



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

**Limerick City**  
& County Council

Forbairt Gheilleagrach,  
Ceanncheathrú Chorporáideach,  
Cé na gCeannaithe,  
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17<sup>th</sup> August 2018

**To the Mayor and each Member of the Metropolitan District of Limerick**

**Re: Proposal to extend the life of the Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013-2019**

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A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

I enclose herewith a copy of the Chief Executive's Report on the proposal to extend the life of the Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019 for your consideration.

The Elected Members, of the Metropolitan District of Limerick at their September meeting shall consider the Chief Executive's Report and decide by resolution whether to defer the sending of a notice under Section 20(3)(a)(i) to make a new Local Area Plan and instead extend the life of the Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019 by a further 5 years.

If you have any queries on the report please contact Karen Burke, A/Senior Executive Planner, on 061-557480

Mise le Meas,

**Dr. Pat Daly,**  
Deputy Chief Executive



# Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019

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

17<sup>th</sup> September 2018



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Forward/Strategic Planning,  
Economic Development Directorate,  
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## **Part 1 - Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

The Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013 – 2019 is the main public statement of planning policies and objectives for the town of Castleconnell. The Plan was adopted by Limerick County Council on the 21 October 2013, and is due to expire in November 2019. 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, if considered appropriate, by resolution to 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, if considered 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, and/or
- 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 of the Metropolitan District of Limerick accept the Chief Executive's recommendation, that the current Castleconnell 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 the objectives of the plan have not been substantially secured within the life time of the plan, they 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 the Members.

#### **1.2.1 Purpose of this report**

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

- a) The Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019, 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; and
- 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 2000 (Amended), a Core Strategy is required to demonstrate how the Development Plan is consistent with the National Planning Framework, existing Regional Planning Guidelines, (Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies when Published), Government Policies and Ministerial guidelines / directives. Local Area Plans, in turn, must be consistent with the Development Plan.

The Core Strategy set out in 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 Castleconnell in the Core Strategy was for an additional 301 people by 2019 and a further 113 people by 2022. This equates to a requirement for 161.5 additional housing units by 2019 and a further 61 units by 2022, which with the densities proposed, including medium low densities and very low densities for serviced sites, would require at least 13.65 hectares to 2019 and an additional 5.16 hectares in total by 2022.

### 2.2 Settlement Strategy, population, zoned land requirements, and capacity of existing zoned land for residential use to accommodate additional population

Castleconnell is designated as a Tier 3 settlement in the settlement hierarchy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended). It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of settlements in Tiers 2-6, and Objectives SS 01 – 08 apply; including Objective SS07, which requires the Council to monitor growth patterns and pace of growth in settlements and apply appropriate management measures.

Despite the recent economic downturn, Castleconnell experienced population growth. Refer to Table 1 below.

**Table 1 - Total Population of Castleconnell and percentage change per census year 1991 - 2016**

Year	Population	Population change	%
1991	1,391	-	
1996	1,414	+1.7%	
2002	1,343	- 5%	
2006	1,330	- 1%	
2011	1,917	+44.1%	
2016	2,107	+9.9%	

Source: CSO Census

The Table below is an extract from the Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019, 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 Core Strategy.

**Table 2 – Population Targets and Housing requirements as per the Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019**

Year	2006	2011	2019	2022
Total population	1330	1917	2218	2331
Additional Population	-	587	301	113
Additional housing units required	-	-	161.50	61
Zoned land required to accommodate additional housing units (including additional 50% headroom) – hectares	-	-	13.65	5.16

### 2.3 Capacity of existing zoned lands

There are 14.05 hectares zoned as new residential development and serviced sites as Phase 1 in the current LAP, with a further 3.8 hectares zoned as Phase 2 new residential development and 7.61 hectares as Phase 3 new residential development. Therefore, there is sufficient land zoned contained in the Castleconnell Local Area Plan for residential use (residential development and serviced sites) to satisfy the core strategy requirements of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended).

**Table 3 – Residential Zoned lands required and zoned in hectares (Ha)**

Land Use	Required 2019 (Ha)	Required 2022 (Ha)	Zoned Lands (Ha)			Lands developed or committed since 2013		
			Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Committed (Ha)	Balance 2019	Balance 2022
New Residential	8.8	12.13	8.17	3.8	7.61	0	8.8	12.13
Residential Serviced Sites	4.85	6.68	5.88	0	0	1.203*	3.647	5.477
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.65</b>	<b>18.81</b>	<b>14.05</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>7.61</b>	<b>1.203</b>	<b>12.447</b>	<b>18.81</b>

\*Only one planning application for residential development consisting of six serviced sites on land zoned Residential Serviced Sites Phase 1 was granted, since 2013 under planning ref: 15/171.

## **2.4 Economic Development**

The following summarises development on lands zoned in the 2013 - 2019 Local Area Plan.

### **Enterprise and Employment**

In relation to the lands zoned for Enterprise and Employment, 6.72 hectares are zoned for this purpose at Coolreiry in Castleconnell. There has been no development on these lands since the adoption the LAP. In accordance with the current Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines in relation to rural areas, suitable uses include internationally trades services, ICT and software development, small-scale workshops/enterprises in agri-business, and crafts as stated in the LAP. Having regard to the amount of undeveloped enterprise and employment zoned land the objectives relating to economic development throughout the plan have not been secured and remain relevant to the sustainable development of the Castleconnell.

### **Village Centre, retail and commercial development, and tourism**

The 2013 LAP zoned 4.52 hectares as Village Centre in the Plan. The purpose of this land use zone is to the protect and enhance the character of the Castleconnell village centre, and to provide for improved retail, residential, commercial, office cultural and other appropriate uses, in the interest of a well-functioning sustainable community capable of accommodating future population growth. Six permissions have been granted on lands zoned village centre since the adoption of the Local Area Plan. Refer to Part 3, Table 4 below.

The Castleconnell Local Area Plan was prepared in accordance with 2010 'Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region', which was incorporated into Limerick County Development Plan on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010. The strategy provides guidance on the need for new retail floor space and location of floor space, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. The central key objective arising from the Retail Strategy is to support the town centre, utilising the sequential approach in the context of the retail hierarchy, and to promote the vitality and viability of existing centres. In line with national planning guidance and appropriate sustainable development the objectives of the LAP relating the village centre, commercial development remain relevant to Castleconnell.

### **Tourism**

The local community continue to develop its tourism product with the support of the Local Authority. The Castleconnell Heritage Centre is located in the ACME community building on Castle Street and makes available to the public resources on local history. The LAP encourages the growth of tourism while safeguarding the local natural and built heritage. The objectives of the LAP relating to tourism remain relevant to Castleconnell.

## **2.5 Infrastructure and Transport**

### **Waste Water Treatment and water supply**

Irish Water is the national water utility responsible for water and wastewater services. The Council remains closely involved in local provision as an agent of Irish Water in the operation and maintenance of services within its administrative area. Irish Water has confirmed that there is adequate water and wastewater capacity to serve Castleconnell, and to cater for the proposed development set out in the Local Area Plan. Any proposals for development remains subject to pre-connection discussions/agreements with Irish Water.

## **Transport**

It is the policy of the Council to improve accessibility and the objectives of the LAP remain relevant to Castleconnell. The Council remains guided by national policy in relation to the transport issues.

## **Flooding**

The Local Authority is committed to managing flood risk in accordance with the principles set out in Ministerial Guidelines "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Nov 2009", and OPW data and advice as stated in the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended) . The Local Authority will continue to apply a precautionary approach based on predictive flood risk study undertaken by JBA Consulting on behalf of Limerick County Council. This is illustrated on Map 4 in the Castleconnell Local Area Plan and planning applications in the area at risk of flooding require a comprehensive flood risk assessment to support the application. The objectives in relation to infrastructure remain relevant for Castleconnell.

## **2.6 Community and recreation**

The community supported by the Local Authority works tirelessly to develop amenities in the town, including the community playground, the community creché, the community hall, and Limerick Youth Services located in the ACME centre on Castle Street. Many community events take place annually including community events during Heritage Week, the Castleconnell Concert Series in All Saints Church, the Worlds End triathlon, and the Castleconnell road race and regatta. The town as a designated Slí na Sláinte route. The riverside and Castleconnell Bog offers further opportunities for outdoor amenity use. The objectives of the 2013 -2019 LAP in relation to community and recreation remain relevant to the town.

## **2.7 Environment and heritage**

The Castleconnell LAP 2013 - 2019 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 (Extended). Given the lack of development since the adoption of the LAP it is considered that the extension of duration of the LAP will not result in significant effects on the environment in accordance with the SEA Directive and Regulations and remains in compliance with the objectives of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010- 2016 (As Extended).

There are 37 no. Protected Structures within the LAP boundary. There have been no additions or removals of Protected Structures within the LAP boundary since the adoption of the LAP. Since the adoption of the Castleconnell LAP, the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) was established under the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. Its purpose is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. The NIAH provides the basis for the recommendations of the Minister<sup>1</sup> to the planning authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures (RPS). There are 48 no. structures located

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<sup>1</sup> Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

within the Castleconnell LAP boundary on the NIAH list<sup>2</sup>. The Local Authority is considering commencing the legal process for adding some of these structures to the Record of Protected Structures.

There are 9 No. Recorded Monuments located in the townlands Stradbally North, Coolbane and Cloon and Commons. The list of the Record of Monuments and Places is maintained and updated by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. There have been no new Recorded Monuments within the boundary since the adoption of the 2013 -2019 LAP.

The objectives of the Local Area Plan 2013 -2019 for environment and built heritage remain applicable to Castleconnell.

## **2.8 Urban design, derelict and vacant sites**

The Castleconnell LAP provides guidance to assist prospective applicant's to address aspects of planning and design that the planning authority will be taking into account when assessing applications for future development. Eight sites were identified in the town as opportunity sites and preliminary design briefs were outlined in the LAP. Since the adoption of the LAP there has been no progression in developing these lands.

In 2013, there was one derelict site located in St. Patrick's Villas entered in the Derelict Sites Register under the Derelict Sites Act 1990. Since the adoption of the LAP, this site has been removed from the register as it is no longer deemed derelict, as remedial works were undertaken to the satisfaction of the Council. The Local Authority have secured approval to construct of 4 no. residential units on this site). No new entries to the Derelict Sites Register have been made since the adoption of the LAP.

Limerick City and County Council established a Vacant Sites Register in 2017 as required by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015. The purpose of the register is to identify vacant sites subject to a levy if the site remains vacant/idle according the provisions of the Act. The Council is required to review the register across the City and County. There are no vacant sites listed on the Vacant Site Register published July 2018, located in Castleconnell.<sup>3</sup>

The LAP highlighted vacancy as an issue in the Castle Centre, Bruach na Sionna and in Castle Rock. The 2011 Census figures recorded 164 vacant dwellings in the Castleconnell, which was 18% of the total housing stock at the time. In the 2016 Census figures records 86 vacant households, which is a 9.7% residential vacancy rate at the most recent census. It is noted that the Census settlement boundary for the Castleconnell is larger than the LAP boundary as the Census boundary extends to Daly's Cross.

An assessment carried out in July 2018; found that there were 6 no. retail/commercial ground floor units vacant in the village core on Main Street/Castle Street and Coolbawn. Unfortunately, a number of these vacant retail/commercial units are very visible, being local landmarks and prominent on the streetscape, for example Worell's Inn, the Ramble Inn and Shannon House. The local community received planning permission to convert the Shannon House (former public house) into a community centre under Planning Reference 13/204. The

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to [www.buildingsofireland.ie](http://www.buildingsofireland.ie)

<sup>3</sup> Refer to [limerick.ie/vacant-sites](http://limerick.ie/vacant-sites)

voluntary agency St. Vincent de Paul occupies 3 no. commercial units off Main Street in Bruach na Sionna.

In terms of residential vacancy in the village, centre the preliminary assessment records 9 no. vacant residential units on Main Street, Castle Street and Coolbawn. It is noted that 6 no. of these vacant units at Castle Centre were recently completed and are ready for occupation. Vacancy remains an issue in the village centre. The objectives for the village in the 2013 - 2019 LAP in relation to land use zoning, vacancy and urban design remains relevant.

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

The following is a brief summary of notable planning applications in the LAP area since 2013.

**Table 4 Planning applications of note, granted since the adoption of the 2013 LAP on lands zoned village centre, residential and open space**

Land use	Planning Ref:	Description
Village centre	17/726	Change of use from public house to community centre which was preceded by ref: 13/204 granted for the retention of the change of use from residence to café
	17/423	Change of use of six ground floor retail units to 6 residential units
	16/889	Change of use from retail unit to crèche
	15/714	Retention of take-away
	14/868	Change of use of restaurant to dance studio and office
	13/147	Change of use from bookie office to hair salon
Residential – serviced sites	15/171	Permission for 6 No. serviced sites, with consequent permissions 17/1011, 17/9363 16/927, 16/963, 16/112,
Open Space and recreation	13/510	Extension to boat shed – Castleconnell Boatclub
Existing residential	18/8003	Local Authority development of 4 residential units – approval secured

### Part 4 - Conclusion and recommendation

Having regard to the limited development since, the adoption of the Local Area Plan 2013 - 2019, there are a considerable number of policies and objectives that remain relevant and are yet to be secured.

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

- The Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013-2019, is consistent with the objectives and core strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (As Extended).
- The objectives of the Castleconnell 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 Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013-2019 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 Planning Authority resolves to extend the life of the Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2013, by a further 5 years, from today's date, in accordance with the provisions of Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act (Amended), which provides for the extension of the valid life of a Local Area Plan.



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**Pat Daly,**  
**Deputy Chief Executive**