

CAHERCONLISH LOCAL AREA PLAN 2012 – 2018

Chief Executive's report submitted to Elected Members in accordance with Section 19 (1)(d) and 19(1)(e) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) in relation to the deferral of making a new Local Area Plan

3rd November 2017

Forward / Strategic Planning



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

Part 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background

The Caherconlish Local Area Plan (LAP) 2012 – 2018 is the main public statement of planning policies and objectives for the town of Caherconlish. The Plan was adopted by Limerick County Council on 17th December 2012 and is due to expire in December 2018. There have been no amendments to the plan since its adoption.

Section 19 (1) (c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) requires that the process of reviewing an existing LAP should commence not later than 6 years after the adoption of the previous plan. However, the Planning and Development Amendment Act 2010 introduced a new provision whereby a Planning Authority may, as they consider appropriate, by resolution extend the life of an existing local area plan for a further period not exceeding 5 years.

1.2 Statutory Procedure

The Planning Authority may, as they consider appropriate, by resolution, defer the sending of notices to commence the review of a Local Area Plan. No resolution shall be passed until such time as the members of the Planning Authority notify the Chief Executive of the decision of the Authority to defer the sending or publishing of the notices, giving reasons, and having sought and obtained from the Chief Executive:

- An opinion that the LAP remains consistent with the objectives and the core strategy of the relevant Development Plan,
- An opinion that the objectives of the LAP have not been substantially secured, and confirmation that the sending and publishing of the notices be deferred and the period for which they may be deferred.

If the elected members accept the Chief Executive's recommendation that the current Caherconlish LAP is consistent with the objectives of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended) and its core strategy, and are in agreement that during the lifetime of the LAP that the objectives of the plan have not been substantially secured. The Elected Members may determine by resolution that it would be appropriate to defer the process for making a new plan, for an agreed time period.

Following the making of any such decision, a public notice to this effect is required to be published in a newspaper circulating in the area of the local area plan not later than 2 weeks after the resolution is passed by members.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to set out the opinion of the Chief Executive that:

- a) The Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018 remains consistent with the objectives and the core strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended);
- b) The objectives of the LAP have not been substantially secured to date;
- c) The sending and publishing of notices to make or review the plan may be deferred and the period for which they may be deferred.

Part 2 - Compliance with the Core Strategy of Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended)

2.1 Introduction

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act (Amended), a Core Strategy is required to demonstrate how the Development Plan is consistent with the National Spatial Strategy, Regional Planning Guidelines, Government Policies and Ministerial guidelines/directives. Local Area Plans, in turn, must be consistent with the Development Plan.

The Core Strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 (As Extended) outlines population targets and housing land requirements for County Limerick, which were allocated by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, at national level and distributed at regional level by the Mid West Regional Authority. The Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) 2010 - 2022 have allocated a population target of an additional 32,800 people for County Limerick up to the year 2022. Based on this population target, the core strategy has allocated a specific population target for each settlement.

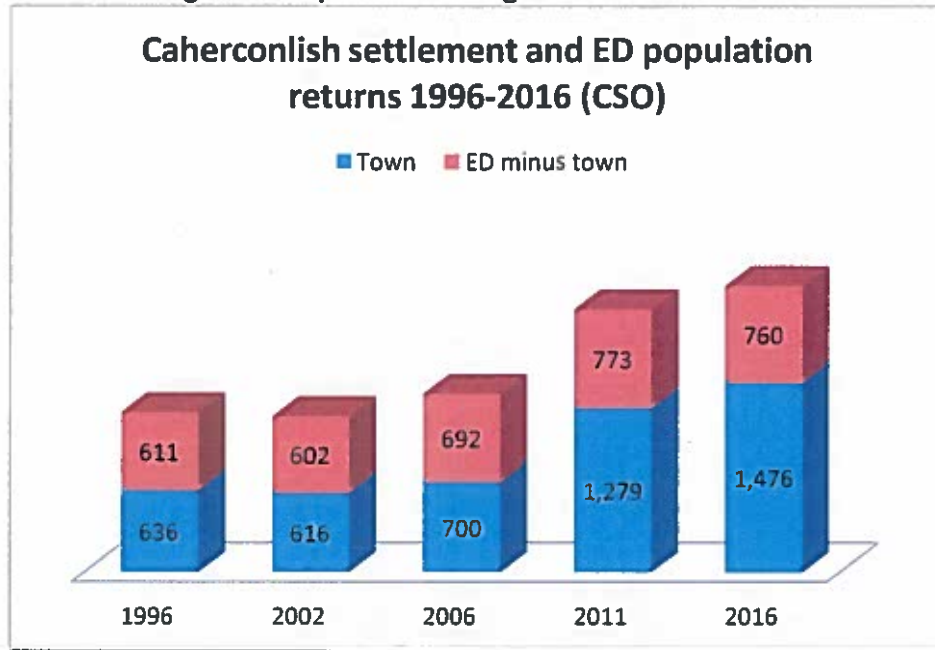
The population target for Caherconlish in the Core Strategy was for an additional 305 people by 2022, 170 of which were to be in Phase One, to the end of the Plan period, by the end of 2018. This equates to a requirement for 113 additional housing units by 2022, which with the densities proposed, including medium low densities and very low densities for serviced sites, would require at least 9.56 hectares in total by 2022. On a pro-rata basis, 63 houses are required by 2018, the end year of the Local Area Plan, requiring 5.33 hectares of land.

2.2 Settlement Strategy

Caherconlish is designated to Tier 4 in the Settlement Strategy in the County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 (As Extended). It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of settlements in Tier 2 - 6, and Objectives SS 01 – 08 apply; including Objective SS07 Monitoring growth which requires the Council to monitor growth patterns and pace of growth in settlements and apply appropriate management measures.

The 2011 total population census figure for the town was 1,279, which is an increase of 579 people during 2006 – 2011. Refer to Figure 1 below. It was acknowledged in the Local Area Plan with the benefit of the 2011 Census Returns, that the growth of the town by 2011 had already exceeded the original growth target that was set for the town in the County Development Plan for 2022. In this context it was decided to revise the target so that the additional population of 305 would apply to the new base of 2011 instead of the original population base of 2006.

Figure 1: Population Change Caherconlish Town



Source: CSO Census 2006 – 2016

The table below is an extract from the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2012 - 2018, indicating the additional population, number of units, and zoned land required up to 2022, and pro-rata within the Plan period, to comply with the revised strategy for the town.

Table 1 – Population targets and Housing requirements as per the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2012 - 2018

Year	2006 population base (CSO)	2011	2016 projections	2018 projections	2022 targets
Population Core Strategy, estimates and targets	700	795*	891	929	1,005**
Total population and targets adjusted for 2011 CSO returns		1,279	1,400	1,449	1,584***
Additional housing units required (cumulative)			45	63	113
Zoned land in hectares, required including headroom (ha) in cumulative totals				5.33	9.56

* This is an estimate derived from the Core Strategy, which was prepared prior to the 2011 Census. All estimates are based on the assumption that the population growth will progress evenly from 2006 to the 2022 population target.

** This is the population target for which provision was made in the Core Strategy. By subtracting from this the figures in the relevant columns for previous years one can derive the additional population to be accommodated over given time periods. Therefore 1,005 minus 700 is equal to 305 additional population to be accommodated from the year 2006.

*** The additional population in the Local Area Plan over the 2006 base is 884. This is over twice that which was provided for in the Core Strategy, but most of this growth occurred between 2006 and 2011. 305 additional people are to be accommodated up to 2022 that is the same number as provided for in the Core Strategy, allowing the town to grow by 24% over eleven years.

Since 2011 the population growth has continued such that it accords broadly with the revised growth rate. The population was 1,476 in 2016. The growth occurred despite there being very limited residential development since the adoption of the Plan, there were only 7 more units recorded as being occupied in the 2016 Census than in 2011. The following two factors must be taken into account in explaining this apparent anomaly:

- 76 of the population in 2016 were in communal establishments (the nursing home), (there were none in 2011). The population in permanent private households actually increased from 1,279 in 2011 to 1,476 in 2016.
- The average household size has also increased from 2.72 to 3.08 in that period, indicating that most of the growth has been accounted for growing families, reflecting the importance of young families in the settlement.

While the population of the town has growth since the adoption of the Local Area Plan, beyond what was set out in the Core Strategy, the amount of undeveloped zoned lands remains the same, none of the lands have developed since the adoption of the plan. The Local Authority acknowledges that the Core Strategy as set out in the County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 (As Extended) requires review, this will be carried out in the review of the City and County Development Plan, which will commence on adoption of the Regional, Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Region.

The residential unit and land requirements by 2018, the end of the Plan period, are stated as follows:

Table 2: Additional population, residential units and zoned land requirements

	A	B	C
	Residential Development Area	Serviced sites	Total required (A+B)
Additional units required	50	13	63
Additional area required-including headroom (ha.)	3.44	1.89	5.33

2.3 Capacity of Existing Zoned Land

The table below demonstrates that there is sufficient land zoned to meet the core strategy requirements.

Table 3: Residential land requirements and zoned lands

	2018 zoned land required (ha.)	2022 zoned land Required (ha.)	Phase 1	Phase 2
New Residential	3.44	2.73	3.58	2.7
Residential Serviced Sites	1.89	1.5	2.09	1.74
Total	5.33	4.23	5.67	4.44
Of which developed since 2012			0.00	0.00
Remainder			5.67	4.44

2.4 Economic Development

The total area zoned for Enterprise and Employment is 8.02 hectares. This is comprised of two blocks of land, both of which are north of the town to facilitate access by HGVs via the Regional Road (R513) to the National Road (N24), two kilometres to the north without necessitating going through the town centre. In respect of the two areas concerned, the zoning in the previous 2008 Local Area Plan was for 'Mixed Use' in one of these sites (north-east of Lynch's corner), and 'Enterprise and Employment' in the other (in Knockatancashlane). In both cases for different reasons the areas covered by zoning was reduced, the former site because of flood risk. A new area of Mixed Use was added along the Regional Road (R513), of 0.508 hectares, replacing its previous zoning as 'Residential'.

There were no additional lands zoned to accommodate retail in the Local Area Plan, which is the area of established business along the main street in the town centre. The governing objective for retail business in the Local Area Plan is to 'enhance the vitality and viability of Caherconlish as a retail service centre' (Objective ED4) and this is consistent with the key objective of the Retail Strategy for the Mid West Region 2010, incorporated into the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended), to support the town centre.

There have been no significant developments since 2012 to compel a review of the 'Enterprise and Employment, Retail or Mixed Use objectives; the objectives remains to be secured in the positive manner in which they were framed.

2.5 Infrastructure and Transport

Waste Water Treatment

The design capacity of the Caherconlish Wastewater Treatment Plant is 2,500 Population Equivalent (PE) with an actual PE of 961 in 2015. Therefore there is still capacity in the wastewater treatment plant to cater for development.

Water Supply

With regard to water supply, there are no issues with either yield or treatment.

Transport

The following are the objectives concerning Transport in the Local Area Plan:

- New road network to facilitate development of backlands (Objective T1a)
- Improvement of the junction between the Local Road (L5096) and the Regional Road (R513) 'Lynches corner' (Objective T1b), and as part of the works, to install suitable pedestrian crossing points at the junction and a footpath along the Local Road (L5096) between Whitethorns and the junction with Barrack Street.
- Provide a network of footpaths and cycle facilities to the east and west of the town associated with areas zoned for new development (Objective T2)
- Facilitate measures in support of public transport (Objective T3)
- Improvement of existing road network and the provision of off street car parks (Objective T4)

These objectives were given further articulation in guidelines and recommendations in the Urban Design chapter, including provision of two new off street parking areas to the east of Barrack Street, and the upgrading of the parking area in front of the Roman Catholic parish church.

In respect of roads and the access network generally the following is a list of works have been undertaken since 2012 or for which, there are specific proposals at plan stage:

- Resurfacing and lining of car park in front of the church was finished in 2013 with an allocation from the Development Fund.
- A signalised pedestrian crossing and a speed radar sign on the Regional Road (R513) approach were installed to the north of the town.
- The upgrading of the junction at Lynches Corner between the Local Road (L5096) and Regional Road (R513) is the subject of a current 'Part 8' proposal (17/8000).
- Improvements have been made to footpaths in and around The Square.

Flood Risk Management

The Local Plan contains an Objective IN4 in respect of Flood Risk Management. The commitment of the Local Authority is stated in this Objective to the implementation of the recommendations as set out in ministerial guidelines "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Nov 2009", and any subsequent guidelines. Caherconlish was covered by a preliminary flood risk assessment undertaken by JBA for the whole county in 2009: areas of flood risk according to that assessment comprised of an area in the town centre including the central square and Barrack Street, and a large part of a field to the north-east of the town along the Groody. The more recent OPW CFRAM's study did not cover Caherconlish.

The positions as set out Objective IN4 as described below need not be altered since the adoption of the Local Area Plan as there have been no developments or proposed development that would require a reframing of these objectives:

- The areas of risk that are undeveloped were zoned 'Open Space and Recreational' in the Local Area Plan.
- For areas with pre-existing uses that are deemed at risk from flooding it was stated that only limited development such as extensions or modifications to the existing structures would be permitted.

2.6 Community and Amenity

There is a primary school to the north of the town. Other community facilities include the community hall (the Millennium Centre) with a playground adjacent to it; a Garda station; a post office, a credit union; a clinic and a branch library. In terms of organised outdoor sports facilities in the town and its immediate environs, there is a soccer club, a GAA club (to the immediate south of the Plan area) and a tennis club (again beyond the Plan area on the Ballyneety Road). Full planning permission was granted for a primary health care centre in the north of the town (Planning Ref.10/1159), however this has not commenced and the planning permission has since lapsed.

The objectives in respect of community and amenity are grouped as follows:

- Protect existing community facilities by appropriate zoning
- Protect sites suitable for needed community facilities, including a new primary school, from other development.
- Encourage the development of amenity cycleways and pathways, indicative routes for which were identified.

The playground has since been constructed close to the community centre. The other objectives remain relevant and are yet to be secured.

2.7 Environment and Heritage

The town's environmental objectives address the following:

- Protection of its architectural heritage - (Objectives EH1) (List of Protected Structures)
- Protection of its Archaeological heritage – (Objective EH2)
- Tree Protection and protection of designated habitats – (Objectives EH4 and EH5)

There are 6 structures listed in the Record of Protected Structures located in Caherconlish. The old Church of Ireland church was made safe, and using a grant from the Structures at Risk fund in 2013, a condition survey and consolidation methodology was commissioned and implemented. The local community have tidied up the adjacent graveyard and surrounding open space.

2.8 Urban Design and Town Renewal

The Caherconlish LAP provides guidance to assist prospective applicants to address aspects of planning and design that the planning authority will be taking into account when assessing applications for future development. Property vacancy and unfinished estates were noted as twin problems afflicting the town in the Local Area Plan. There were two derelict site notices in the town centre, these have since closed with improvements to the appearance of the structures concerned, although both properties concerned remain vacant. The overall level of vacancy has reduced, principally due to the finishing of estates and the successful sale and occupancy of houses in these estates. The major scheme of Ceoil na hAbhann to the north of the town has been completed and the large field in front of it has been levelled and fully seeded; the nursing home in the north of the scheme is now fully operating and the sheltered houses to the rear of the nursing home have been fully completed.

- 29 properties out of 524 are listed as 'vacant' in the Geodirectory in 2017 compared to 59 out of 524 in 2012.
- The level of vacancy in the town centre is still high although it has improved slightly since 2012. An assessment carried out in September 2017, found 8 units of the total of 51 units zoned 'Town Centre' (residential and commercial use) are listed as vacant, this is 16%; this compares to 11 of the 51 sites being listed as 'vacant' in the 2014 geodirectory.

Four 'Opportunity Areas' were identified in the town as bearing potential for enhancement of the public realm and preliminary design briefs were outlined in the LAP. Since the adoption of the plan there has been little progression in developing these lands; the one exception is the resurfacing of the car park in front of the local parish church, which was identified as Opportunity Site 4.

2.9 Environmental Considerations

The Caherconlish 2012 – 2018 LAP was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The LAP incorporated appropriate land use zoning, policies and objectives to ensure the implementation of the LAP will not result in significant effects on the environment in accordance with the SEA Directive and Regulations and in compliance with the associated objectives of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 (As Extended).

Part 3 - General overview of planning applications and Part 8s for development in the area since the adoption of the LAP

Due to the economic downturn there has been very little development in the area since the adoption of the LAP. The following is a brief summary of permissions granted in the area under the various land uses of the LAP since 2012; and developments that have occurred on foot of planning permissions and Part 8's.

Residential

There have been no significant permissions granted for residential development since the adoption of the Local Area Plan in December 2012. The permission for a 101 unit housing scheme development in the north-east of the town off the Carrigareely road expired in April 2013. A Part 8 for ten housing units in Gragane remains un-developed.

Retail and Tourism

The following have been the list of permissions granted for retail development since the adoption of the Local Area Plan in December 2012.

- Shop front and off licence in O'Sullivan's Centra (15/292), granted and commenced
- Change of use of vacant retail premises from retail to snooker hall (16/435), amalgamate with adjacent public house (Mulcahy's) in Barrack. This was granted and commenced.

Education and Community

A community playground has been established adjacent to the Millennium Centre by Caherconlish/Caherline Local Community Council in accordance with planning permission in 2011 and supported by a scheme of assistance.

Industrial and Enterprise

There have been no proposals for industry and enterprise in the plan period.

Part 4 - Conclusion and Recommendation

Having regard to the lack of development in the area since 2012 there are a considerable number of policies and objectives that have not been secured.

In summary, it is the opinion of the Chief Executive that:

- The Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2012 - 2018 is consistent with the objectives and Core Strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 (As Extended).
- The objectives of the Caherconlish Local Area Plan have not been substantially secured.
- The sending and publishing of notices to review the existing LAP may be deferred for a period of 5 years. Therefore the lifespan of the Caherconlish LAP 2012 - 2018 should be extended for a further five years.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the following resolution be approved by the Council:

‘Having considered the Chief Executive’s report, the Council resolves to extend the life of the Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2012, by a further 5 years, from today’s date, in accordance with the provisions of Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act 2010 (which amends section 19 of the Principal Act) and provides for the extension of the valid life of a Local Area Plan.’



**Dr. Pat Daly,
Director of Service,
Economic Development Directorate**

