriate Assessment Screening of the proposed amendment to the Hospital LAP 2012 – 2018 (As Extended), in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The amendment to the plan is a change to the zoning matrix on page 68 of the Hospital Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018 (As Extended). The time frame of the plan has been extended until 2022. This change allows the potential development of a hotel and petrol station in areas which are zoned as Residential Serviced Sites. See Figure 1 above. There are no changes to the zoning in the plan. There is a change to the zoning matrix, which defines the type of uses within zoned lands. Please see revised zoning matrix in Appendix 1 with the changes indicated.

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 were that the Proposed LAP **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) are Natura sites. There is no SAC or SPA within the boundaries of the Hospital LAP. The LAP has been formulated to ensure that land uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon this 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.

It must be acknowledged that the Wastewater Treatment Plant is at capacity. Upgrading of the plant will be required to accommodate any expansion of development. In 2016 Irish Water in its *Assessment of Wastewater Treatment Plants in County Limerick 2016* states the following:

*“The town of Hospital is served by a Wastewater Treatment Plant with secondary treatment consisting of a primary settlement tank, trickling filters and humus tank. The plant is in poor structural condition and is both organically and hydraulically overloaded. The treatment plant is presently unable to meet its licence discharge emission limit values. The outfall discharges into the Mahore Stream which in turn discharges to the Camogue River which is a tributary of the Maigue River. The dilution factor in the receiving water is approximately 0.25 based on the 95 percentile flow in the stream (licence application). Analysis of the receiving water indicates that the plant is adversely affecting the water quality in the Mahore Stream which is an important feeder and spawning stream in the Maigue River catchment”.*

The inclusion of policies in the Local Area Plan to maintain this upgrade as a priority (see Chapter 7), and ensure that growth takes place only in tandem with sufficient capacity in the wastewater treatment plant will reduce any pollution risks. Objective IN2 (LAP, p, 41) is

specific in this regard as it says that it is “an objective of the council to ensure that wastewater infrastructure will keep pace with development that takes place to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters.” It also goes on to say that “permission will not be granted for developments where there is any uncertainty that the developments might be premature with respect to the existing or committed capacity of existing services”.

The Lower River Shannon SAC site which lies 36km downstream is the eventual destination of the discharges. It is important to ensure that no development takes place which adds to the pollution load of the Mahore River. In addition to Objective IN2 referred to above, Objective EH5 (Designated Sites and Nature Conservation) offers an additional safeguard in that its purpose is to ensure that “appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided in advance of new developments thus ensuring that discharges to the river are within correct environmental limits”.

The conclusion is at this stage that the proposed amendment to the Hospital LAP **does not require** an Appropriate Assessment.

### Screening Matrix

<p><b>Brief description of the amendment to the plan:</b></p> <p>The amendment is a change to the zoning matrix on page 68 of the Hospital Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018 (As Extended). The time frame of the plan has been extended until 2022. This change allows the potential development of a hotel and/or petrol station in areas which are zoned as residential serviced sites</p>
<p>The amendment to the LAP is intended to provide additional variety in terms of the type of development that will be permitted in previously zoned residential (serviced sites)lands in the town.</p>
<p><b>Brief description of the Natura 2000 sites:</b></p> <p>There are no Natura sites within the town. The Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) site is approximately 34km to the north west of the town, which is the upper reaches of the River Maigue into which the Mahore River eventually drains. This site has been selected because of a range of riparian habitats and species such as wet woodlands, tidal mudflats, estuaries and for species such as otter, salmon and lamprey. Maintenance of high water quality is an important factor in ensuring the preservation of these habitats.</p> <p>The Galtee Mountains SAC (00646) site lies approximately 20 km to the south east while the Ballyhoura SAC site (002036) lies 18-20 km to the south.</p>
<p><b>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:</b></p> <p>The main way in which ex-situ impacts could be created is through pollution that would affect water quality downstream in the Lower River Shannon SAC site.</p> <p>The capacity issue of the existing WWTP remains a concern, (See SEA screening document). A policy limiting development, unless catered for by an improvement in the plant, is in the proposed LAP and the plan emphasises the need to upgrade the WWTP. Upgrading of the plant will be required to accommodate any further development.</p>

The inclusion of policies to upgrade the plant are present (see Chapter 7), and ensure that growth takes place only in tandem with sufficient capacity in the wastewater treatment plant which, will reduce any pollution risks. Objective IN2 (LAP, p, 41) is specific in this regard as it says that it is “an objective of the council to ensure that wastewater infrastructure will keep pace with development that takes place to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters.” It also goes on to say that “permission will not be granted for developments where there is any uncertainty that the developments might be premature with respect to the existing or committed capacity of existing services”. Objective EH5 (Designated Sites and Nature Conservation) offers an additional safeguard in that its purpose is to ensure that “appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided in advance of new developments thus ensuring that discharges to the river are within correct environmental limits”.

**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 town 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 such as wastewater infrastructure, (See SEA screening and above). The need to upgrade the Waste Water Treatment Plant is stressed in Chapter 7 of the plan.

- **Land-take**

It is not proposed to further expand the development boundary of the Local Area Plan. The amendment relates only to changes in the zoning matrix.

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

The River Shannon SAC site lies approximately 34km to the north west.

- **Resource requirements (water abstraction etc)**

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

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

In the plan there will be policies designed to ensure that the pace of development does not add to the loading of the available treatment systems and seeks to ensure that the development of infrastructure keeps pace with development. The wastewater treatment plant is at capacity and Chapter 7 of the existing plan emphasises the need to upgrade the plant.

- **Excavation requirements**

Any excavation which may be permitted within the scope of the plan will take place within the LAP boundaries and are sufficiently distant from the 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 any 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**

An additional buffer area had been provided along the river in the review of the plan in 2012. This area will prevent encroachment on the river. It is considered that the concentration of development within the plan boundary, in an area that has access to infrastructure, is preferable to more scattered development in the open countryside. This concentration of development in an area where waste can be processed is expected to result in less sources of diffuse pollution in the open countryside which would have implications for ground water. The upgrading of the WWTP referred to in the SEA Screening and above will be required to reduce any risk of pollution from development within the town boundaries.

- **Disturbance to key species**

No projects giving rise to disturbance to key species for Natura 2000 sites is likely within the boundary of the plan as no such sites are present in the plan boundary. The inclusion of policies that ensure that development takes place only in tandem with the upgrade of wastewater treatment systems helps to ensure that no ex-situ effects through water pollution issues are reduced. The need to upgrade the plant is emphasised in the amendment proposed.

- **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**

There are no Natura 2000 sites close to or within the plan area. It is not envisaged that any reductions in non-designated species density would take place both through the fact that the integrity of natural features within the boundary are respected and additional buffer areas are in place along the river. Policies exist within the current plan to conserve tree stocks within the plan boundary. In the County Development Plan the emphasis placed on the use of native species in landscaping is stressed.

- **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 boundary.

- **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 boundary is not expected to result in climate change issues that would affect the sites. Objective EH5 deals with adaptation to climate change.

**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, there are no Natura 2000 sites within the plan area or close to it. See emphasis 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 by the amending of the plan and the overall conservation objectives set out by the County Development Plan 2010 -2016 (As Extended), 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

- **Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc)**

Not applicable

**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.**

Not applicable

**Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix**

<b>Name of Project or Plan:</b>	Amendment to the Hospital Local Area Plan 2012-2018 (As Extended)
<b>Name and location of Natura 2000 sites:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code 002165) - 38km to the northwest.</li> <li>- The Galtee Mountains SAC (00646) site lies approximately 20 km to the south east</li> <li>- Ballyhoura SAC site (002036) lies 18-20 km to the south.</li> </ul>
<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
<b>Are there other projects or plans that</b>	None currently

<b>together with the project of plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?</b>			
<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>		The amendment to the LAP relates only to types of development within the town. The inclusion of policies relating to the upgrade of wastewater infrastructure means that designated sites are not likely to be affected.	
<b>Explain why these effects are not considered significant:</b>		No sites exist within the plan boundary and policies, including those set out in the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended), for the prevention of pollution, nuisance or other environmental effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.	
<b>List of Agencies Consulted: Provide contact name and telephone or email address:</b>		AA Screening Reports are sent to: The Manager, Development Applications Unit Newtown Road, Wexford.	
<b>Response to consultation</b>		Awaited	
<b>Data Collected to Carry out the Assessment</b>			
<b>Who carried out the Assessment?</b>	<b>Sources of Data</b>	<b>Level of assessment Completed</b>	<b>Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed</b>
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.

## Appendix 1

### Hospital Local Area Plan 2012 (As Extended) Land Use Planning Matrix Table 11(2) as per proposed amendment No. 1 2017

Development/ Zone	Existing / New Residential	Residential serviced sites	Enterprise & Employment	Open Space & Recreation	Town centre	Education/ Community	Agriculture	Commercial Tourism
Dwelling	/	/	X	X	O	X	X*	X
Apartments	/	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Guesthouses	O	O	X	X	/	X	X	/
Hotel	O	X <sup>o</sup>	O	X	/	X	X	/
Local Shops	O	O	X	X	/	X	X	X
Retail Warehousing	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Supermarket >900 sq.m	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Take Away	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Pub	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	O
Restaurant/Café	O	O	O	X	/	X	X	O
Cinema, Dance Hall	X	X	O	X	/	X	X	O
Conference Facilities	X	X	O	X	/	X	X	O
Community Hall Recreation	O	O	O	X	O	O	X	O
Community Hall Functions	O	O	O	X	/	O	X	O
Nursing Home / Nursing home integrated with retirement homes	O	O	O	X	O	X	X	O
Health Centre/Clinic	O	O	O	X	O	O	X	X
Hospital	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	O
Church/School	/	/	O	O	O	/	X	O
Open space/Recreational/Leisure	O	O	O	/	O	/	X	O
Office	O	O	O	X	/	X	X	O
Car Repair/Sales	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Petrol Station	X	X <sup>o</sup>	X	X	O	X	X	X
Industry General	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Light	O	X	/	X	O	X	X	O
Wholesale/Warehouse	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Logistics	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X
Agricultural Machinery	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Garden Centre	O	O	O	X	O	X	X	O
Amusement Arcade	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Advertising Panel	X	X	O	X	/	X	X	X
Hair Dressing salon	O	O	O	X	/	X	X	X
Bank	O	O	O	X	/	X	X	X
Group Housing, Halting Sites & Transient sites for Travellers	O	O	O	X	O	X	X	X
Childcare Facilities	/	/	O	X	/	O	X	O
Bring Centre	/	/	O	X	/	/	/	O
Recycling Centre (e.g. Bottle Banks)	O	O	O	O	/	/	O	O
Burial Ground	O	O	O	O	O	X	/	O
Allotments	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Key = / Generally Permitted O Open for Consideration X Generally not permitted. \* Except for farmer or son / daughter of landowner where rural housing need demonstrated in accordance with the rural housing policy as set out in the Limerick County Development Plan

