



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

Forbairt Gheilleagrach,
Ceanncheathrú Chorparáideach,
Cé na gCeannaithe,
Luimneach

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22nd March 2019

To the Cathaoirleach and each Member of the Municipal District of Newcastle West

Re: Proposal to extend the life of the Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020

A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

I enclose herewith a copy of the Chief Executive's Report on the proposal to extend the life of the Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020 for your consideration.

The Elected Members, of the Municipal District of Newcastle West at their April 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 Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020 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,
Director of Economic Development

Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020

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

22nd March 2019

Forward/Strategic Planning Section,
Economic Development Directorate,
Limerick City and County Council,
Merchants Quay,
Limerick



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Part 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background

The Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020 is the main public statement of planning policies and objectives for the town of Newcastle West. The Plan was adopted by Limerick County Council on the 7th July 2014, and is due to expire in August 2020. 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 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 accept the Chief Executive's recommendation, that the current Newcastle West 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 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 Newcastle West Local Area Plan(LAP) 2014 - 2020, 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 (Extended)

2.1 Introduction

In accordance with the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (Amended) a Core Strategy is required to demonstrate how the Development Plan is consistent with the National Planning Framework (which has replaced the national Spatial Strategy), Regional Planning Guidelines (which will be replaced by the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, when adopted), 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 including Newcastle West.

The population target for Newcastle West in the Core Strategy was for an additional 2,721 people between the 2011 Census and 2020, and a further 604 people by 2022. This equates to 1,695 additional housing units by 2020 and a further 376 units by 2022. At the national recommended densities of 35 units per hectare for new residential developments, and 10 units per hectare for serviced sites, 90 hectares of land is required to accommodate the 1,695 residential units required to provide for the projected population growth to 2020.

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

Newcastle West designated as a Tier 2 key service settlement in the settlement hierarchy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended). Policy SSP 7 of the County Development Plan states it is the policy to;

*'..promote Newcastle West and Kilmallock as the key service centres in West and South Limerick areas and to promote the sustainable growth of these towns. ...In this regard it is the policy of the Council to ensure that sufficient land is zoned within these settlements so that they can act as the primary focus for investment in infrastructure, housing, transport, employment, education, shopping, health facilities and communities.'*¹

Objectives SS 01 – 08 of the CDP apply; including Objective SS07 which requires the Council to monitor growth patterns and pace of growth in settlements and apply appropriate management measures.

¹ Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As extended)

Despite the recent economic recession Newcastle West experienced some population growth. Refer to Table 1 below.

Table 1 Total Population of Newcastle West and percentage change per census year 1991 - 2016

Census	Population Total	Population Change %
1991	4,306	-
1996	4,373	+1.55
2002	4,800	+9.76
2006	5,098	+6.2
2011	6,327	+24.1
2016	6,619	+4.6

Source: CSO Census

The Table below indicates 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 Strategy².

Table 2 – Population targets and Housing requirements as per the Core Strategy (CDP as extended) and Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020

	Census population			Core Strategy growth according to Core Strategy of CDP and Newcastle West LAP 2014 - 2020		
	A	B	C	D	E	F
	2006 Census	2011 Census	2016 Census	Expected population 2022	Expected growth 2011 – 2020	Expected Growth 2020 - 2022
Total population	5,098	6,327	6,619	8,423	1,530	340
Additional housing units required					1,695	376
Zoned land required to accommodate additional housing units					90 ha	21 ha

2.3 Capacity of existing zoned lands

There are 88.3 hectares zoned as new residential development and serviced sites as Phase 1 in the current LAP, with a further 55.98 hectares zoned as Phase 2 new residential development and serviced sites. Phase 1 consists of 63.4 hectares of new residential development and 24.9 serviced sites, based on national policy of 80% of units comprising of medium density residential housing, and 20% of units required allocated for low density serviced sites. The purpose of the allocation is to provide an element of choice for unit choice.

² Refer to Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 – 2020, page 31

Table 3 summarises the planning applications received for residential development and serviced sites zoned lands since the adoption of the LAP in 2014. Table 4 is a comparative analysis between area of the lands zoned and area of lands committed.

Table 3 Planning applications received for residential development and serviced sites lands since adoption of 2014 - 2020 LAP

Land use	Ref:	Location	Applicant	Description	Area ha	Status
New Residential – Phase 1	19/146	Rathnaneane	V. Dimaulo	Construction of 8 houses	0.45	Being processed
	18/1089	Killeline	Fitzgerald	Construction of 20 units	0.81	Being processed
	171075	Cois Temple, Churchtown	Eko Integrated Services	Construction of 12 dwellings	0.49	Granted
	17/383	Carrig Desmond, Churchtown	Rockspring Development Ltd	Construction of 54 dwellings	2.85	Granted
	17/375	Cloonsyrehane	Denton	Construction of 60 dwelling units and 3 serviced sites	3.52	Granted
	16/719	Churchtown	Rockspring Development Ltd.	Completion of 10 no. dwelling houses	0.2	Granted
	15/1018	Arraview	Woulfe	Construction of 2 detached dwellings	0.97	Granted
Serviced Sites – Phase 1	18/528	Granted	Mullane	Outline permission for 2 dwellings	0.4	Granted
Total committed since adoption of the 2014 - 2020 LAP					8.7 ha	

Table 4 – Residential Zoned lands required, lands zoned accordingly, and lands committed since the adoption of the 2014 LAP

Land Use	Required 2020 (Ha)	Required 2022 (Ha)	Zoned Lands (Ha)		Lands developed or committed since 2014		
			Phase 1	Phase 2	Committed (Ha)	Balance 2020	Balance 2022
New Residential	65	80	63.4	40.97	8.3	56.30	71.7
Residential Serviced Sites	25	31	24.90	15.01	0.4	24.60	30.6
Total	90	111	88.3	55.98	8.7	80.90	102.3

Therefore, there is sufficient land zoned in the Newcastle West LAP for residential use (residential development and serviced sites) as 8.7ha of the 88.30 ha allocated has been committed in the interim. The current zoning allocations satisfies the core strategy requirements of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended).

2.4 Economic Development

Enterprise and Employment

In relation to the lands zoned for Enterprise and Employment, 71.31 hectares in zoned for this purpose in Newcastle West. Since the adoption of 2014 LAP there have been a number of permissions granted on land zoned enterprise and employment. These range from extensions to existing business, particularly the logistics sector, to the location of the Ortec European headquarters permitted under ref: 16/906 in Churchtown. The importance of the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC) initiative to the town of Newcastle West is significant. Under the AEC an enterprise strategy will be developed for Newcastle West in order to realise the full potential of the town’s enterprise assets to support job creation, improve competitiveness, attract investment and create future economic growth. This will enable opportunities for foreign direct investment and for indigenous businesses to establish, innovate and grow across a range of key sectors.

Table 5 summarises the permissions granted on enterprise and employment zoned lands since 2014. Much of the land zoned enterprise and employment remains undeveloped (Dromin and Gortroe), or undeveloped/ under-utilised (Station Road, and Newcastle West Business Park). Given the scale of development that has taken place since 2014, the objectives of the 2014 LAP in relation to enterprise and employment remain relevant to the sustainable development of Newcastle West.

Table 5 Significant planning applications granted since the adoption of the 2014 LAP on lands zoned enterprise and employment

Land use	Planning Ref:	Location	Description
Enterprise and employment	13/727	Churchtown	Change of use from light industrial and extension for office, retail area and staff area
	16/906	Churchtown	Extension to existing unit to accommodate polymer manufacturing facility - Ortec
	14/1187	Churchtown	Extension to warehouse – All Star Logistics
	18/155	Churchtown	Extension to fleet depot – O’Callaghan Transport
	13/605	Churchtown	Extension to workshop and staff area – MC Commercials Ltd
	16/952	Gortboy	Retention of change of use form light industrial to physiotherapy and Pilates studio
	15/895	The Demense	Extension to production and warehouse – Britvic Ire. Ltd
	15/403	Sheehan’s Road	Construction of industrial unit
	17/1026	Sheehan’s Road	Partial change of use from disused factory to distribution warehouse
Sample of permissions granted on lands zoned mixed use and town centre			
Mixed Use	15/202 and 16/490	St. Mary’s Road	Work to refurbishment of hotel
	16/721	Killiline	Change of use of pub to medical centre (HSE)
Town centre	13/202	Demense/Square	Aldi – discount foodstore
	15/32	Bridewell Lane	Change of use from retail to veterinary clinic
	16/47	Bridge Street	Change of use from pub to retail unit
	16/1169	Bridge Street	Change of use from retail to office
	14/1059	Maiden Street	Demolish building and construct retail unit
	18/7028	Market Square	Extension to duration – primary care centre granted under ref:12/907
	17/336	Market Square	Extension to restaurant

The Newcastle West LAP was prepared in accordance with 2010 ‘Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region’ which was incorporated into Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As extended). 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. There is no zone for 'tourism' as generally tourism proposals are open to consideration in lands zoned town centre and mixed use subject to satisfying planning criteria including infrastructure, built and natural heritage, and amenity. In 2017, Fuller's Folly was purchased by the Council for potential tourism opportunities. In line with national planning guidance the objectives of the LAP relating the town centre, retail and commercial development, and tourism remain relevant to Newcastle West.

2.5 Infrastructure and Transport

Waste Water Treatment and water supply

Irish Water is the national water utility responsible for water and wastewater service. The Council remains closely involved in local provision as an agent of Irish Water in the operation and maintenance of services in its administrative area. There are planned upgrades works in Newcastle West the Activate Sludge Programme. Any proposals for significant development remains subject to pre-connection discussions/agreements with Irish Water.

Transport

Transport in Newcastle West remains a key objective of the Council to support the town as a Tier 2 settlement of regional significance, with accessibility to the national road network on the N21, and the strategic location close the Shannon - Foynes Port. Transport connectivity is crucial for Newcastle West for fulfil its distribution/logistics role for enterprise and employment, and general quality of life as people commute to school, work, and the town centre. Since the adoption of the 2014 LAP major structural upgrade works were completed on Curling's footbridge – a Protected Structure dating from 1866 and an important pedestrian link across the River Arra. In 2015 improvement works on the N21 through the town were completed, including the provision of a new pedestrian bridge on the N21. Consultants were appointed in the 2019 to prepare a Public Realm and Traffic Movement Plan for Newcastle West. The Council remains guided by national policy in relation to the transport issues. It is the policy of the Council to improve accessibility and the objectives of the LAP remain relevant to Newcastle West.

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. 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 Newcastle West Local Area Plan and planning applications in the area at risk of flooding require a comprehensive flood risk assessment to support the application.

2.6 Community and recreation

The community supported by the Local Authority works tirelessly to develop amenities in the town, including the progressing of the development of a Regional Athletics Hub, the Great Southern Greenway, the annual Michael Hartnett Literary and Arts festival, and various initiatives by Newcastle West Tidy towns. Other investment in community facilities in the town since 2014 include the new HSE service in Killeline, and refurbishment and extension to St. Ita's community hospital. In 2017, lands were purchased by the Council for the

development of a Regional Athletics Hub for future recreation and competitive use on Cloonyschrehane. The objectives of the 2014 LAP in relation to community and recreation remain relevant to the town.

2.7 Environment, built and archaeological heritage

The Newcastle West LAP 2014 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). 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 67 Protected Structures within the LAP boundary. There have been no additions to the Record of Protected Structures in the town since the adoption of the LAP. In 2015 two Protected Structures were removed from the Record of Protected Structures located in the town (RPS 1693 and RPS 1471). Since the adoption of the Newcastle West 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 Minister³ to the planning authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures (RPS).

There are 20 Recorded Monuments located in the within the LAP boundary and the core of the town situated in the townlands of Castle Demesne, Churchtown, Gortboy, Rathaneane and Knockane. 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 2014 LAP. There is one a correction of an error in the 2014 LAP referring to LI036-207 Enclosure Churchtown 527874/633708 which is outside the LAP zone. LI036-064 Ringfort Cullenagh 527169/633371 should be included in the list of National Monuments in the 2014 LAP. The objectives of the 2014 LAP for natural, built and archaeological heritage remain applicable to Newcastle West

2.8 Urban design, derelict and vacant sites

The Newcastle West 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. Six sites were identified in the town as opportunity sites and preliminary design briefs were outlined in the LAP. Since the adoption of the LAP only one site has be redeveloped to accommodate a foodstore on Opportunity Site 6 – Nash backlands/the Square/Castle Demesne.

³ Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

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 idle according to 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 December 2018, located in Newcastle West.⁴ As required by the Act the register is monitored regularly. However, vacancy remains an issue in the town, particularly on Maiden Street. Geo Directory analysis reports a commercial vacancy rate of 21.1% in Newcastle West in Q 4 2018 when the national average commercial vacancy rate was 13.2%.

The Council has entered three sites in Newcastle West on the Derelict Sites Register under the Derelict Site Act 1990. There are 29 cases currently being processed for entry into the register. The Council is also progressing compulsory acquisition for sites under the Derelict Sites Act 1990, and the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, and the Buy & Renew Scheme under Rebuilding Ireland.

In terms of public realm, new traditional style street lighting was provided part funded under REDZ and Town and Village Renewal funding in 2017. The Council recently appointed consultants to prepare a Public Realm and Transport Movement Plan through the town which is expected to be published late 2019. This will provide an integrated approach to traffic movement, including the sustainable modes of movement such as walking and cycling, and public realm improvements in the town. The objectives of the 2014 LAP in relation to public realm urban design, public realm and re-use of brownfield lands, under-used buildings remain relevant.

Part 4 - Conclusion and recommendation

In order to sustainably strengthen the diverse employment base, population growth and regeneration of Newcastle West town centre as an economic driver for West Limerick and North Kerry capitalising on infrastructure, and Newcastle West's inherent strengths, there are a considerable number of policies and objectives that remain relevant and yet have not been secured.

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

- The Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014-2020, is consistent with the objectives and core strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (As Extended).
- The objectives of the Newcastle West 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 Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020 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 Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 – 2020, by a further 5 years, from today's

⁴ Refer to limerick.ie/vacant-sites

date, in accordance with the provisions of Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended), which provides for the extension of the valid life of a Local Area Plan.



Dr. Pat Daly,
Director Economic Development