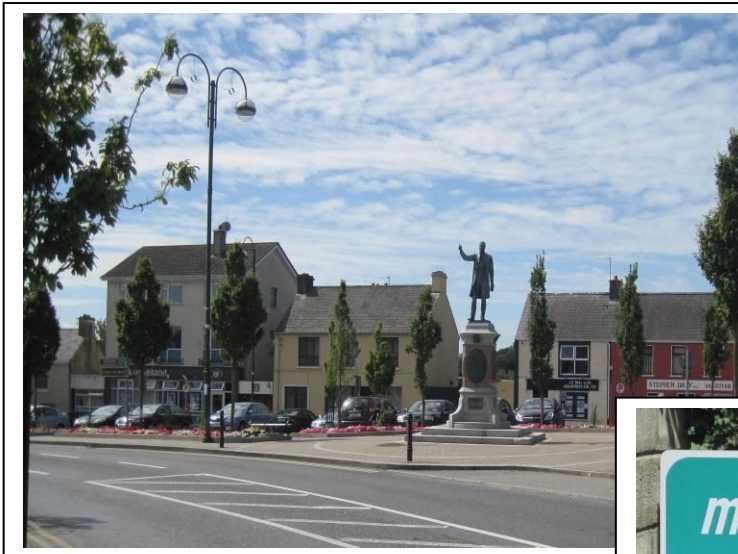


# Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2014 - 2020



July 2014  
Extended until April 2024



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**  
**Limerick City**  
& County Council

**In accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2013, Section 20 (4A), this Local Area Plan came into effect on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2014, four weeks from the date of its adoption by elected members of Limerick City and County Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2014.**

**On the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 Limerick City & County Council extended the duration of the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2014 – 2020 for a further five years until April 2024.**

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 What is the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan (LAP)?	3
1.2 Plan Area	3
1.3 The Review Process	4
1.3.1 Steps involved in the preparation of the LAP	4
1.3.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	5
1.3.3 Appropriate Assessment	5
1.3.4 Flood Risk Assessment	5
1.4 Planning Context	5
1.4.1 National Planning Context	6
1.4.2 Regional Planning Context	6
1.4.3 County Planning Context	7
1.4.4 Other Planning Guidelines	8
<b>Chapter 2: Context</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Geographical Context	9
2.2 Historic Evolution	9
2.3 Natural and Built Environment	12
2.4 Function	13
2.5 Demographic and Socio-economic Context	14
2.5.1 Population	14
2.5.2 Age Profile	15
2.5.3 Employment	16
2.5.4 Education	17
2.5.5 Travel Patterns	18
<b>Chapter 3: Plan Strategy</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Policy Context	19
3.2 Vision Statement	19
3.3 Strategic Policy	19
3.4 Evaluation of 2007 Abbeyfeale LAP	20
3.5 SWOT Analysis	21
3.6 Population Targets and Zoning Requirements	22
3.6.1 Population Targets	22
3.6.2 Land currently available for Housing Development	23
<b>Chapter 4: Housing</b>	<b>25</b>
4.1 Introduction	25
4.2 Residential density, design, mix and phasing	25
4.3 Serviced and low density sites	26
4.4 Infill Development	27
4.5 Unfinished Housing Developments	27
4.6 Social Housing	28
4.7 Traveller Accommodation	29
<b>Chapter 5: Economic Development</b>	<b>30</b>
5.1 Introduction	30
5.2 Enterprise and Employment zoned land	31

5.3	Small-scale business in residential areas	32
5.4	Retail and commercial development	32
5.5	Mixed-use zoned land	33
5.6	Tourism	34
<b>Chapter 6: Transport</b>		<b>37</b>
6.1	Introduction	37
6.2	Movement and accessibility	38
<b>Chapter 7: Infrastructure</b>		<b>41</b>
7.1	Introduction	41
7.2	Water Supply	41
7.3	Foul Sewerage	41
7.4	Surface Water Drainage	42
7.5	Flood Risk Management	42
7.6	Waste Management	44
7.7	Energy and Electricity	44
7.8	Access to Broadband and Telecommunications	44
<b>Chapter 8: Environment and Heritage</b>		<b>46</b>
8.1	Introduction	46
8.2	Built Environment	46
	8.2.1 Protected Structures	46
	8.2.2 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA)	46
	8.2.3 Abbeyfeale Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)	47
8.3	Archaeological Heritage	49
8.4	Natural Environment	50
8.5	Climate Change	52
<b>Chapter 9: Community and Recreation</b>		<b>54</b>
9.1	Introduction	54
9.2	Community and Recreation	54
9.3	Education and Childcare Facilities	55
9.4	Health Facilities	56
9.5	Emergency Services	56
<b>Chapter 10: Urban Design</b>		<b>57</b>
10.1	Introduction	57
10.2	Derelict and Vacant sites	58
10.3	Abbeyfeale Opportunity Areas	59
<b>Chapter 11: Land Use Zoning</b>		<b>66</b>
11.1	Purpose of Land Use Zoning	66
11.2	Non Conforming Uses	67
11.3	Land Use Zoning Categories	67
11.4	Land Use Matrix	69
<b>Appendices</b>		
Appendix 1: Maps		
Map 1	Zoning Map	

Map 2	Amenity Map
Map 3	Protected Structures Map
Map 4	Predictive Flood Zones

Appendix 2:	Flood Risk Assessment
Appendix 3	SEA/AA Screening Report
Appendix 4	Protected Structures and List of Traditional Building Materials found in County Limerick
Appendix 5	Recorded Monuments
Appendix 6	Glossary and Abbreviations

### List of Tables

Table 2.1	Total Population, Abbeyfeale	14
Table 3.1	SWOT Analysis of Abbeyfeale	21
Table 3.2	Population targets, total residential units and zoned land requirements	23
Table 3.3	Residential units and land requirements by 2020	23
Table 3.4	Residential land required and zoned	24
Table 11.1	Total Zoned Lands	66
Table 11.2	Abbeyfeale Land Use Zoning Matrix 2013 – 2019	71

### List of Figures

Figure 1.1	Location of Abbeyfeale	4
Figure 1.2	Hierarchy of Spatial Planning Policies	5
Figure 2.1	Map of Abbeyfeale 1840	10
Figure 2.2	Map of Abbeyfeale 1923	11
Figure 2.3	Aerial Photograph of Abbeyfeale, 2006	11
Figure 2.4	Map of Abbeyfeale OSI 2013	12
Figure 2.5	Example of Protected Structures	13
Figure 2.6	Population trend experienced in Abbeyfeale town 1991 – 2011, CSO	15
Figure 2.7	Age Profile of Abbeyfeale town, Census 2011	15
Figure 2.8	Persons at work by sex and broad industrial group, Census 2011	16
Figure 2.9	Unemployment Trends	17
Figure 2.11	Persons aged 15 years+ by sex and education completed	17
Figure 2.12	Persons aged 5 years + by travel time to work, school or college	18
Figure 2.13	Persons aged 5 years + by means of travel to work, school or college	18
Figure 4.1	Completed housing units in Ellis Wood Housing estate	28
Figure 5.1	Part of Abbeyfeale town centre	34
Figure 5.2	Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway	35
Figure 5.3	Section of Great Southern Trail	36
Figure 5.4	Existing signage for GST at carpark on Railway Road	36
Figure 5.5	The River Feale	36
Figure 6.1	Council owned car park	38
Figure 6.2	Lack of a footpath on Railway Road	39
Figure 8.1	Part of the ACA on Main Street	48

Figure 8.2	Walkways in Pairc Cois Feile	52
Figure 9.1	Recently completed Colaiste Ide agus Iosef School	55
Figure 10.1	Cinema building	59
Figure 10.1	Vacant units at Colbert Terrace	59
Figure 10.2	Map showing location of Opportunity Areas	60

## Structure of the Plan

### **Chapter 1 Introduction**

This section introduces the Abbeyfeale LAP 2014 – 2020, and the statutory context which informs the LAP.

### **Chapter 2 Context**

This Chapter describes the geographical location of the town: its historical evolution, present day function and an overview of the socio-economics and demographics of the town, specifically population, age profile, employment, education and travel patterns.

### **Chapter 3 Plan Strategy**

This Chapter outlines the Council's vision statement for the development of the town, and the consequent strategic objective to achieve the vision statement. A SWOT analysis of the town is undertaken bearing in mind the issues identified by the various stakeholders who made submissions during the non-statutory pre-draft stage. Importantly, this Chapter sets out the reasoning behind the allocation of zoning and objectives of the LAP based on population projections. These population projections are detailed in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.

### **Chapter 4 Housing**

Chapter 4 sets out the requirements of the Council regarding any proposed residential development. This discussion includes the requirements of the Limerick County Development Plan, residential density, design, housing mix and phasing, infill development, social housing and traveller accommodation.

### **Chapter 5 Economic Development**

This Chapter outlines the labour market in Abbeyfeale based on the most up to date census figures, skills and education which affects employability. The Chapter discusses lands zoned for enterprise and employment, mixed use, small-scale businesses in residential areas and commercial and retail development in the town and tourism.

### **Chapter 6 Transport**

This Chapter briefly describes national and regional transport policy and how it informs the Councils local transport objectives for the town.

### **Chapter 7 Infrastructure**

This Chapter briefly deals with water services infrastructure including water supply, waste water treatment, storm water drainage, flood risk management, waste management, energy and electricity and access to broadband and telecommunications.

### **Chapter 8 Environment and Heritage**

This Chapter deals with the archaeological, architectural, natural and built heritage. Topics discussed include Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), the natural environment and climate change.

**Chapter 9 Community and Recreation**

Chapter 9 looks at provisions made by the Plan for education, health facilities, open space and community infrastructure.

**Chapter 10 Urban Design**

Chapter 10 gives a brief overview of the Council's requirements for the design of future buildings and places. Four opportunity areas are identified as having potential for development.

**Chapter 11 Land Use Zoning**

This Chapter describes the purpose of the various land use zones of the Plan.

## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 What is the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan (LAP)?

The Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan (LAP) is a legal document consisting of a public statement of Limerick City and County Council's planning policies for the town of Abbeyfeale. This plan, when adopted will replace the Abbeyfeale LAP 2008 - 2014. The aim of the LAP is to establish a framework for the planned, coordinated and sustainable development of the town of Abbeyfeale, including the conservation and enhancement of its natural and built environment over the next six years and beyond. The LAP provides guidance as to how this development can be achieved, what new developments are needed, where public and private resource inputs are required, and guidance for development proposed in the plan area.

The plan builds on the review of the Abbeyfeale LAP 2008 - 2014, taking into account recent key development trends and national, regional and local policy developments.

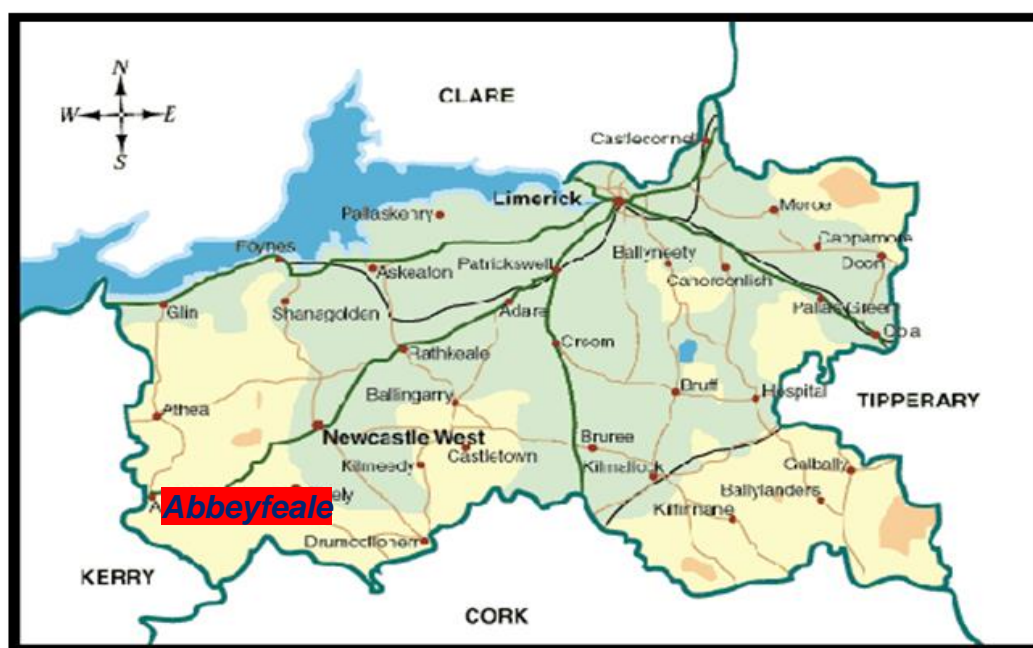
All planning applications in the town of Abbeyfeale will be measured against the contents of this LAP and the current Limerick County Development Plan.

The Abbeyfeale LAP must be read in conjunction with the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 and any variation thereof. Unless otherwise stated, the general development plan policies, objectives and development management standards still apply to the area.

### 1.2 Plan Area

The Abbeyfeale LAP covers approximately 2.95 square kilometres (295 hectares) in area and falls into the Abbeyfeale Electoral Division (ED's). It contains parts of the townlands of Abbeyfeale East, Abbeyfeale West and Knockbrack. The extent of the boundary of this local area plan is determined by the pattern of urban development and the natural features in the town such as the River Feale to the west and a tributary of the River Allaughan to the east. The northern boundary of the plan area is the dismantled Limerick to Tralee railway line now in use as the Great Southern Trail greenway. The town is located approximately 65km south west of Limerick city on the Limerick to Tralee national primary route.

Figure 1.1 Location of Abbeyfeale



Not to scale

### 1.3 The Review Process

#### 1.3.1 Steps involved in preparation of the plan

The review of the Local Area Plan commenced on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013 with the publication of an issues paper entitled 'Proposed Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2014 – 2020 – Issues Paper.' Its intention was to prompt discussion on local issues at pre draft stage. Copies of the issues paper and an invitation to make a submission were sent to local community and voluntary agencies in the area. A public information evening was held in Halla Ide Naofa in Abbeyfeale town on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013.

The LAP went on public display at County Buildings, area offices, libraries and on the internet at [www.lcc.ie](http://www.lcc.ie) for a period of six weeks from 25<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Again, written submissions were invited and a second public information evening was held in Halla Ide Naofa in Abbeyfeale town on the 04<sup>th</sup> February 2014. At the end of the public consultation period a Manager's Report was prepared on issues arising during the public consultation period and was submitted to the Members of the Council for their consideration. Following the elected member's consideration of the Manager's Report, the Council decided to materially amend the proposed local area plan and a further period of four weeks public consultation took place from the 10<sup>th</sup> May to 09<sup>th</sup> June 2014 on these material alterations only. A further Manager's Report on the submissions received regarding the proposed amendments was then prepared for the Councillors who having considered the report made the new local area plan on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

Responsibility for making a local area plan rests with the elected members of the Planning Authority.

### 1.3.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requires all European Union member states to systematically evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing a plan or programme prior to its adoption. The Plan does not fall within the thresholds for which a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is mandatory. The Plan was screened in line with “Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment - Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities” to determine whether or not a SEA would nevertheless be appropriate. After consultation with the Environmental Authorities it was determined by the Planning Authority that a full Environmental Report was not required. See Appendix 3 for SEA Screening.

### 1.3.3 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

In accordance with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive the Planning Authority undertook an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report of the proposed plan which found that the plan would have no significant effects on Natura 2000 sites.

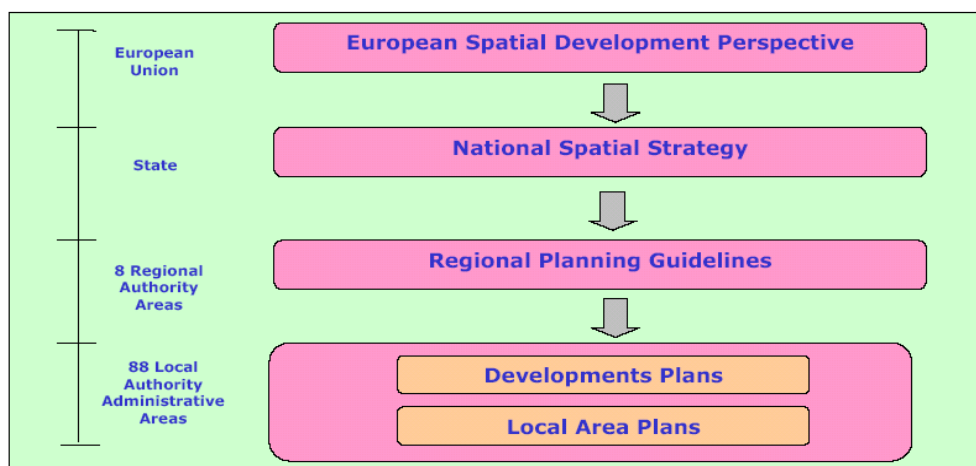
### 1.3.4 Flood Risk Assessment

A Stage One Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken in support of the Abbeyfeale LAP. See Appendix 2 – Flood Risk Assessment. The information gathered has informed the Land Use Zoning Map included in this LAP. The LAP has adopted the precautionary approach and lands which have been identified as potentially at risk to flooding have generally been zoned for uses which are not considered vulnerable. Where lands have been zoned for development on areas identified on flood maps as potentially at risk to flooding, justification tests for zoning have been carried out.

## 1.4 Planning Context

In accordance with the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2013 the LAP has been informed by a hierarchy of national, regional, and local spatial planning policies. See Figure 1.2 below.

Figure 1.2 Hierarchy of Spatial Planning Policies



A summary of some of the provisions of relevant guidelines and policy documents are outlined below.

## **1.4.1 National Planning Context**

### **1.4.1.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002 - 2020**

The National Spatial Strategy for Ireland (NSS) is a twenty year planning framework designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development and population growth between regions. Its focus is on people, on places and on building communities. The National Spatial Strategy concentrates on a number of specific regions and their development by identifying Gateway settlements throughout the country which are to be used to support geographically balanced growth in the regions outside of the Greater Dublin Area. Abbeyfeale is considered to play a complementary role to the development of the Limerick – Ennis - Shannon Gateway as outlined in the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines.

### **1.4.1.2 National Development Plan 2007 - 2013**

The National Development Plan (NDP) identifies investment funding for significant projects in sectors such as health services, social housing, education, roads, public transport, rural development, industry, and water and waste services. The NDP is designed to strengthen and improve the international competitiveness of the Country so as to support continued, but more balanced, economic and social development in line with the NSS.

## **1.4.2 Regional Planning Context**

### **1.4.2.1 Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 - 2022**

This document has been prepared in accordance with the overall policy frameworks established by the National Spatial Strategy and the National Development Plan 2007-2013. It sets clear objectives and targets to guide County Development Plans and Local Area Plans within the region, specifically in relation to future population, settlement strategy, development distribution and infrastructure investment priorities in line with the NDP 2007-2013. The Regional Planning Guidelines provide a wider area approach to the development of County Limerick. These guidelines look at Limerick in its regional context and identifies sub-regions or 'zones', with the core area of the region incorporating the Limerick Shannon Gateway. Abbeyfeale is located in zone 4.

### **1.4.2.2 Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) 2012 - 2030**

A strategic planning, land use and transportation strategy for the Mid-West region has been prepared and was adopted by the elected members of Limerick County Council in September 2012. MWASP provides for a comprehensive integrated plan for Land Use Planning and Transportation in the Mid-West Region over the next 30 years. MWASP identifies Abbeyfeale as a 'Rural Economic Node' (REN). These are centres that have a strategic location within relatively densely populated rural areas and are essential to the success of the MWASP strategy as they will act as focal points linking rural

areas and larger urban centres. In this regard it is envisaged that Abbeyfeale will function in synergy with Newcastle West and Rathkeale.

#### **1.4.2.3 Retail Strategy for the Mid West Region 2010 - 2016**

This strategy, which was incorporated into the County Development Plan, was prepared in 2010 on behalf of Counties Limerick and Clare and Limerick City Council. It addresses the retail needs, opportunities and issues of the Mid-West region and sets out an integrated strategic framework for retail planning in the Mid West over the period to 2016.

#### **1.4.2.4 Joint Housing Strategy 2010 – 2017**

The Housing Strategy has been prepared in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2013 and covers the functional areas of Limerick County Council, Limerick City Council and Clare County Council. A critical objective of the Housing Strategy is to ensure the provision of housing for the existing and projected future populations in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The housing strategy also aims to provide an equitable level of social housing and social integration.

### **1.4.3 County Planning Context**

#### **1.4.3.1 Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016**

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 is the 'parent' document for this Abbeyfeale LAP, and thus the LAP is made in accordance with the policies and objectives as set out in the County Development Plan.

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 sets out the Council's policy to steer future development in the County based on a settlement hierarchy reflecting settlement function. It outlines population targets and zoning requirements for settlements for the years 2016 and 2022 which must be incorporated into LAPs.

The settlement structure for County Limerick which is set out in the County Development Plan designates Abbeyfeale as a Tier 3 settlement. Tier 3 settlements are generally located on major transport corridors and are promoted as secondary development centres for significant future development. They provide a wide range of services and their functions are complementary to the Limerick Gateway, the Key Service Centres and each other. They also have an important regional employment function within their surrounding catchment areas.

#### **1.4.3.2 Limerick 2030 An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick**

The Limerick 2030 plan provides an economic and spatial plan for Limerick City and County up to 2030. The plan is structured around three main elements. The first is an Economic Strategy which identifies how Limerick needs to be positioned in order to best take advantage of economic opportunities in order to build a stronger local economy through the creation of

employment and the attraction of investment. The second element is a Spatial Plan focused on revitalising and redeveloping Limerick City Centre and the final element is a Marketing Plan which aims to use Limerick's unique and positive attributes to change perceptions of how Limerick is viewed.

#### **1.4.4 Other Planning Guidelines**

Planning Authorities are required to take account of any policies and guidelines issued by the Minister. For a comprehensive list of other policy documents taken into account in preparing this plan refer to Chapter 1 in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 and the DoECLG on <http://www.environ.ie/en/DevelopmentHousing/PlanningDevelopment/PlanningGuidance/>

### 2.1 Geographical Context

Abbeyfeale is located approximately 65km south west of Limerick city and is 20km west of the town of Newcastle West. Its hinterland is the rural area defined by the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 as an area of Strong Agricultural Base. The town is located just inside the Limerick/Kerry county boundary, on the Limerick to Killarney National Primary Road (N21), which is the main tourist and traffic route serving the southwest. The western edge of Abbeyfeale is defined by the River Feale and the town is located at the junction of two converging river basins, the Feale and the Allaghaun.

The town has developed in a linear fashion along the N21 and the R-524, Regional road which serves Athea to the north. The topography of the area rises steeply to the south of the town forming the western end of the Mullaghareirk Mountains which straddles the county Limerick, Cork and Kerry boundaries.

### 2.2 Historic Evolution

Westropp<sup>1</sup> (1904-05, 404) states that 'Feil' is mentioned in the Book of Rights before 902 and again in 1116 at the Synod of Rathbreasil. Abbeyfeale, however, owes its name to a Cistercian abbey founded in Abbeyfeale in 1188 and the adjoining river Feale. The foundation is credited to Brien O'Brien. It may have been colonised from Abbeydorney or Monasteranenagh, however, by 1209 it had become a cell of Monasteranenagh (Gwynn & Hadcock 1988, 123).<sup>2</sup> The church at 'Feell' was recorded as destroyed in war in the Papal Taxations of 1302 and was mentioned again in 1410 (Westropp 1904-05, 404). It is suggested that Abbeyfeale may have become a normal residential grange and been leased to laymen by *circa* 1350 and that the Carmelite Friars may have obtained possession at a much later date, possibly 1639 (Gwynn & Hadcock 1988, 123). It was depicted in the Down Survey (1655-7) "as roofless, with a lofty tower, and pointed spire at north-west angle. It had a nave with a south door and two west windows, a chancel with two south windows" (*ibid.*). The Civil Survey contains entries for two landowners (Nicholas Lillies and James Bourke) whose lands adjoined the Abbey at the south; Nicholas Lillies' property contained a mill (Simington, R. 1938, 270).<sup>3</sup> According to Lewis a chapel was erected on the site of the abbey that incorporated a small portion of it (Lewis 1837, 2).<sup>4</sup> The Ordnance Survey letters (1840) maintains that 'of this abbey... not a stone now remains...there are old men still living who remember to have seen some fragments of its

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<sup>1</sup> Westropp, T.J. 1904-05 'A survey of the ancient churches in the county of Limerick' *PRIA XXV*, 327-479.

<sup>2</sup> Gwynn, A. and Hadcock, R.N. 1970 *Medieval religious houses: Ireland*, London

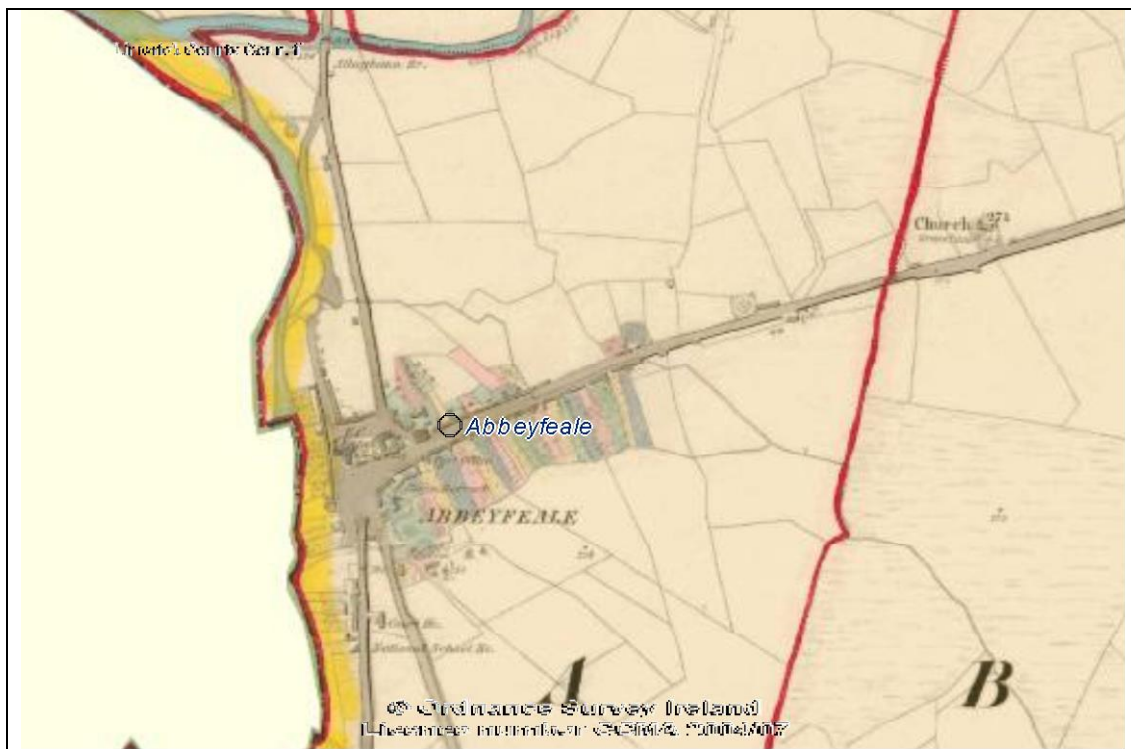
<sup>3</sup> Simington, R.C. 1938 *The civil survey AD 1654-1656, County of Limerick Vol IV* Dublin

<sup>4</sup> Lewis, S. 1837 *A topographical dictionary of Ireland*, Vols. 1 & 2, London.

walls' (M. O 'Flanagan, (ed) 1929, 43)<sup>5</sup>. The former site of the abbey is now entirely occupied by a graveyard. Port Castle, a mile from the town, is accredited to the Fitzgerald's.

Abbeyfeale and the wider West Limerick area were prominent in the agrarian agitation of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Abbeyfeale benefited from the building of road infrastructure starting with the road from Newcastle West to Kerry in 1787 and later the road from Abbeyfeale to Glin in 1836. It was also on the railway line between Limerick and Tralee which opened in 1880. Fr. William Casey, who is commemorated in the town square, was associated with Abbeyfeale from 1871 until his death in 1907; he continued the struggle to get rights for tenant farmers, forming a branch of the Land League in Abbeyfeale.

Figure 2.1 Map of Abbeyfeale, from the first Ordnance Survey edition, 1840.

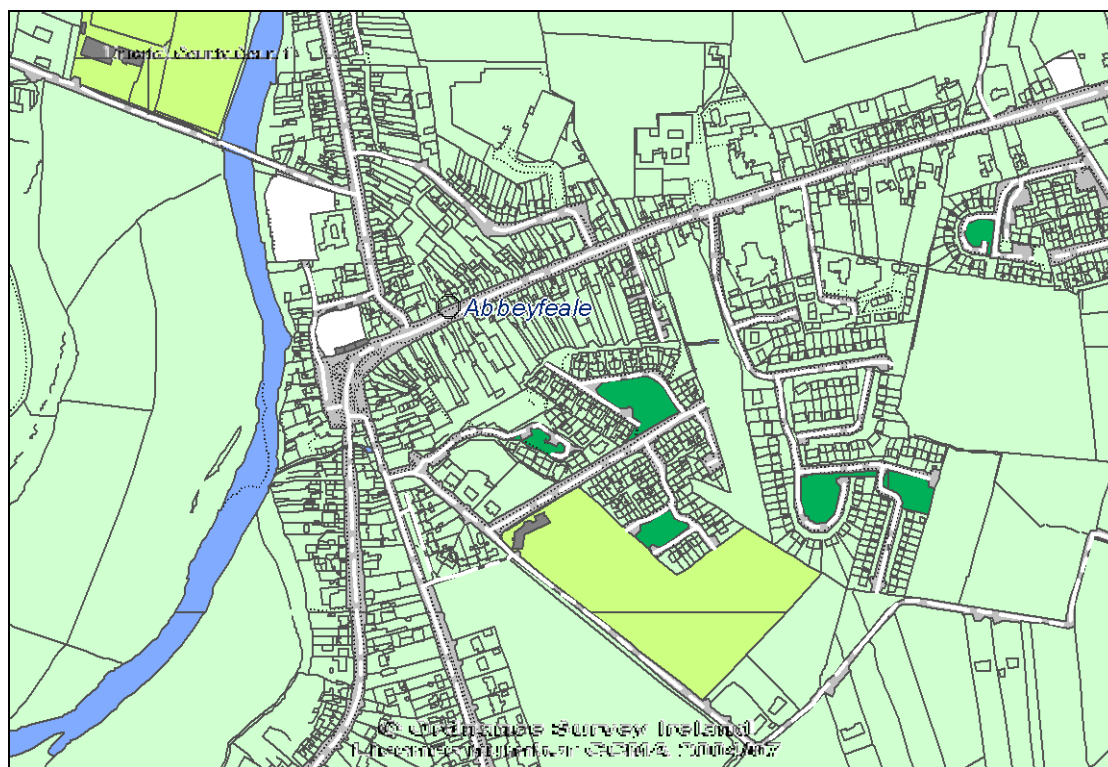


Not to scale

<sup>5</sup> O'Flanagan, M. (ed) 1929 *Letters containing information relative to the antiquities of the county of Limerick collected during the progress of the ordnance survey in 1840* Bray



Figure 2.4 Map of Abbeyfeale, OSI, 2013



Not to scale

Since the adoption of the Abbeyfeale LAP in 2008, limited development has taken place in the town, the major developments being the construction of a new 850 pupil post primary school on Convent street and the construction of a first floor extension to St Mary's Boys National School on Church Street.

### 2.3 Natural and Built Environment

Abbeyfeale is located in the Western Uplands landscape character area as designated by the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016. This zone comprises a significant area of western County Limerick and is bounded on the west side by the Limerick/Kerry county boundary. The southern boundary is defined by gradually rising ground which leads to the Southern Uplands landscape character area which includes the Mullaghareirk range of hills. The eastern boundary is defined by the agricultural lowlands while the northern boundary straddles the Shannon Coastal zone. The landscape of the Western Uplands Zone is defined by isolated farmsteads and improved grassland punctuated by blocks of forestry, which is one of the characteristics of the area.

Abbeyfeale is essentially a linear town having developed along the N21 Limerick to Killarney national road. The Square, the River Feale and the town centre with its traditional streetscapes are important elements in the make up of the town's physical appearance. Abbeyfeale is typical of an urban settlement located in a predominantly rural area. The town performs an important civic and service function with a concentration of civic amenities

including schools, a library and a church. These provide services not only for the resident population but also for a much wider rural based population. Abbeyfeale town centre stretches along the N21 national road consisting mainly of retail, commercial, public/institutional buildings and some residential dwellings. The Market Square forms the focal point of the town containing the statue of Fr. William Casey. A more loosely knit pattern of development, consisting mainly of housing, spreads further east and southwest. The majority of the town's building stock is of nineteenth and early twentieth century origin. The town displays a number of notable buildings, including the Convent of Mercy, the AIB bank building, Leen's hotel and the old cinema building.

There are 61 Protected Structures within the LAP boundary and an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) extends along Main Street and parts of Bridge Street and Church Street, taking in the town centre. Thirty two of these protected structures are also listed in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. There are two recorded archaeological monuments within the LAP zoned area and one located on the northern LAP boundary within the townland of Knockbrack.

Figure 2.5 Examples of Protected Structures, Church Street, Abbeyfeale



## 2.4 Function

The town performs an important civic, trade/market and service function for the resident population and for the surrounding hinterland. This is evident by the diverse range of services and businesses operating in the town.

Most of the local economic activity is located on Main Street, Bridge Street and The Square. Abbeyfeale has a credit union, two banks, two large convenience retailers (Supervalu and Tesco), a number of smaller convenience shops/newsagents and a wide range of comparison retailers.

The town also has a wide range of pubs and restaurants/takeaways as well as a post office, funeral home, hardware stores, two bookmakers, a number of hair dressers/barbers/beauty salons, 3 service stations at the edge of the town and professional services including accountancy, auctioneering and veterinary services. Educational, health and community facilities include a community health clinic, a library, two primary schools, a secondary school, 3 pre-schools, a community education and training centre, a Fire station and a Garda station.

Abbeyfeale is also famous for its traditional music and sporting tradition. The town is well known for its dog coursing events which normally take place in the winter months at its facility located on the Killarney road. In more recent times the recreational value of the Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway linking Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale has been developed and offers potential to further develop this amenity.

## 2.5 Demographic and Socio-economic Context

### 2.5.1 Population

The total population of Abbeyfeale town according to the 2011 census was 2007. This represented a 3.45% increase in population from the 2006 figure which was 1940. The rate of population increase in the town has slowed significantly when compared to the 2002 census and 2006 census which showed an average increase of over 14%.

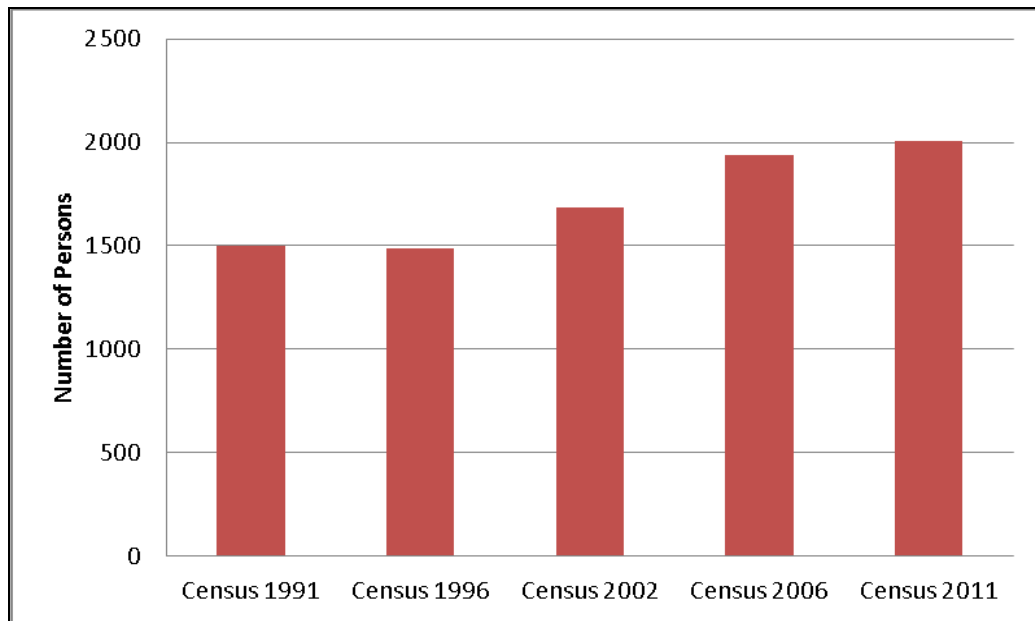
Table 2.1 Total Population of Abbeyfeale town

Year	Population	Population change %
1991	1501	
1996	1486	-1.00%
2002	1683	+13.25%
2006	1940	+15.27%
2011	2007	+3.45%

Source: CSO Census

The graph below indicates the total population trend experienced by Abbeyfeale town over the period 1991 to 2011. The largest increase in the population of the town was in the early to mid 2000's which is reflective of the housing boom in that decade.

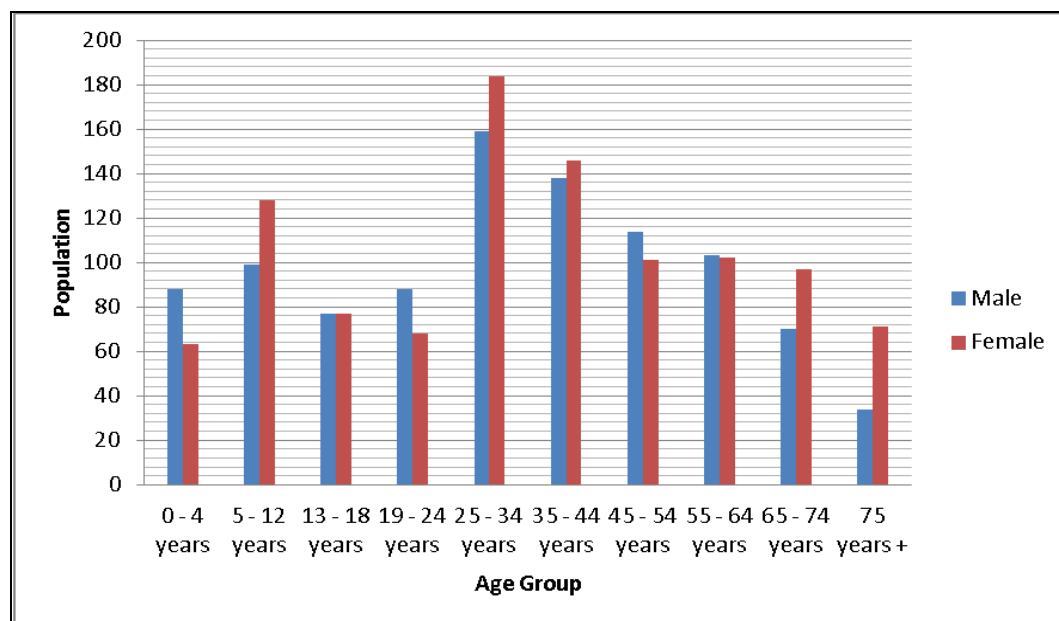
Figure 2.6 Population trend experienced in Abbeyfeale town, 1991 – 2011, CSO



### 2.5.2 Age profile

The graph below depicts the age structure in Abbeyfeale town in 2011. This demonstrates that Abbeyfeale has a relatively young population with 378 persons under the age of 12 (19% of the total population). At 31% of the total population the 25 - 34 and 35 - 44 age groups account for a significant proportion of the overall population. This has implications in terms of housing provision, the size of the workforce and demand for education, recreation amenities and health services.

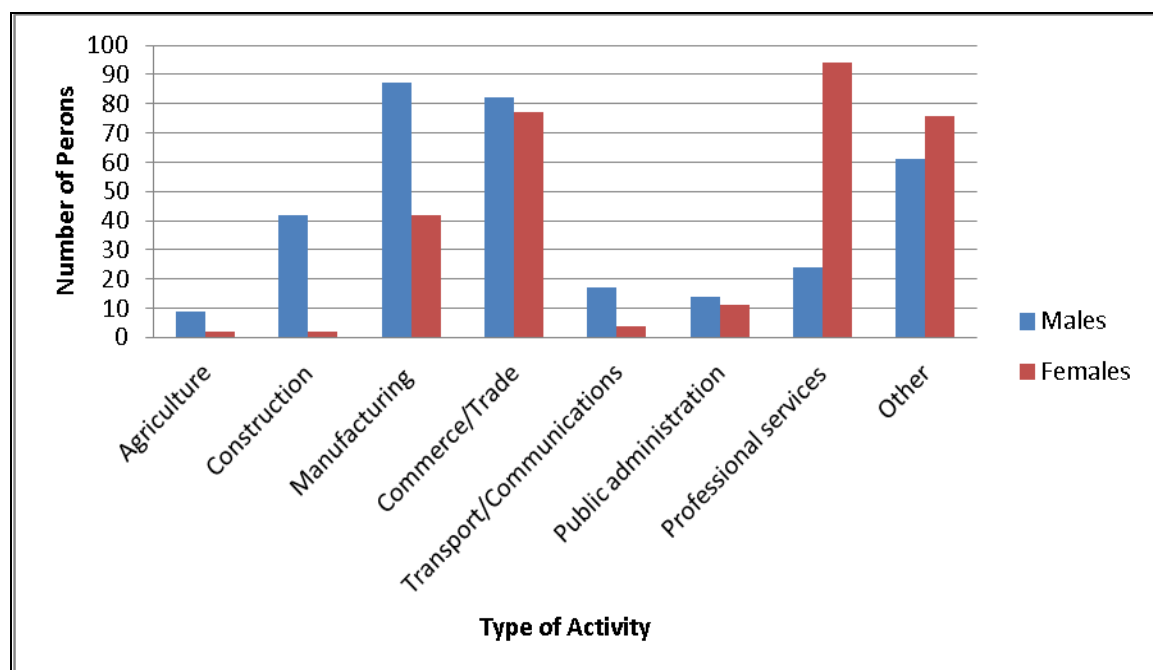
Figure 2.7 Age Profile, Abbeyfeale town, Census 2011



### 2.5.3 Employment

Figure 2.8 below depicts the employment in the different broad industrial groups in 2011. The greatest numbers were employed in the commerce/trade sector, while manufacturing and professional services sectors also absorbed a considerable amount of the local workforce. The graph shows a very high proportion of women employed in the professional services sector and a high proportion of men employed in the manufacturing sector. The majority of the manufacturing sector can be accounted for by Kostal, a car components company which currently employs approximately 650 people at their plant in the town.

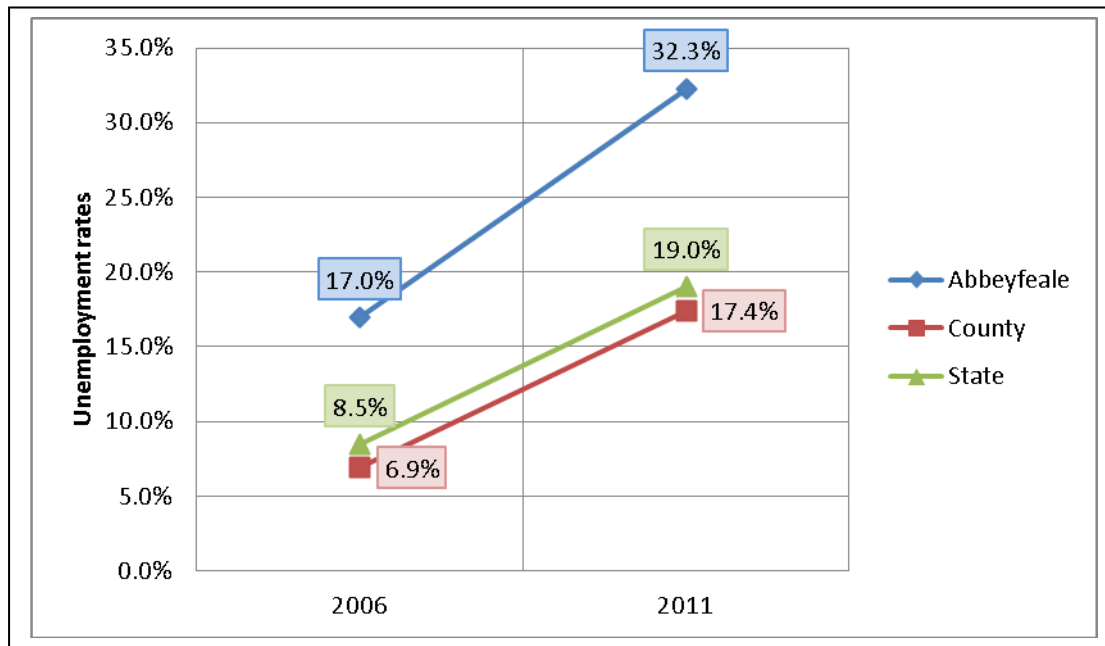
Figure 2.8 Persons at work by sex and broad industrial group, Abbeyfeale, Census 2011



According to the 2011 census the unemployment rate in Abbeyfeale as a percentage of all those aged 15 years and over and who were available for work was 32.3%. This is well above the national unemployment rate of 19% which was the most up to date actual figure released by the CSO in April 2011. Figure 2.9 below illustrates the unemployment trend in Abbeyfeale compared to Limerick County and the national trend, between 2006 and 2011.

In Abbeyfeale the numbers in the workforce have remained relatively static, being 951 in 2011 and 927 in 2006, an increase of only 2.5%. However the numbers of those working has decreased significantly, from 769 to 644 in that period, suggesting a substantial decrease in the supply of jobs. Of the 289 persons unemployed, 189 are male and 100 are female.

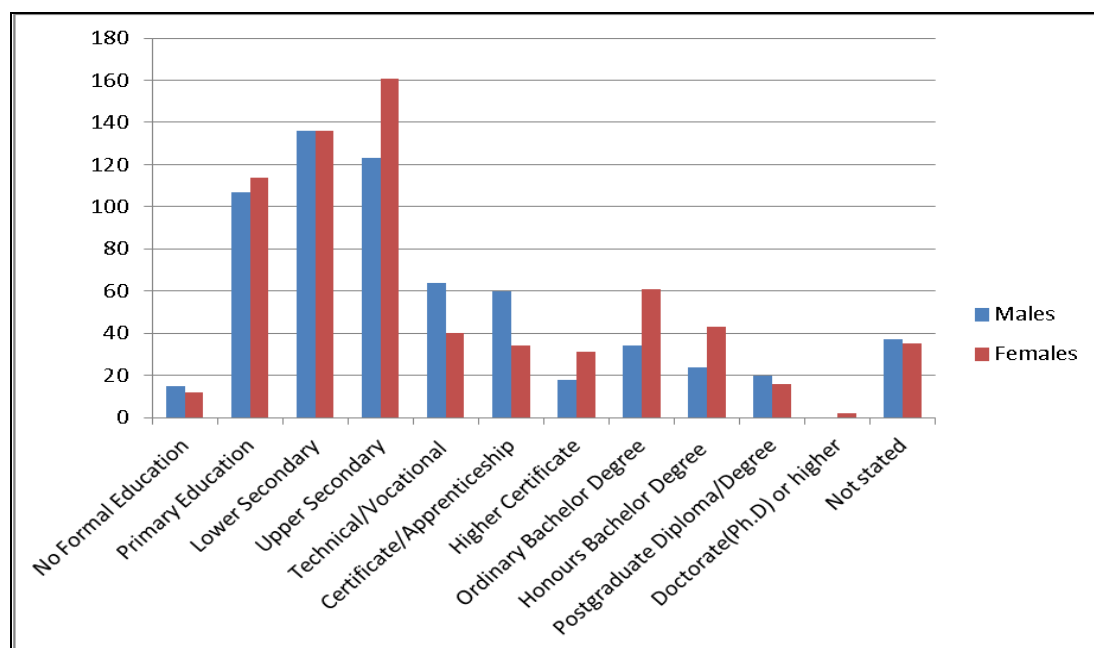
Figure 2.9 Unemployment Trends, Census 2011



### 2.5.4 Education

Analysis of the 2011 census indicates that 21% of those over 15 years of age have completed the Leaving Certificate and 15% of those over 15 years have some form of a degree or postgraduate qualification. A greater number of males completed technical/vocational and certificate/apprenticeship education which may reflect the number of males that entered into the construction sector during the construction boom.

Figure 2.11 Persons aged 15 years and over by sex and highest level of education completed, Abbeyfeale, Census 2011



### 2.5.5 Travel Patterns

Given its location at the western edge of County Limerick, Abbeyfeale is a one hour commute time from Limerick City. Towns within a 30 minute commute time from Abbeyfeale include Newcastle West and Listowel and Castleisland in County Kerry. Figure 2.11 shows the travel time to work, school or college by people living in Abbeyfeale town. According to the 2011 census there is a noticeable peak in travel time of less than 15 minutes, which would be largely accounted for by those working and attending school in the town. Figure 2.12 below shows that 58% of people living in Abbeyfeale travel to work, school or college by car. However at 24% a significant proportion of people walk to work, school or college.

Figure 2.12 Persons aged 5 years and over by travel time to work, school or college, Abbeyfeale, Census 2011.

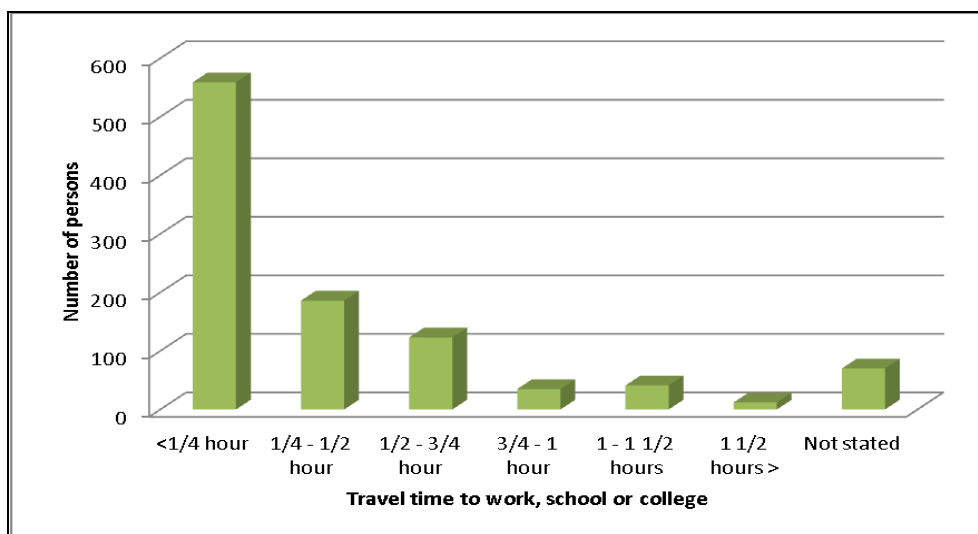
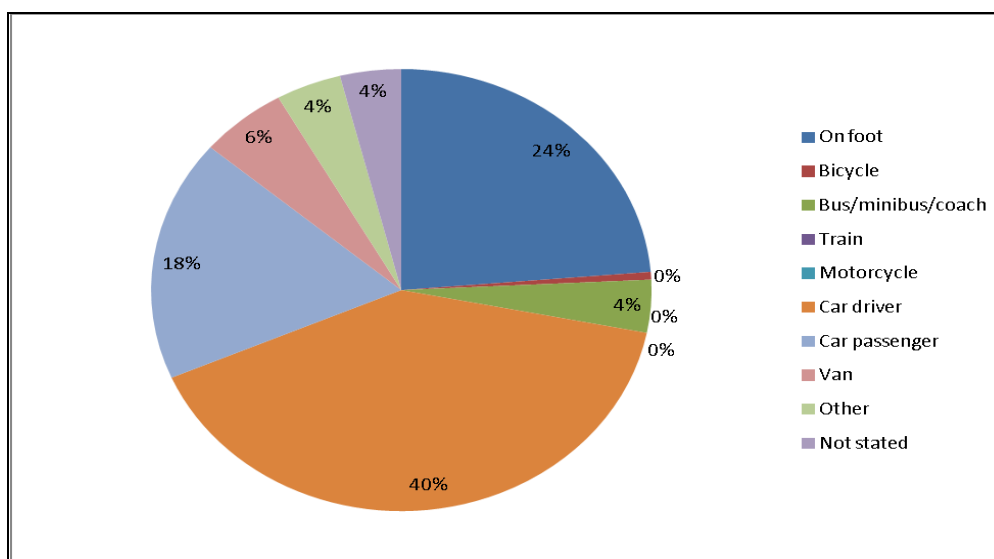


Figure 2.13 Persons aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work, school or college, Abbeyfeale, Census 2011.



## Chapter 3 Plan Strategy

### 3.1 Policy Context

The Abbeyfeale LAP 2014 – 2020 is made in accordance with the objectives as set out in the Limerick County Development Plan (CDP) 2010 -2016.

The CDP contains the Council's policy to guide future development in County Limerick. This guidance includes placing settlements, towns and villages in a settlement hierarchy determined by the population of the settlement, and existing public and private services. The settlement hierarchy reflects the development role of each settlement within the county. Abbeyfeale is a Tier 3 settlement providing a wide range of services for its inhabitants and its hinterland.

### 3.2 Vision Statement

*It is the long term vision of the Council that Abbeyfeale functions efficiently as a place where people can and want to live, work, and visit, and which fosters an authentic sense of place.*

To achieve this vision Abbeyfeale must develop in a manner that protects its rich cultural and natural heritage, accommodates a vibrant and balanced community, and provides good employment opportunities and quality local services and amenities. Good transport links are important, including improvements to public transport services to provide a genuine alternative to the car. Building on the existing strengths of the settlement it is imperative that all stakeholders maximise any development opportunities in the town to secure progression and improved quality of life.

### 3.3 Strategic Policy

#### **S1 Sustainable Development**

**It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of Abbeyfeale.**

#### **S2 Compliance with the Limerick County Development Plan**

**It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 and the objectives of this Plan.**

In order to achieve strategic policy S1 this LAP focuses on:

- (a) Rationalising the residential land use in the town to comply with the population targets as set out in the County Development Plan core strategy.
- (b) Ensuring development accommodates envisaged housing need and diversity to sustain vibrant, socially balanced communities.

- (c) Ensuring that land use zones and objectives provide for adequate social and recreational facilities, in tandem with the growth of Abbeyfeale.
- (d) Enhancement and development of the town centre.
- (e) Ensuring that the town develops in a way that protects and enhances the richness and integrity of the town's natural, built and cultural heritage.
- (f) Ensuring that the growth of the town is accompanied by adequate infrastructure.

### **3.4 Evaluation of the 2007 Abbeyfeale LAP**

It is important to assess the strengths and limitations of the 2008 – 2014 Abbeyfeale LAP and to determine what planning policies are relevant to the future development of the town.

There have been some significant developments by the public, private and voluntary sectors since the adoption of the 2008 LAP. Amenities have been improved through the construction of a mini pitch for soccer and basketball in Pairc Cois Feile on the Killarney Road and the development of the Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway linking Rathkeale to Abbeyfeale and onto the Kerry border.

In recent years the major developments that took place in the town are the construction of a new 850 pupil post primary school on Convent Street and the construction of a first floor extension to St Mary's Boys National School on Church Street. Two housing developments within the town commenced prior to the adoption of the Abbeyfeale LAP in September 2008 and construction continued during the early part of the plan period. These are Ellis Wood Estate on the Killarney Road and Cois na Féile estate on the Clash Road and both remain unfinished. The development at Ellis Wood commenced in August 2006 and a 5 year extension of duration for the completion of this development was permitted in November 2010. At present this development includes 14 completed dwellings, 4 dwellings at wall plate level and 18 dwellings at foundation level. The development at Cois na Féile commenced in November 2006 and remains unfinished. The dwellings are constructed to roof level; however the permission has expired since March 2011.

The 2008 plan identified 3 opportunity sites in the town as having redevelopment potential. The Supervalu site on Bridge Street received planning permission for a significant redevelopment in April 2011. Construction commenced in November 2012 and is taking place in a phased manner. Permission was granted for a mixed use development in January 2009 for the redevelopment of the Abbey Stone and Tile Centre site to the north of Main Street and Church Street. However development has not yet commenced.

There are also a number of respects in which little progress has been made on the objectives in the 2008 Local Area Plan.

1. There has been no progress on the business and industry objectives of the Plan.
2. Retail/commercial and residential vacancy is becoming an issue in the town centre with 15 vacant retail/commercial units and 7 vacant residential units on Main Street.

### 3.5 SWOT Analysis

The following table sets out the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as identified through public consultation at the pre-draft stage and the site appraisals undertaken as part of the plan preparation process.

Table 3.1 SWOT Analysis of Abbeyfeale

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible to national road network</li> <li>• Good range of local services (shops, pubs, banks, garda station, post office)</li> <li>• Has a number of key community services</li> <li>• Has a strong history of community development and a vibrant local voluntary sector</li> <li>• Rich built fabric and traditional streetscape</li> <li>• Picturesque location on the banks of the River Feale and Allaughan</li> <li>• Location on the Great Southern Trial walkway</li> <li>• Increasing relatively young population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reliance on Limerick city for employment and associated commuting issues on quality of life</li> <li>• High traffic volumes through town centre</li> <li>• Flood risk identified in the town</li> <li>• High number of vacant commercial and residential units</li> <li>• Lack of employment opportunities in the town</li> <li>• Increasing unemployment</li> <li>• Restricted access to River Feale and Allaughan</li> <li>• Fragmented urban structure with ribbon development on approach roads to town</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land available adjacent to national road for small and medium size employment and development activity.</li> <li>• Further development of community initiatives with the experience of a strong voluntary sector in the town, and a history of co-operation and partnership with a wide range of agencies</li> <li>• Relatively young population with 19% of the population under 12 years</li> <li>• Tourism development potential given its location on the main tourist route serving the southwest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of unfinished housing developments in the town</li> <li>• Commercial vacancy rate and associated neglect of these buildings in the town centre becoming a problem</li> <li>• Employment losses associated with the downturn in the economy</li> <li>• Reduction in public service provision in order to minimise costs</li> <li>• Uncertainty regarding the release of zoned lands</li> <li>• Inaccessibility to backlands</li> <li>• Worsening traffic congestion</li> </ul>

## 3.6 Population Targets and Zoning Requirements

### 3.6.1 Population Targets

The core strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 outlines population targets for county Limerick, which were allocated by the DoECLG at national level and distributed at regional level by the Mid West Regional Authority. The Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 have allocated a population target of an additional 32,800 people for county Limerick up to the year 2022.

Each settlement is allocated a specific population target in the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan. The amount of land to be zoned in Local Area Plans is generally based on the population targets as set out in the Core Strategy. The population target for Abbeyfeale in the Core Strategy was for 3,440 persons by 2022, or 1,500 persons in addition to the 1,940 persons recorded in the 2006 Census.

However in the case of Abbeyfeale it is considered appropriate to adjust the population target having regard to the limited growth in Abbeyfeale over recent years. According to the 2011 census the population of Abbeyfeale was 2,007 which was a 3.45% increase from the previous census. Therefore the 1,500 persons allocated by 2022 in the core strategy is regarded as excessive given the limited growth since the 2006 census and the current and forecasted economic climate. Thus a revised population target for 2,912 persons by 2022, or 972 persons in addition to the 1,940 persons which was recorded in the 2006 Census. This equates to an additional 522 housing units up to 2022. The 2020 additional housing requirement for the town based on the revised 2022 additional housing figure applied on a pro-rata basis is as follows:

522 additional housing units required – 58 (the number of units built between 2006 and 2011 according to CSO) = 464 additional housing units / 11 {the number of years 2011 – 2022} x 9 {the number of years 2011 – 2020} = 379.63 additional housing units required by 2020.

The hectares required to accommodate the 380 additional units by 2020 at a percentage allocation of 20% serviced sites and 80% as new residential is determined as follows:

20% of 380 units = 76 units applied at a density of the 10 units per hectare = 7.6 hectares + 50% {headroom to allow for element of choice} = 11.40 hectares

80% of 380 units = 304 units applied at a density of 22 units per hectare = 13.81 hectares + 50% {headroom to allow element of choice} = 20.72 hectares

The total area required for additional units in Abbeyfeale as serviced sites and new residential areas is 32.12 hectares by 2020.

The housing land requirement was calculated by allocating 20% of housing units as serviced sites at a density of 10 units per hectare in accordance with the guidance contained in 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities'. A density of 22 units per hectare has been applied for the remaining 80%. The amount of zoned land required includes an additional 50% to allow for an element of choice.

Table 3.2 Population Target, total residential units and zoned land requirements

<b>Year</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2022</b>
Total population	1940	2007	2747	2912
Additional Population			740	165
Additional housing units required			380	84
Zoned land required to accommodate additional housing units (including additional 50% headroom) - hectares			32.12	7.10

Table 3.3 Residential unit and land requirements by 2020

	<b>A Residential development areas</b>	<b>B Serviced sites</b>	<b>Total required by 2020 (A+B)</b>
<b>Additional Units required including headroom</b>	456	114	570
<b>Additional area required including headroom (ha)</b>	20.72	11.40	32.12

### 3.6.2 Land Currently Available for Housing Development

This LAP proposes a reduction in the amount of land zoned for residential development from that contained in the 2008 Abbeyfeale LAP. Under the 2008 Abbeyfeale LAP there are approximately 66 hectares of undeveloped land zoned for residential purposes.

Table 3.4 outlines the amount of land in hectares that is zoned in the plan in each phase. A total of 32.11 hectares are zoned as phase one, which is expected to meet the population target for the plan period. Parts of unfinished estates (Ellis Wood estate and Cois na Féile estate) are located within phase 1 zoned land.

Table 3.4 Residential land required and zoned

	<b>Total Required by 2020</b>	<b>Total Required by 2022</b>	<b>Zoned Phase 1</b>	<b>Zoned Phase 2</b>	<b>Zoned Phase 3</b>
<b>Residential development area - hectares</b>	20.72	25.30	20.74	5.78	2.69
<b>Serviced Sites- hectares</b>	11.40	13.92	11.37	4.36	0
<b>Total hectares</b>	<b>32.12</b>	<b>39.22</b>	<b>32.11</b>	<b>10.14</b>	<b>2.69</b>

## Chapter 4 Housing

### Strategic Policy for Housing

**Policy H1** It is the policy of the Council to provide appropriately zoned lands to cater for the sustainable growth of Abbeyfeale town and to ensure that all residents can enjoy a safe and accessible environment.

**Policy H 2** It is the policy of the Council that quality shall underpin all new development by creating and maintaining a sense of place and local distinctiveness in established and new development areas.

#### 4.1 Introduction

Based on the population and household projections in Chapter 3, 32.12 hectares of land zoned for residential use is required to accommodate the population target of 2,747 persons by 2020. 20.74 hectares of land has been zoned 'Residential Development Area – Phase 1' in this Plan. 11.37 hectares of land is zoned for 'Residential Serviced Sites - Phase 1' which will accommodate 10 units to the hectare while the 'Residential Development Area' zoned land is envisaged to accommodate a density of 22 units to the hectare. Phase 2 lands will only be permitted when at least 50% of the housing in phase 1 has been completed. Similarly phase 3 residential development shall only commence on the completion of 50% of phase 2 development.

Chapter 3, Objective SS O1 in the County Development Plan outlines the Council's requirements for development within tier 3 settlements. The Council's objective is to ensure that development is in proportion to the pattern of existing development and as close to the town centre as possible. It also requires that the town grows in a sequential, compact manner and avoids leap frogging of development. Within tier 3 settlements generally no one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 15% within the lifetime of this LAP. According to the 2011 census there were 1077 dwelling units in the town.

#### 4.2 Residential density, design, mix and phasing

Future residential development is required to be of a good quality design, accommodate a mixture of house types and integrate with the existing town. To assess future proposals for residential development, developers will be required to submit as part of the planning application, detailed design briefs, sustainability statement and social infrastructure assessment (SSSIA) as required by the County Development Plan.

#### **Objective H1: New Housing**

(a) It is an objective of the Council, on serviced land that is zoned 'Residential Development Area', to facilitate residential development in accordance with the principles and guidelines of the 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' (2013), the 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas'

(2009), the accompanying Urban Design Manual, 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities' (2007) and the policies, objectives and Development Management Standards contained in the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016.

(b) It is an objective of the Council to promote the provision of community and other facilities such as childcare as an integral part of new developments.

### **Objective H2: Residential density, design, mix and phasing**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure that proposals for residential development are planned coherently through the use of design briefs, masterplans for larger landholdings where proposals involve the partial development of landholdings if appropriate, sustainability statements and social infrastructure assessments and any other supplementary documents deemed necessary by the Council.

b) Promote the concept of a 'compact district' by encouraging appropriate densities in suitable locations and by resisting sporadic isolated developments.

c) Require an average gross density of 22 units to the hectare on 'New Residential' zoned sites within the plan area.

d) Ensure that the density of housing in any one location is appropriate to the housing type.

e) Ensure a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures are provided to meet varying population requirements and needs.

f) Ensure compliance with the objectives of the County Development Plan SSO1 to SSO7 inclusive.

g) Ensure development of sites in Phase 2 can only proceed when at least 50% of all development in New Residential zoned Areas Phase 1 is completed. Similarly Phase 3 will only be permitted on the completion of 50% of development in phase 2.

### **4.3 Serviced and low density sites**

Residential serviced sites offer an alternative to the option of un-serviced sites in the open countryside for those wishing to build and design their own houses. Their urban setting reduces the cost of servicing these sites and also means that residents have more convenient access to shops and other facilities. The sites should be large enough to offer the advantages commonly associated with rural sites, namely the capacity to have control over the design of one's own house and to have generous private amenity space. The size of sites, their location and number are dictated by the over-riding need to keep the town compact. Serviced sites should be no less than 0.1 hectare each in size, but may be larger depending on the site configuration or the house size.

**Objective H3: Serviced and low density sites**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Promote lower density serviced sites in specified edge of town locations zoned 'Residential Serviced Sites', of no less than 0.1 hectares each. Larger sites than these will generally be required for houses exceeding 250 square metres or where the sites are of awkward configuration.
- b) Require a masterplan/design brief for all serviced and low density sites and encourage within this, a high standard of design. The masterplan will show the overall layout, infrastructure, services and landscaping for the whole of the serviced site development.
- c) Ensure development of sites in Phase 2 can only proceed when at least 50% of all development in Residential Serviced Sites zoned areas Phase 1 is completed.

**4.4 Infill Development**

The Council will encourage infill development in the town centre, and the adaptation of existing vacant and under-used buildings.

**Objective H4: Infill Development, Restoration and Town Renewal**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Encourage living in the town centre by the promotion of residential uses over businesses.
- b) Promote sensitive infill developments on sites in the town centre that are not developed and are not required for access to backlands.
- c) Ensure that in any proposed alterations to the streetscape of the town centre, adequate consideration is given to conservation, restoration and reconstruction, where it would affect the settings of protected structures, or the integrity of the eighteenth and nineteenth century streetscapes.
- d) Consider on their merits proposals for residential development of rear plots where they can be adequately accessed, and where they would not affect existing or proposed private amenities, storage or parking requirements. Such proposals should in general be part of larger masterplans involving contiguous plots.
- e) Have regard to the guidance on the Opportunity Areas in Chapter 10 of this plan.

**4.5 Unfinished Housing Developments**

In Abbeyfeale town there are 2 housing developments on the Council's list of unfinished housing estates – Ellis Wood Housing estate on the Killarney Road and Cois Na Féile estate on the Clash Road. The County Council established an Unfinished Housing Development Team in accordance with the DoECLG guidance on unfinished housing to deal with these developments. This team has a number of key responsibilities including public safety works, the preparation of site resolution plans and the implementation of enforcement proceedings. This plan encourages the use and further development of existing vacant and partially completed dwellings with a view to enhancing local surroundings and to maximise the use of the existing built environment.

These sites have been included in residential phase 1 lands in order to encourage completion.

**Objective H5: Unfinished Housing Estates**

It is an objective of the Council to monitor and to encourage the completion of unfinished housing developments in the plan area in accordance with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government guidance manual 'Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments.'

Figure 4.1 Completed units in Ellis Wood Housing Estate



**4.6 Social Housing**

The Council seeks to provide social housing to meet the needs identified in the Joint Housing Strategy for the administrative areas of Limerick City and County Councils and Clare County Council (2010-2017). All relevant lands zoned for residential development or a mix of uses including residential will be subject to the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2013 in relation to the provision of social housing. The Council will engage in discussions with developers prior to the formal planning process to negotiate details of the operation of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2013. It will ensure that there is proper balance and integration of tenures in any given area. In this regard the Council will take into account the needs and preferences for housing in this area, but will ensure there is not an over-supply of social housing in any one development area.

**Objective H6: Social Housing and Joint Housing Strategy**

It is an objective of the Council in compliance with Objective HOU O2 of the County Development Plan, to

- a) Require that developers comply with Part V of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2013.

b) Require developers to provide social housing on all lands zoned for residential use, in accordance with the 'Joint Housing Strategy for the Administrative Areas of Limerick City and County Councils and Clare County Council' and any subsequent document.

#### **4.7 Traveller Accommodation**

Limerick City and County Council has prepared and adopted a Joint Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2014-2018 to meet the existing and projected needs of travellers in the County. Objective HOU O9 of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 outlines Limerick County Council's objective to provide housing accommodation for the Traveller Community in accordance with the Joint Traveller Accommodation Programme and any subsequent document.

#### **Objective (H7) Joint Traveller Accommodation Programme**

It is the objective of the Council to provide appropriate housing accommodation for the Traveller Community in accordance with the Joint Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 – 2018 and any subsequent programme formally adopted by the Council.

## Chapter 5 Economic Development

### Strategic Policy for Economic Development

**Policy ED 1 It is the policy of the Abbeyfeale LAP to zone dedicated areas for economic development recognising Abbeyfeale as an important local employment and service centre, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy of the County Development Plan.**

#### 5.1 Introduction

Abbeyfeale town is a service centre for its own community and the hinterland. There is a diverse range of businesses and services in the town as detailed previously in section 2.4 of this Plan. Services include retail, food and drink sectors, accommodation, community services, banking and professional services.

Apart from the main commercial core, employment is concentrated in a small number of manufacturing outlets, the largest being Kostal, a German owned car components company. This company employs approximately 650 persons at their plant in the Abbeyfeale Business Park and plays a significant role in terms of local economic activity. Other businesses located in the Abbeyfeale Business Park include Component Inter-Technologies Ireland Ltd, Gerard Daniels Worldwide Cloth Wire, and Feale Fit Health and Fitness.

Abbeyfeale does offer the range and number of retailing facilities that is expected for a town of its size. However in recent years a number of premises in the town centre have closed and these vacant buildings impact on the physical appearance of the town. A preliminary assessment carried out in November 2013 found that along Main Street there are approximately 15 vacant commercial buildings (ground floor) and 7 vacant residential buildings. An incentive scheme called the 'Business and Retail Incentive Scheme' is currently operating in the town. This scheme run by Limerick City and County Council aims at reducing vacancy in the town centre and strengthening the retail function of the town.

Policies and objectives in the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 of relevance to land use planning in relation to economic activity in Abbeyfeale, include:

- a) a general policy to complement the aims of the settlement strategy by facilitating a hierarchy of employment centres;
- b) a commitment to work pro-actively with development agencies to secure an adequate range of locations for enterprise at key locations throughout the County;
- c) an objective to support small manufacturing businesses through the Business Support Unit; a development company set up by the County Council and County Enterprise Board for this purpose, and
- d) an objective to assist in area based renewal projects in urban and rural areas selected for their potential for renewal and sustainable development.

In relation to retail, the County Development Plan is committed to the implementation of the Joint Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016, as amended by the elected members. There is adequate scope in the existing town centre to meet the envisaged convenience retail needs of the community. Priority should be given to the town centre as the location for retail business. It is important that sufficient land is zoned within the town to strengthen the service function of the town.

## **5.2 'Enterprise and Employment' Zoned Land**

A total of 34 hectares of land was zoned for 'industrial' in the 2008 Abbeyfeale LAP. The majority of these lands are located on the Limerick side of the town, adjacent to the N21 and include the Abbeyfeale Business Park. A smaller area of industrial zoned land is located on both sides of Railway Road to the north of the town. These sites take up approximately 2ha and are home to the Golden Vale Mart, National Car Testing Centre and Pakie Mulcahy car sales and servicing. Reflecting the existing commercial uses the majority of this zoning is to remain in this Abbeyfeale LAP.

The Abbeyfeale Business Park site takes up approximately 7.62 hectares in size and is home to Kostal, Component Inter-Technologies Ireland Ltd, Gerard Daniels Worldwide Cloth Wire and Feale Fit Health and Fitness. Located further east is Abbeyspeedway Karts and Race Circuits which takes up an area of approximately 2.42ha. The remainder of the land has not been released for the purposes of enterprise and employment and remains in agricultural use. This zoning is to remain in the Abbeyfeale LAP. Any future application(s) on these lands shall include the development of an access road through the site which will eventually link the N21 to the Killarney Road as shown on the zoning map. Furthermore, as part of any proposal to develop these lands, a buffer of screen planting shall be provided along all boundaries, with particular attention being given to boundaries with residential areas.

Overall lands zoned for enterprise and employment are envisaged to facilitate such economic development uses as outlined in the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines for rural areas, such as internationally traded services and ICT including software; small workshop type enterprises, such as food, furniture or crafts that can use local resources and exploit niche markets. Developments at these locations should refer to the Development Management Guidelines for Industrial/Commercial Development in Section 10.6 of the Limerick County Development Plan. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location having regard to surrounding land uses and scale.

### **Objective ED 1: Economic Development Proposals**

It is the objective of the Council to permit proposals for new industrial and enterprise development or extensions to existing industrial development in appropriately zoned areas, where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal:

- (a) is located on appropriately zoned land;

- (b) is appropriate to the respective area in terms of size and the type of employment generating development to be provided;
- (c) would not result in adverse transport effects;
- (d) would have no significant detrimental effect on the surrounding areas or on the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupiers; and
- (e) can be serviced efficiently and economically.

### **Objective ED 2: Boundary Treatment**

It is the objective of the Council to ensure that where industrial, enterprise or distribution activities are proposed sufficient land shall be reserved around site boundaries, in both individual sites and industrial parks to accommodate landscaping to soften the visual impact and reduce the biodiversity loss of the development thereby improving the quality of the environment.

### **5.3 Small-scale businesses in residential areas**

Proposals for planning permission for small-scale business from people working in their own homes will be considered based on the scale and nature of operations. Uses which might negatively impact on residential amenity such as the repair of vehicles will not be permitted in a residential area. The level of customers/callers will also be taken into account. Any proposals for small scale businesses in residential areas shall comply with Section 10.6.2 of the County Development Plan.

### **5.4 Retail and Commercial Development**

In 2010 a retail strategy for the Mid West Region, 2010 – 2016 was prepared on behalf of counties Limerick and Clare and Limerick City Council. The Limerick County Development Plan, 2010 - 2016 incorporates the policy recommendations from the Retail Strategy as they apply to County Limerick.

The Strategy's primary purpose is to ensure that adequate provision is made for new retail development in the most appropriate locations and that excessive provision of retail space is avoided in the county. The central key objective arising from the Retail Strategy is to support the "town centre first" approach in the context of the retail hierarchy, and to promote the vitality and viability of existing centres. Abbeyfeale is identified in the Mid West Retail Strategy as a tier 3 level 1 centre, which is an attractive historic market town with a good range of both convenience and comparison goods retailing with the potential for future enhancement.

Policy ED 14 of the County Development Plan is applicable to Abbeyfeale. The policy seeks to 'support the improvement of retail facilities so as to improve the service they provide to their local catchment population.'

Abbeyfeale town centre has a broad range of retail services that provide for the needs of the town and surrounding catchment area. The function of these businesses is extremely important locally. In order to protect the vitality and viability of the town centre new retail developments will generally only be permitted on land which is zoned town centre unless the proposed

development complies with Section 5.5 below. The enhancement of the local shopping facilities in both the convenience and comparison arena is a key ingredient in maintaining and enhancing the vitality of the town. Abbeyfeale has significant potential for retail expansion by developing backland locations and by occupying existing vacant units in the town centre. The Market Square still functions on designated days during the week.

**Objective ED 3: Retail Development**

It is the objective of the Council to enhance the vitality and viability of Abbeyfeale as a retail service centre and to improve the quantity and quality of retail provision in the town by:

- (a) Emphasising the core retail/commercial area as the primary shopping location.
- (b) Encouraging the upgrading and expansion of existing retail outlets and the development of new outlets within the town centre.
- (c) Ensuring that proposals with significant retail development elements comply with the provisions of the County Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines in reference to site suitability and the sequential approach.
- (d) Ensure that proposals at ground floor level within the town centre are generally restricted to shopping and closely related uses such as banking. Residential use may also be appropriate depending on site location. Storage use will not be permitted as the primary use in this location.
- (e) Encouraging the use of upper floors in retail premises for commercial or residential use.
- (f) Enhancing the physical environment of the town centre as a location for shopping and business through measures aimed at improving conditions for pedestrians.
- (g) Encourage the retention of traditional shop fronts to enhance the streetscape. Shopfront signage shall not, by reason of its scale, form or size, be visually detrimental to the appearance and character of the building or streetscape. Internally illuminated signs will not be permitted.

**5.5 Mixed use zoned land**

This zoning is intended to facilitate renewal of these areas, which are generally located on the edge of the town but which are on the main approach roads. Sites are zoned mixed use to reflect their existing uses. It is important that any redevelopment of these sites should not result in undermining of the town centre's primacy as a retail centre and therefore large retail developments will not be considered at these locations with the exception of the mixed use zoning to the north of the town centre which includes the Tesco site. This has been retained in order to facilitate the development of large retailer(s).

**Objective ED 4: Development of Mixed use lands**

Any development on mixed use zoned lands shall demonstrate that the proposal:

- (a) Would comply with the terms of the retail objectives in this Plan and in particular would not undermine the town centre's primacy as a retail centre.
- (b) Would have no significant adverse affects on the amenities of adjacent occupiers.
- (c) Would not result in adverse transport impacts.
- (d) Would respect the prevailing development grain, scale and built form in the design and scale of development.
- (e) Would not result in any significant negative impact on the conservation value of the Rivers Feale and Allaghaun.

Figure 5.1 Part of Abbeyfeale town centre



## 5.6 Tourism

Abbeyfeale has potential for tourism growth with many important resources in close proximity including: its location on the N21 national road which is the main tourist and traffic route serving the southwest, its location on the Great Southern Trail walkway/cycleway, its local heritage including Purt Castle and the towns musical and sporting traditions, the Rivers Feale and Allaghaun and the towns traditional streetscapes with many fine traditional shopfronts. As a resource that can be further developed this plan seeks to ensure that the potential of tourism to contribute to Abbeyfeale's economy is harnessed.

The specific tourism zoning at the northern fringe of the LAP area is intended to be linked to the Great Southern Trail greenway which runs along the northern boundary of the LAP area. Greenways such as the Great Southern Trail are major tourist attractions and have the potential to generate expenditures on lodgings, food and recreation related services. Tourism activities related to the Great Southern Trail and Railway bar such as cafés/restaurants, equipment rentals, bike hire and accommodation including



Figure 5.3 Section of Great Southern Trail



Figure 5.4 Existing signage for the GST at carpark on Railway Road

Figure 5.5 The River Feale

Overall this plan encourages the growth of the tourism sector while safeguarding the local natural and built environment and local cultural heritage for the benefit of both tourism and the local community.

**Objective ED 5: Tourism**  
 It is the objective of the Council to

- Enhance the tourism potential of the town including the promotion of new tourism products in an environmentally sustainable manner in partnership with other agencies and the local community.
- Encourage new development for the tourist industry to be located within the LAP boundary to maximise existing services.
- Protect the natural, built and cultural heritage features from unwarranted encroachment of unsuitable development.

## Chapter 6 Transport

### Strategic Policy for Transport

**Policy T1:** It is the policy of the Council to improve accessibility; reduce dependence on private car transport and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport and alternatives to the private car.

**Policy T2:** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010 – 2016 in relation to transport and infrastructure and the objectives outlined below.

#### 6.1 Introduction

The Government's policy 'Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future', the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 - 2022, the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016, and the 30 year Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) all point in the direction of improving existing transport infrastructure and designing new infrastructure that will make non-car transport modes more attractive.

At a national level, 'Smarter Travel' has as a target that by 2020 the percentage of those travelling to work by car will decrease from 65% to 45%. It recommends a range of actions, many to be implemented through the National Development Plan. This is a particular challenge in Abbeyfeale where, as noted in Chapter 2 of this Plan, a significant number of people travel to work, school or college by car. Bus Eireann runs a daily service from Limerick to Killarney and Limerick to Tralee which stops in Abbeyfeale town. Maintaining and improving the bus connections between Abbeyfeale and Limerick city is a key objective to ensuring that the town develops in an efficient and sustainable manner and an alternative to the car as a choice of travel is promoted. Rural bus, the community bus company operates a weekly service in the Abbeyfeale and the wider west Limerick area.

There are other issues relating to the effectiveness and uses of the existing transport infrastructure in the town. The N21 Limerick to Killarney road passes through the centre of Abbeyfeale causing traffic congestion issues throughout the year, but particularly in the summer months with tourist traffic to and from the southwest. The town is served by a limited capacity road network with many roads meeting in the town centre contributing to congestion problems. Also because of on-street parking on both sides of Main Street and Bridge Street, trucks have particular difficulty passing each other. In order to address the traffic management in the town centre the council is currently in the process of developing a traffic management plan on Main Street as well as promoting the use of the council owned car park to the south of Main Street through the possible provision of a pedestrian link from Main Street.

**Objective T1: Traffic Management**

- (a) It is an objective of the Council to work with the local community to address traffic management issues within the town.
- (b) It is an objective of the Council to seek the provision of a vehicular link road between Pound Lane/Hill road and the Killarney road in order to reduce traffic congestion on the Market Square.

In relation to car parking there are both public and private car parking areas within or close to Abbeyfeale town centre. Approximately 57 car spaces are provided in the Market Square. The Council owned car park to the south of Main Street and accessed off Pound Lane provides for 100 car spaces. The development of a direct pedestrian link from Main street to the council car park would make it more amenable to visitors to the town and would also help to open up the existing under-utilised backland areas to the Main street. Private car parking areas within the town include the Church car park on Convent Road, the Tesco car park off Main Street and the Supervalu car park on Bridge Street.

Figure 6.1 Council owned car park to the south of Main Street

**6.2 Movement and accessibility**

The Council is committed to the development of a network of access routes reflecting the requirements of personal safety, choice, and convenience to services and amenities. The access network should facilitate access for all, and should be socially inclusive. These requirements and the desire to minimise dependence on the car for short journeys, means that a matrix type network is preferable to a network with long cul-de-sacs.

The indicative distributor road shown on the zoning map will act as a localized bypass for the town. This is specified in the Mid West Area Strategic Plan 2012-2030 which states that in the absence of full alignment upgrades of the

N21, consideration should be given to a localized bypass for the town of Abbeyfeale. Any redevelopment of the Supervalu site and/or former coursing field shall include traffic management proposals indicating the removal of car parking along St. Ita's Road/Hill Road and the development of off-street car parking. Car-parking may be provided on part of the open space zoned area adjoining the proposed distributor road subject to appropriate layout and landscaping. Access to any proposed car parking at this location shall be provided off the proposed distributor road. Also in the future should resources permit it is intended to develop a footpath/cycleway along Railway road from the Great Southern Trail car park to connect with the existing footpath on New Street. This would help to attract pedestrians and cyclists using the Great Southern Trail into the town centre.

All future development proposals in proximity to the N21 national road shall have regard to the DoECLG publication 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (January 2012). Direct access and intensification of direct access to the national road network where a 100kph speed limit applies will not be permitted in accordance with provisions of Section 2.5 of the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines and Policy IN P9 of the County Development Plan, 2010-2016.

Figure 6.2 Lack of a footpath on Railway Road which links the town and the Great Southern Trail



**Objective T2: Network of pedestrian and cycle facilities**

It is an objective of the Council to encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Abbeyfeale, and facilitate the provision of an attractive and coherent network of off-road footpaths and cycle facilities. This will be achieved by:

- (a) The seeking of secure cycle parking facilities at appropriate locations as opportunities arise.
- (b) The encouragement of combined off-road footpath and cycleway links along Railway Road and along the River Feale.

(c) A pedestrian/cycle network will be encouraged where identified in Appendix 1, Map 2 linking existing and proposed residential areas to each other and to amenity areas and to provide connections to the town centre.

**Objective T3: Measures in support of public transport**

(a) It is an objective of the Council to facilitate measures to improve public transport infrastructure within Abbeyfeale and networks to adjacent settlements and Limerick City.

(b) All future development proposals shall incorporate the relevant objectives of the Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP 2012-2030), the smarter travel strategy, and the promotion of enhanced public transport facilities and services.

**Objective T4: Car parking and traffic management**

It is an objective of the Council to encourage the provision of off-street public parking areas as part of any application for development.

**Objective T5: Safeguard the Capacity of the N21 and R-524**

It is the objective of the Council to safeguard the capacity of the N21 and the R524 and ensure that any future developments do not compromise the strategic function of these roads.

**Objective T6: Development of Enterprise and Employment land requiring new access onto the N21**

Any future development proposal that require a new access onto the N21 shall include a Traffic and Transport Assessment in accordance with Objective IN O2: Traffic and Transport Assessments of the County Development Plan to ensure that the junction(s) with the national road has sufficient capacity to facilitate the extent of the development planned. The costs of implementing mitigation measures arising from the traffic impact shall be borne by the developer.

## Chapter 7 Infrastructure

### Water Services, Energy, telecommunications and Waste

#### Strategic policy for Infrastructure

**Policy IN 1** It is the policy of the Council in co-operation with Irish Water to provide for adequate water, and sewerage facilities in Abbeyfeale; and raise awareness of energy efficiency, and waste management including the minimisation, re-use, recycling/recovery of waste.

#### 7.1 Introduction

A key consideration for the development of the town is the availability and quality of infrastructure. Infrastructure and land use should be managed and developed together while protecting the environment for future generations. The responsibility for water services provision now rests with the newly formed body 'Irish Water.' However the local Authority will remain closely involved in the sector acting as an agent of Irish Water in relation to the operation and maintenance of services.

#### 7.2 Water Supply

Abbeyfeale's public water supply is currently provided from the existing Water Treatment Plant located to the south of the town. This plant was constructed in the 1980's. The plant is supplied with raw water from the River Feale and there is sufficient resource available to supply the existing needs and predicted needs of the area.

#### **Objective IN 1 Water supply and storage**

It is an objective of the Council to:

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

#### 7.3 Foul Sewerage

The Abbeyfeale Wastewater Treatment Plant was constructed in the early 1980's and is located adjacent to the River Feale on the northwestern edge of Abbeyfeale. The design capacity of the plant is 2860 Population Equivalent (PE) but is receiving a loading of 4680 population equivalent. The excess loading includes the transport of sewage sludge from four neighbouring villages to the plant for treatment. The council is currently in the process of appointing consultants to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant.

### **Objective IN 2: Sewerage facilities**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Ensure that adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided for prior to further development to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters. In this regard account shall also be taken of existing outstanding permissions in assessing impact.
- (b) Ensure that development proposals provide adequate waste water infrastructure to facilitate the proposed development. This includes the separation of foul and surface water through the provision of separate sewerage networks.
- (c) Ensure that discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

### **7.4 Surface Water Drainage**

A combined system is in place for foul and storm water within the town. This has implications for the capacity of the existing sewerage network, particularly during periods of high rainfall where overflow of untreated wastewater into waterways can occur when stormwater dominates the system.

### **Objective IN 3: Surface water disposal**

It is the objective of the council to:

- (a) Require that all applications for development demonstrate that appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are examined and where feasible provided.
- (b) Require the submission of surface water design calculations establishing the suitability of drainage between the site and a suitable outfall in order to establish whether the existing surface water drainage system can accommodate an additional discharge generated by a proposed development(s).
- (c) Require applicants to investigate the potential for the provision of porous surfaces where car parking and hard landscaping is proposed.
- (d) Protect the surface water resources of the plan area, and in individual planning applications request the provision of sediment and grease traps, and pollution control measures where deemed necessary.
- (e) Surface water runoff to be designed to agricultural runoff rates, subject to agreement with the local authority.

### **7.5 Flood Risk Management**

The Council is committed to managing flood risk in accordance with the principles set out in Government guidance 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' (DEHLG and OPW, Nov. 2009).

A stage 1 flood risk assessment has been prepared for Abbeyfeale and is included as appendix 2 of this LAP. OPW preliminary flood risk indicative maps are available for Abbeyfeale under the OPW's CFRAM study. These indicate substantial areas of land along the River Feale and River Allaughan are located in the indicative Flood Zone. In this zone most development is

considered vulnerable to flooding and as a response the LAP designates most lands located in the Flood zone as open space or agricultural use. However when the final OPW CFRAM map for Abbeyfeale become available the local area plan shall be amended if there are significant discrepancies between the OPW preliminary flood risk indicative map and the final version.

A small tributary of the Feale known locally as the Glorach Stream may pose a flood risk to properties in its vicinity. This stream flows west to the River Feale and is culverted under St. Ita's Road/Pound Lane and again under the N21. Any future planning applications in proximity to this stream should include a site specific flood risk assessment in accordance with "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities, (DoECLG Nov. 2009)."

#### **Objective IN 4: Flood Risk Management**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Implement the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works Guidelines on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidance Documents (November 2009) ', and any subsequent guidelines.
- b) Require any development proposal in a location identified as being subject to flooding to:
  1. Carry out a flood risk / catchment analysis for the development to assess the likely level of flood hazard that may affect the site to the satisfaction of the Council;
  2. Design the development to avoid flood levels, incorporating building design measures and materials to assist evacuation and minimize damage to property from flood waters;
  3. Demonstrate that the proposal will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow across floodplains, where compensatory storage / storm water retention measures shall be provided on site and will not alter the hydrological regime up stream or down stream or at the development location so as to pose an additional flood risk or to increase flood risk;
  4. Proposals should have provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff i.e. minimisation of concrete surfaces and use of semi-permeable materials and include adequate measures to cope with the flood risk, e.g. sustainable drainage systems.
- c) Have regard to the Office of Public Works Planning Policy Guidance in the design and consideration of development proposals; and
- d) Preserve riparian strips free of development and ensure adequate width to permit access for river maintenance.

All flood risk assessments should have regard to national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the River Shannon Catchment Flood Risk and Management Plan Studies

(CFRAM) when completed, by the OPW and the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan. The 'development management justification test' and the 'plan - making justification test' as detailed in The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidance document will guide Council responses to development proposals in areas at moderate or high risk of flooding.

## **7.6 Waste Management**

In Abbeyfeale there is a public waste recycling facility located in the Tesco car park. The nearest civic recycling centre is located in Newcastle West providing recycling facilities for a comprehensive range of waste materials.

### **Objective IN 5: Provision of composting facilities**

It is an objective of the Council to ensure developers provide new housing with effective composting facilities by applying suitable planning conditions to new residential development.

### **Objective IN 6: Shared bin spaces**

It is an objective of the Council to require all commercial and residential developments to be provided with adequate internal and external space for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials. This is particularly important in relation to shared bin spaces such as apartment developments. In such cases the following must be provided for:

- (a) Adequate space must be given for waste to be segregated and stored in an appropriate manner.
- (b) A multi-occupancy development will require a designated, ventilated waste storage area of sufficient size which allows for the segregation of waste.
- (c) New and redesigned commercial buildings and apartment complexes should have waste facilities designed in a manner that waste can be collected directly from them and where possible waste and recyclables should not have to be collected on the street or at the front of the premises.

## **7.7 Energy and Electricity**

Abbeyfeale is served by the ESB distribution network and the town itself is served by 110KV overhead electricity lines. The Council will work with Limerick-Clare Energy Agency to improve energy conservation and renewable energy use.

## **7.8 Access to Broadband and Telecommunications**

The town of Abbeyfeale benefits from access to Broadband. It is important that adequate broadband service infrastructure is installed at the appropriate time into new development schemes.

### **Objective IN 7: Broadband**

It is the objective of the Council to ensure that all new development proposals where relevant, incorporate broadband service infrastructure on an open access basis.

The Planning Authority's goal is to achieve a balance between facilitating the provision of mobile telecommunications services in the interests of social and economic progress and sustaining residential amenities, environmental quality and public health. When considering proposals for telecommunication masts, antennae and ancillary equipment, the Council will have regard to the DEHLG document 'Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures' (DEHLG 1998) and any subsequent advisory document issued by the DECLG.

## Chapter 8 Environment and Heritage

### Strategic policy for Environment and Heritage

**Policy EH 1** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the archaeological, architectural, natural and built heritage of Abbeyfeale is protected.

**Policy EH 2** It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016.

### 8.1 Introduction

The protection of the built, historic and natural environment is a keystone to the sustainable development of a town or village. Conservation and preservation relates to buildings and land and the Council is concerned with the protection and enhancement of both. As settlements develop the demands on the environment, both natural and manmade, become greater. The role of the Council is to balance the two – preservation of a high quality environment while satisfying economic and social needs.

### 8.2 Built Environment

#### 8.2.1 Protected Structures

In the interests of safeguarding the cultural and built heritage, 61 structures have been identified for their contribution to the architectural heritage in the town and have been designated as 'protected structures' under section 51 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2013. These structures are included within the Record of Protected Structures (R.P.S.) set out in Appendix 4 of this Plan. This list of structures is an abstract from the Record of Protected Structures, which is a statutory document maintained by Limerick County Council as part of the County Development Plan. As the Planning Act allows a Planning Authority to make additions to or deletions from the RPS the most recent edition of the RPS contained in the County Development Plan should be consulted. Exempted development regulations are not applicable to such structures where proposed development would materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to the architectural heritage.

In the past funds were available from Limerick County Council in the form of Conservation Grants to ensure the restoration and conservation of these buildings in an appropriate manner that reflects and respects the original detailing and construction. Information on any future funding available can be received from the Conservation Officer, Limerick City and County Council.

#### 8.2.2 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA)

The collective arrangement of buildings within the town centre is considered of significance to the built heritage of the town and contributes to the character and established street and townscape. It is the objective of the Council to preserve the character of this area and therefore it is designated as an

Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). The ACA is defined in the Protected Structures and ACA Map 3. The designation of the ACA does not preclude future development, but the carrying out of works to the exterior of structures within the ACA shall not be considered as exempted development where those works would materially affect the character of the ACA. In assessing development proposals within the ACA, the Council shall take into account the material effect that the proposed development would be likely to have on the character of the ACA.<sup>6</sup>

### **8.2.3. Abbeyfeale Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)**

Abbeyfeale straddles a significant road through the county which in the past was the mail road linking Limerick to Tralee. Designated now as a National Primary Route, the N21 road forms the spine of the town as it sinuously wends its way from the east, with a number of cross-streets and lanes giving access to the lands on either side. Abbeyfeale's origins are to be seen on the western side of the town where a graveyard contains the demolished remains of a structure associated with the Cistercian Order. South of this site is the Market Square which still functions as such on designated days during the week. Here the road swings southwards to follow the direction for Tralee. The Market Square, crowned by a statue honouring Fr. Casey, a local curate of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century is the highest point in Abbeyfeale's core emphasising its significance.

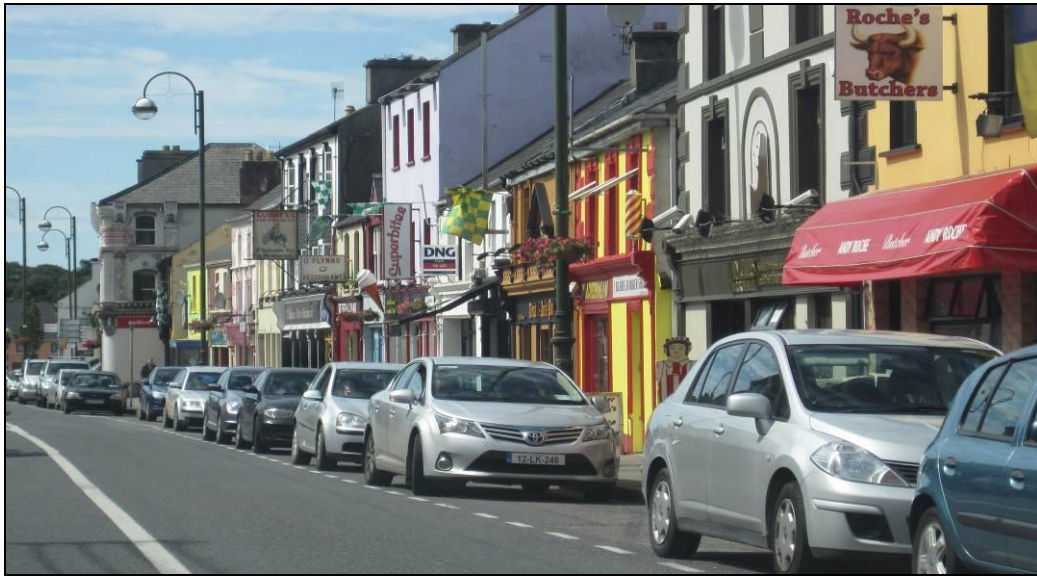
North of the Square is a road that links the town to Glin and the Shannon Estuary, off which runs a road to Listowel. In and around the Square, and along the streets radiating out from it, are the locations of places of significance, past and present. These include the former Police Barracks and the Court House which also houses the Library branch today, the Pound and the Post Office, and the site of the now demolished Roman Catholic Church now occupied by St Marys Boys National School. This area was, and is, the focus of commercial activity, with banks and hotels, as well as many shops and other places of commercial activity, being located here.

The building lines found in Abbeyfeale are the normal found in many Irish towns. Each individual building, be it for commercial or residential purposes, tended to have its own distinct plot of land. The buildings tended to be constructed in terraces, though this was not adhered to in all instances. In Abbeyfeale's historic core (on which the Architectural Conservation Area is centred) the buildings, be they residential or commercial, address the footpaths directly. New developments proposed within the Architectural Conservation Area, and in its setting, should respect the existing building lines and the historic form of those buildings. Proposals for new buildings should not seek to dominate the historic core and should respect the historic fabric of the buildings and the morphology of their plots.

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<sup>6</sup> Refer to section 7.6.4, Chapter 7 of the Limerick County Development Plan, page 7-26 to 7-28.

Figure 8.1 Part of the ACA on Main Street



In undertaking repairs or maintenance works to buildings in the Abbeyfeale Architectural Conservation Area, property owners and their contractors should be aware of the materials traditionally used in the county, and more specifically, in the town itself and its immediate surrounds. Refer to Appendix 4.

Works in Conservation Areas must retain existing surviving elements; aim to re-instate lost elements or character, with new build complementing the original streetscapes, building lines and open areas. Proposals for new buildings should not seek to dominate the historic core and should respect the historic fabric of the buildings and the morphology of their plots.

Where original or early surviving elements; such as windows and doors, rainwater goods of rolled mild steel or cast iron (or a combination of both), natural slate roofing and lime renders, and so forth, then these should be repaired sensitively. The guidance here is to “do as much as necessary, as little as possible”. If replacement proves necessary, then they must be replaced on a “like-for-like” basis.

In replacing elements that were installed as replacements in recent decades, such as aluminum windows or smooth finish artificial slate, there are good reasons, apart from those put forward on the basis of architectural heritage, to return to the original materials, such as timber windows and natural slate. These reasons include the compatibility of traditional materials with one another and the fact that the historic material allows the building to breathe, thereby providing a healthier internal atmosphere for those using the buildings.

**Objective EH 1: Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)**

It is the objective of the Council to protect, conserve and where appropriate, enhance the ACA as identified in Map 3.

Proposals for development within the ACA shall;

- a) Reflect and respect the scale and form of existing structures within the ACA in proportioning, overall scale and use of materials and finishes, particularly with reference to the street frontages and seek to contribute to or enhance the character and streetscape of the ACA;
- b) Seek to retain/incorporate/replicate exterior features which contribute or enhance the character and streetscape of the ACA such as shop fronts, sash windows, gutters and down pipes, decorative plasterwork etc;
- c) Ensure priority is given to the pedestrian, to inclusive access, and to facilitating the improvement of the quality of the public realm: the latter will include for consideration of the planting of trees in the wider public open spaces, benches for sitting and the articulation of uses through appropriate paving.

**Objective EH 2: Protected Structures**

It is the objective of the Council to protect structures entered onto the Record of protected structures, or listed to be entered onto the Record and to encourage their appropriate re-use and restoration. The Council shall resist;

- a) Demolition of protected structures, in whole or in part;
- b) Removal or modification of features of architectural importance;
- c) Development that would adversely affect the setting of the protected structure.

**8.3 Archaeological Heritage**

There are two Recorded Monuments (LI042-12001/002) within the Local Area Plan zoned area. They are the church and graveyard in the town square on the site of the original Cistercian foundation which gave the town its name. A further Recorded Monument, a ringfort LI042-006, lies on the northern perimeter in the townland of Knockbrack. The monuments within the local area plan boundary are shown on the accompanying map in Appendix 5. The location of each archaeological monument is provided in the Record of Monuments and Places which is maintained and up-dated by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, a branch of the National Monuments Service. The 1994 amendment to the National Monuments Act established the Record of Monument and Places on a statutory basis with a set of maps and a catalogue of sites. Copies are available for public consultation in the Council's Planning Department and in all the county libraries. Under the provisions of the National Monuments Act Section 12, 1994 Amendment any person proposing any works (this includes exempted development) 'at or in relation to such a monument' has to give written notification two months in advance to the Minister for the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Sites continue to be discovered, some of those found subsequent to the publication (1997) have been included in the Site and Monuments Database which is available on the website [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie). Under Section 14 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004, proposed development or works within or in the vicinity of archaeological monuments in

Local Authority or State ownership or guardianship may require authorisation in the form of Ministerial Consent to proceed and the National Monuments Service, Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht shall be consulted in this regard in advance of site works. Proposed developments and/or works, dredging schemes etc. within or in the vicinity of watercourses have the potential to impact on previously unrecorded wrecks or small craft that may be over 100-years old, and which are therefore protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987. The Underwater Archaeological Unit of the National Monuments Service, Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht shall be consulted in advance of any works on the Feale and Allaughan rivers.

Limerick City and County Council is committed to protecting the archaeological heritage including the preservation of unrecorded or newly discovered archaeological material. Consequently, the planning authority has a policy of archaeological monitoring on developments whose scale and nature may have an impact on previously unknown archaeological materials.<sup>7</sup>

**Objective EH 3: Archaeology**

It is the objective of the Council:

- (a) to seek the preservation (in situ, or at a minimum, preservation by record) of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest. This is to include all the sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.
- (b) to protect and preserve (in situ, or at a minimum, preservation by record) all sites and features of historical interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.
- (c) to ensure that any proposed development shall not have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument.
- (d) that the area of a monument and the associated buffer area shall not be included as part of the open space requirement demanded of a specific development, but should be additional to the required open spaces, and if appropriate, where such a monument lies within a development, a conservation and/or management plan for that monument shall be submitted as part of the landscape plan for that development.

#### **8.4 Natural Environment**

Abbeyfeale is set within the Western Uplands landscape character area as designated by the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016. The pastoral nature of the agricultural landscape around Abbeyfeale reflects the function of the town as a service centre for the agricultural sector. The town developed as market town in the 18th century, the market square adjoining the original site of the Cistercian Abbey being the key civic space.

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<sup>7</sup> Refer to section 7.5.2, Archaeological heritage, of the Limerick County Development Plan, page 7-23.

The Rivers Feale and Allaghaun and Glorach stream which cross Bridge Street and Pound Lane remain of central importance to the town and are recognised as an important amenity and are valued as a natural habitat. Both rivers have been designated as a part of the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation. This designation has implications for development, in terms of buffer zones, but could also constitute an opportunity, as the designation of such areas is generally recognition of good species diversity and river quality, which would have implications for angling activities. The lands adjoining the rivers are zoned open space and recreation, agriculture and semi natural open space. These zonings recognise the importance of the natural habitat of the river. Indicative walkways have been indicated on the zoning maps in the plan. These contribute to the role of the river as an amenity and can also help to reinforce the idea of a buffer zone between the river and any form of development.

There are also a number of impressive tree groups and freestanding trees that exist particularly in and around the town park and adjacent to the old vocational school site at Mountmahon. These are particular landscape features which future development patterns should have regard to. A number of field boundaries within the plan area, while lacking mature impressive trees, nonetheless form an essential part of the natural fabric of the area.

**Objective EH4: Tree Protection and Nature Conservation**

It is the objective of the Council to protect mature trees. Development that requires the felling or harming of such trees shall not normally be permitted unless otherwise supported by a tree survey report establishing that the subject trees are of no ecological or amenity value. Such report shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and competent person.

**Objective EH5: Designated Sites and Nature Conservation**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- a) Protect the integrity of the downstream Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation site, through the establishment of buffer zones around the river.
- b) 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.
- c) Ensure that development projects likely to have significant effects on the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation site are subject to appropriate assessment and will not be permitted under this plan unless they comply with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

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

In terms of general nature conservation the Council will protect undesignated habitats such as notable trees and hedgerows and ponds/wetlands and other natural features of local importance.

**Objective EH6: Compliance with Water Framework Directive**

All development activities governed by the plan shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive and associated regulations and guidance documentation.

**Objective EH7: Compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive**

Any developments that fall within the ambit of the EU EIA directive 2011/92/EU and associated regulations shall be subject to the contents of the revised directive and the updated regulations.

Figure 8.2 Walkways in Pairc Cois Féile



**8.5 Climate Change**

Promoting land use patterns and economic activity that minimises effects on climate change is an objective of Limerick City and County Council. As part of this objective the Council will endeavour to promote responsible development and management of land, drainage systems and natural habitats and the local delivery of energy, efficiency and adaptation to climate change in Abbeyfeale.

Achieving a low carbon producing economy and society requires, where practicable, everybody seeking to efficiently meet resource requirements from

indigenous local resources. Those indigenous resources should be harnessed to optimum potential in order to meet or exceed local needs, having due consideration for national targets and the local planning guidelines. This involves not just the use of local resources where applicable but the adoption of new building techniques and designs which will minimise energy intensive inputs. Development proposals which incorporate these issues will be encouraged by the Council.

**Objective EH8: Adaptation to Climate Change**

It is an objective of the Council to promote responsible development and management of land, drainage systems and natural habitats and to encourage development at appropriate locations, which minimise the uses of fossil fuels and maximises the use of local or renewable resources.

## Chapter 9 Community and Recreation

### Strategic Policy for Community and Recreation

#### Policy C1: Community and Recreational Facilities

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the education, health facilities, recreation, open space and community needs of residents, both new and existing, can be provided for by suitably zoning lands for these purposes. The Council will require future development in Abbeyfeale to be accompanied by a corresponding expansion of these facilities and amenities.

#### 9.1 Introduction

In recent times greater emphasis has been placed on the importance of community infrastructure in national policy as reflected in many guidance documents published since 2005. These include policy documents on recreation for children and young people, provision of schools, green travel, residential design guidelines and the recent age friendly initiative pilot project undertaken in the county. The Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 includes a requirement for future development proposals to submit a supplementary social infrastructural assessment with planning applications to determine if the community and its existing facilities have the capacity to cater for the proposal. Prospective developers are advised to consult with the Limerick County Development Plan, Chapter 6 Community and Recreation referring to general policy and objectives on these topics, and Chapter 10, Development Management Guidelines specifically section 10.3 regarding the Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment.

#### 9.2 Community and Recreation

Abbeyfeale has a vibrant voluntary community with many local community groups involved in a wide range of activities including sports, arts and culture, local history and heritage, youth, environmental and local development. It also has a number of important features and amenities that offer both active and passive recreational opportunities and provide important wildlife habitats. The Riverside Community Park (Pairc Cois Féile) located to the southwest of the town and the recently completed Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway linking Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale are important contributors to the quality of life of the residents of the town and surrounding areas. The completion of an all-weather multi-use Mini Pitch in Pairc Cois Féile provides an area of active amenity which is of enormous benefit for local children. The Council supports such proposals and will endeavor to work with the local community in the future in relation to community and recreational requirements. The identification of possible amenity walkways and cycle routes throughout the town forms an important part of the plan.

Figure 9.1 Recently completed Coláiste Íde agus Iosef Secondary School



**Objective C 1: Open space hierarchy**

It is the objective of the Council to seek the provision of well designed, high quality, accessible and useable open space in all residential development in accordance with the development management standards of the County Development Plan.

**Objective C 2: New amenity areas and Walkways**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties over look proposed walkways.
- b) Co-operate with other agencies to enhance and provide recreational and amenity facilities in the town.

**Objective C 3: Allotments and Community Gardens**

It is the objective of the Council to facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.

**9.3 Education and Childcare Facilities**

The town is currently served by four pre-schools/after schools childcare services. These are Teach Mhuire Montessori school located on Colbert Terrace, Teach na Féile playschool on New Street and Little Stars creche and Feale Montessori on the Killarney Road. The town is served by two primary schools, St Mary's Boys National School on Church Street and Scoil Mháthair Dé on Convent Street which have an overall enrolment of 220 pupils. Secondary level education is provided by Coláiste Íde agus Iosef located on

Convent Street which has an enrollment of 750 pupils. This school opened in September 2011 and is an amalgamation of 3 former secondary schools in the town. Also County Limerick VEC run a number of education and training courses at their centre in the former vocational school building at Mountmahon.

Based on the envisaged population projections to 2020 outlined in Chapter 3, demand for educational facilities will continue to rise in Abbeyfeale in the lifetime of this Plan. As outlined in chapter 2 Abbeyfeale has a relatively young population with 378 persons under the age of 12 years. This equates to 19% of the total population.

#### **Objective C 4: Educational Facilities**

It is the objective of the City and County Council to:

- a) Ensure that there are sufficient educational places to meet the needs generated by proposed residential developments by requiring the completion of a Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment for residential developments of 5 or more dwellings.
- b) Ensure that all proposals for childcare facilities shall comply with the development management standards of the County Development Plan.

#### **9.4 Health Facilities**

There is a part time HSE clinic located on Colbert Terrace in the town. The primary role of the Planning Authority with regard to healthcare is to ensure that (a) there is an adequate policy framework in place inclusive of the reservation of lands, should additional services be required and (b) healthcare facilities would be permitted subject to good planning practice. The Council will continue to support further economic and social progress with regard to health services including capital investment in community and continuing care services at the HSE (West) Health Clinic in Abbeyfeale.

#### **Objective C 5: Provision of Healthcare Facilities**

It is an objective of the Council to:

Support the Health Service Executive (West) and other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of appropriate healthcare facilities and the provision of community based care facilities, at appropriate locations, subject to proper planning considerations and the principles of sustainable development.

#### **9.5 Emergency services**

There is a part-time fire station located in the centre of the town, just off Main street and a garda station located adjacent the N21 at Mountmahon.

## CHAPTER 10 URBAN DESIGN

### Strategic Policy for Urban Design in Abbeyfeale

#### Policy UD1:

**It is the policy of the Council to promote high quality design throughout the Plan area and ensure that future development in Abbeyfeale is guided by principles of best practice and sustainability.**

#### 10.1 Introduction

Good urban design is essential in creating attractive places for people to live in, work in and relax in. It is achieved by the arrangement of streets and spaces, the scale, and design of buildings, the materials used, the colour scheme and finishes of buildings, and the layout of roads and footpaths. A well designed urban area has a clear and distinct sense of place instilling a sense of community and pride with a clearly defined centre which is desirable to walk around and feels safe. A successfully designed urban area would generally take the following into consideration:

1. Context: How does the development respond to its surroundings?
2. Connections: How well is the new site connected?
3. Inclusivity: How easily can people use and access the development?
4. Variety: How does the development promote a good mix of activities?
5. Efficiency: How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
6. Distinctiveness: How do the proposals create a sense of place?
7. Layout: How does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces?
8. Public realm: How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
9. Adaptability: How will the buildings cope with change?
10. Privacy/amenity: How do the buildings provide a decent standard of amenity?
11. Parking: How will the parking be secure and attractive?
12. Detailed design: How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

This Chapter provides general guidance to assist prospective applicants by outlining the aspects of planning and design that the planning authority will be taking into account when assessing applications for future development.

Since the adoption of the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan in 2008 there has been a number of guidance documents issued which deal with urban design. These are as follows:

- DECLG (2013) 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets'
- DEHLG (2009) 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' and the accompanying 'Urban Design Manual',
- DEHLG (2009) 'Government Policy on Architecture 2009 – 2015,
- DEHLG (2009) 'Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment', and

- DEHLG (2007) Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities.

The DEHLG also recommends using the UK’s “Manual for Streets” (Dept of Communities and Local Government, 2007) in designing residential streets. Other influential documents affecting the design of proposals include the guidelines on flood risk management published by the DEHLG in 2009, and the government’s policy on transport ‘Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020’, published by the Department of Transport.

On a local level the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 has placed greater emphasis on appropriate design in its development management guidelines. It is a requirement that a design statement is submitted as part of a planning application. A ‘Design Statement’ is a short document which enables the applicant to explain why a particular design solution is considered the most suitable for a particular site.<sup>8</sup>

## **10.2 Derelict and Vacant sites**

Currently, there is one building/site in Abbeyfeale town on the Derelict Sites Register. This is located at Old Church Street Lane. However both commercial and residential vacancy is becoming a serious issue within the town. According to the 2011 census there were 245 vacant dwelling units in the town which accounts for nearly 23% of the total housing stock. Vacancy is becoming a particular problem along Main Street with 15 vacant shops and 7 vacant dwellings on this street. As outlined in Section 5.1 of this plan a ‘Business and Retail Incentive Scheme’ with the aim of reducing vacancy in the town centre and strengthening its retail function is currently operating in the town.

In relation to derelict and vacant sites, the general approach is to seek timely actions and improvements of sites, through positive engagement with landowners, using powers under the Derelict Sites Act only where necessary, and taking into account:

- a) outstanding planning permissions,
- b) evidence of efforts to address vacancy and dereliction,
- c) security, safety to the public and condition of the site,
- d) the conservation value of the building and requirement for remedial restoration works, and
- e) the feasibility of various actions to make good the site, and find viable uses for the site.

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<sup>8</sup> Refer to Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, Section 10.4, Design Statement.

Figure 10.1 Below shows the improvement works recently carried out at the Cinema building. This building is a protected structure.

Before



After



Figure 10.2 Vacant units at Colbert Terrace



### 10.3 Abbeyfeale Opportunity Areas

The purpose of the opportunity sites identified by this Plan is to encourage the restoration, consolidation and improvement of these sites. The appropriate development of these sites could provide for significant improvements in the town. The opportunity areas are located close to the town core and thus, sensitive development of these areas would consolidate the centre of the town whereby amenities are within walking distance. Indicative layouts are included

below. Developers are strongly advised at an early stage to engage with the planning authority and avail of a pre-planning meeting to discuss their proposal. The Plan identifies 3 opportunity areas. These are:

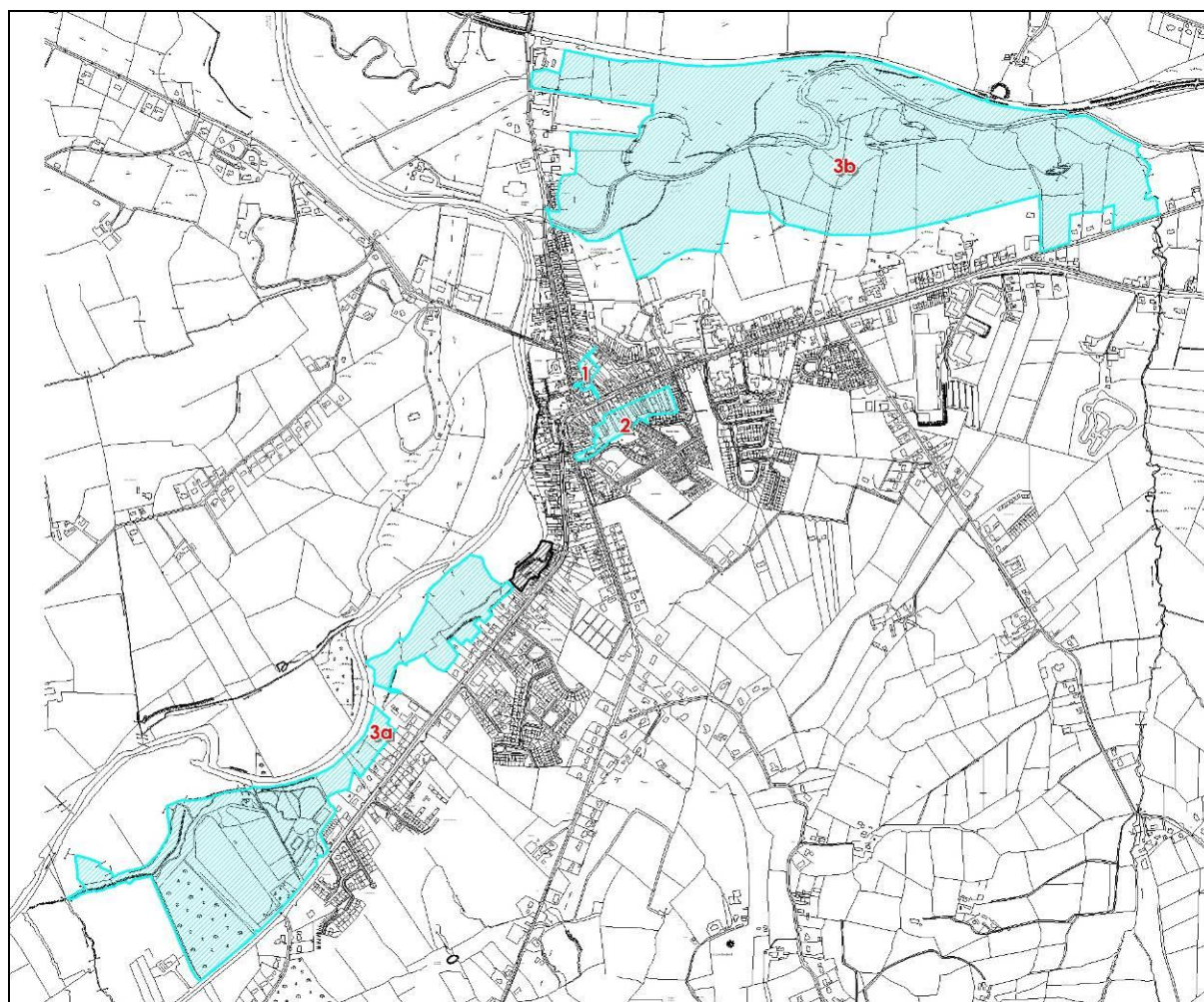
Area 1 - Backland development - North of Main street.

Area 2 - Backland development - South of Main street.

Area 3a - Riverside of the Feale.

Area 3b - Riverside of the Allaughan.

Figure 10.3 Map showing location of Opportunity Areas

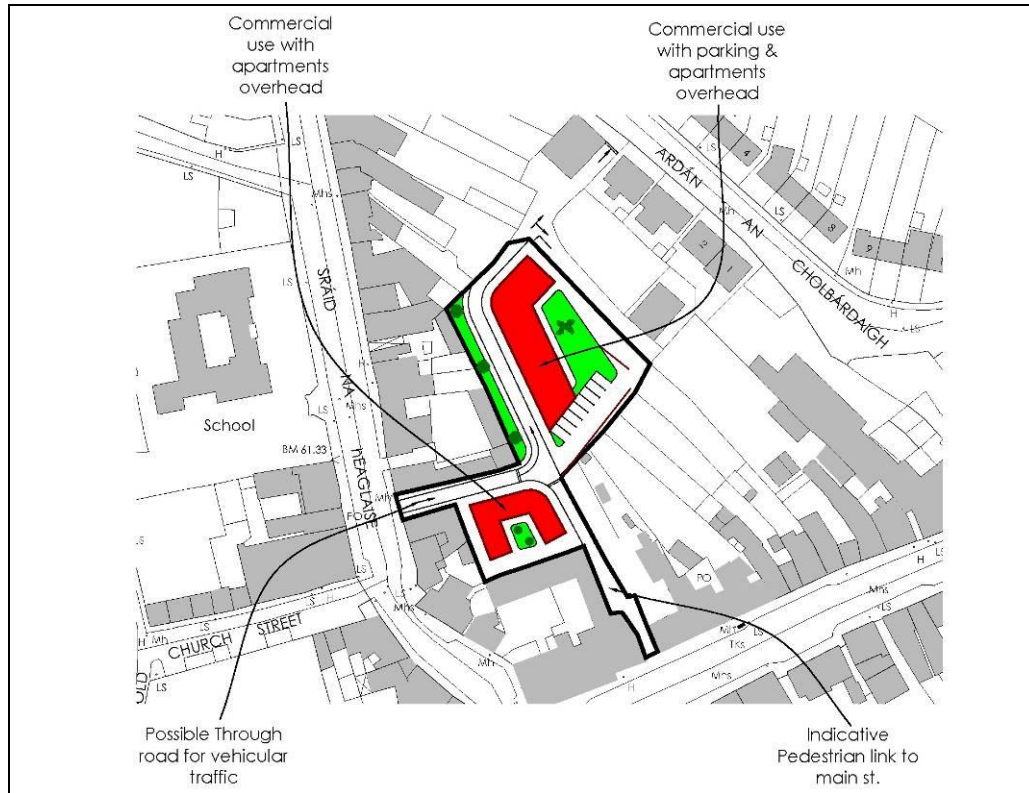


### Opportunity Area 1 – Backland development - North of Main Street

This backland site is located to the rear of Main Street and Church street. The site is accessed from Main Street via a laneway adjoining Murphy's Bar and has rear access onto Colbert Terrace via a shared access way. The site is presently in use as a tile centre and associated storage yard. There is a current planning permission permitted on this site for a mixed use development consisting of retail units, warehousing, office units, a health centre/clinic and apartments. This permission is due to expire in February 2014. Overall given its location this site presents a considerable opportunity to

allow for town centre expansion and for securing a high density mixed use scheme.

Below is an indicative layout and the purpose of this zoning is to promote town centre uses with retail and commercial uses at ground floor level fronting onto a new street(s).



### **Opportunity Area 2 – Backland development – South of Main Street**

This large backland area presents considerable opportunity for creating multiple redevelopment opportunities on backlands within proximity to the town centre. This area is currently in use as under-utilised backland areas to Main Street and consists of several narrow plots. These are bounded to the south by the council owned public carpark and Collins Park housing estate.

As part of any redevelopment of this opportunity area there is potential to develop a through road for vehicular traffic, from the access road serving Cedarville and Belfry housing areas to Pound Lane. This road would run through this backland area thus relieving some of the congestion in the town centre which is particularly bad during the summer months.

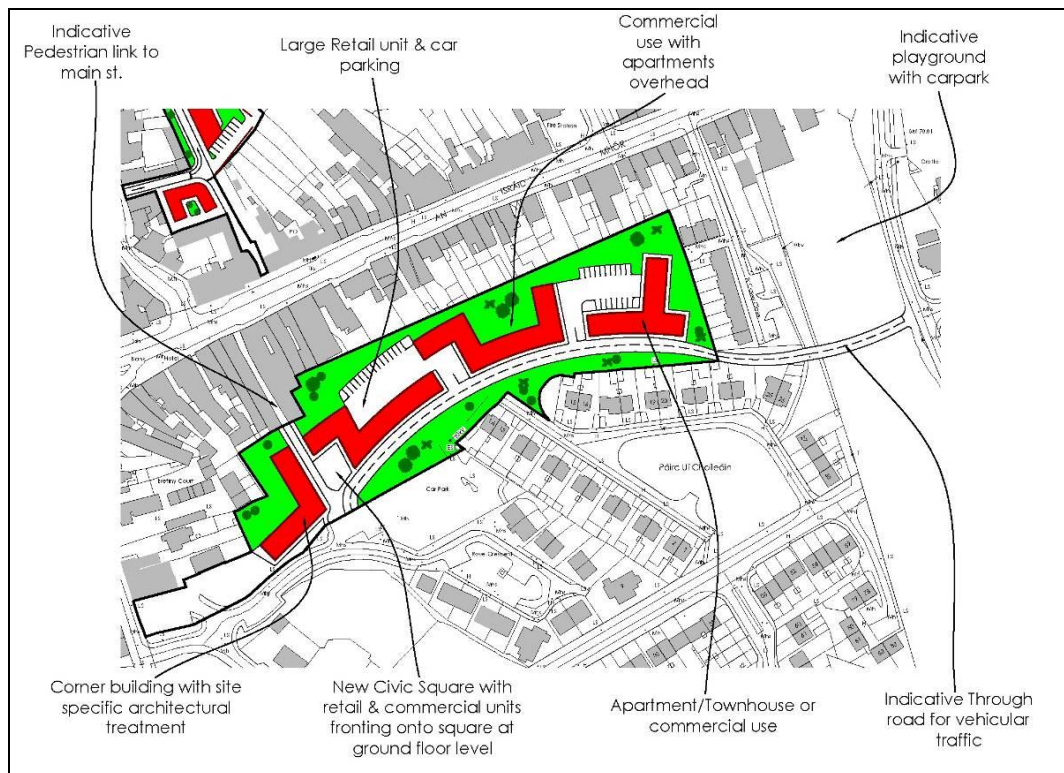
This development would allow for town centre expansion and the redevelopment of backland areas to the Main Street. New commercial uses, with a focus on a new urban civic square, fronted by retail development and over the counter commercial services where possible. A pedestrian street is proposed linking the new urban civic square and Main Street. In addition, it is proposed to permit larger commercial uses and/or convenience stores (including discount foodstores) in this area. Residential developments in the

form of apartments and/or townhouses are proposed to front the through street. Pedestrian links from this backland area to a possible future public park located on the vacant strip of land between Collins Park housing estate and Cedarville/Belfry housing estates will be encouraged.

Overall any proposed development of this area would require plot amalgamation and the co-operation of multiple landowners. The proposal would have to demonstrate a well planned, integrated scheme for the re-development of the entire area.



Below is an indicative layout and the purpose of this zoning is to promote town centre uses with retail and commercial uses at ground floor level fronting onto a new street and civic spaces



### Opportunity Area 3(a) and 3(b) – Riverside of the Feale and the Allaughan

The Rivers Feale and Allaughan and their associated flood plains are one of the most significant environmental and landscape features in the town. The River Allaughan and part of the River Feale have been designated as Special Areas of Conservation.

The banks of the River Feale including Pairc Cois Féile which includes a number of well established walks is identified as opportunity area 3(a) in this plan. This LAP zones the lands as open space and recreation and semi-natural open space. Adjacent land uses include residential and mixed use. There is potential for creating a riverside walk from the town park northward along the bank of the river Feale and linking to the town centre (see amenity map).



Opportunity area 3(b) incorporates the banks of the Allaghau River and includes part of the Great Southern Trail greenway. This LAP zones the lands as agriculture reflecting its existing use. Adjacent land uses include residential, mixed use, enterprise and employment, tourism and open space. The existing Great Southern cycleway/walkway forms the northern boundary of this opportunity area. There is potential for the creation of links through this area which could attract visitors using the Great Southern Trail into the town.



Overall both riverside areas have been identified as a valuable amenity that has potential for further appropriate development in the interest of habitat protection and recreational amenity. It is the objective of the Council to preserve and protect this area from inappropriate development in order to maintain its significance in providing an important ecological role, as a natural wildlife corridor, as a flood risk management mechanism and as a natural amenity area. Any redevelopment of this area should include:

- A comprehensive masterplan to demonstrate a planned, integrated scheme for the area to reinforce the riparian character of the banks of the river safeguarding the natural habitat of the river and its banks. Prior to any works commencing the river banks should be checked for breeding otter and kingfisher, and any works should not be carried out until the risk of significant disturbance to breeding otter or kingfisher has passed. Also scrub to be cleared from the walkways should be done only outside of the bird nesting season.
- Future development proposals shall provide high quality riverside walkways and cycleways. Proposals shall provide pedestrian and cycle ways to residential areas and the town centre where appropriate and shall be designed in accordance with the principles of universal access for all.
- All developments shall demonstrate that they enhance the biodiversity value of the area through suitable landscape and management measures.
- An Appropriate Assessment screening should be carried out at a minimum for any development in this area. Should it be deemed necessary a full Appropriate Assessment maybe required and if there are any significant effects on the ecology of the Natura 2000 site then no works shall proceed.

## Chapter 11 Land Use Zoning

### 11.1 Purpose of Land Use Zoning

The land use zoning map of the Plan guides development to appropriate locations and should be read in conjunction with both the zoning matrix of this LAP and the Limerick County Development Plan, Chapter 10: Development Management Guidelines. The purpose of the land use zones is to indicate the types of development that are considered most appropriate in each area and to avoid competing and incompatible land uses. The zoning objectives allow developers to plan proposals with some degree of certainty, subject to other conditions and requirements as set out in the Plan.

The land use zoning matrix is intended as a general guide to assess the acceptability or otherwise of development proposals, although the listed uses are not exhaustive. The various land use designations have been formulated on the following principles:

- Ensuring that land use designations will accommodate the potential population and growth needs of Abbeyfeale within and beyond the lifetime of the Plan;
- Encouraging the development of Abbeyfeale as a compact and coherent settlement;
- Ensuring an acceptable balance of land uses in proximity to one another;
- Supporting the principles of proper planning and sustainable development of the area; and
- Identifying the characteristics of various primary land use categories in order to provide a broad planning framework, which guides development to appropriate locations.

The following table sets out the total zoned land for the various zoning categories in this plan compared with the totals designated in the 2008 LAP.

Table 11.1 Total Zoned Lands

Zoning	Total Area 2014 LAP - ha	Area designated in 2008 LAP - ha	% change
Agriculture	62.43	0	+ 100
Enterprise and employment	36.73	34.15	+ 7.5
Education and community facilities	10.44	11.20	- 7
Utilities	3.52	0	+ 100
New residential Phase 1	20.74	18.01	+ 15
New residential Phase 2	5.78	24.38	- 76
New Residential Phase 3	2.69	0	+ 100
Existing residential	51.43	55.14	- 6.7

Residential Serviced Sites – Phase 1	11.37	24.51	- 53
Residential Serviced Sites – Phase 2	4.36	0	+100
Open space and Recreation	37.01	48.90	- 24
Town centre	8.84	0	+100
Mixed Use	7.37	20.56	- 64
Semi Natural Open space	7.78	47.49	- 83
Tourism	1.14	0	+100

## 11.2 Non Conforming Uses

Throughout the County there are uses which do not conform to the zoning objective of the area. These include uses which were in existence on 1st October 1964, or which have valid planning permissions. Reasonable extensions to and improvement of premises accommodating these uses will generally be permitted within the existing curtilage of the development and subject to normal planning criteria.

## 11.3 Land Use Zoning Categories

The various categories of zoning incorporated on the Land Use Zoning Map and the Zoning Matrix are defined below.

### Town Centre

The purpose of this zoning is to protect and enhance the character of Abbeyfeale town centre and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the town centre while guiding the development of an expanded and consolidated town centre area. Any proposed retail development shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Retail Strategy for the Mid West Region, 2010-2016.

### Existing Residential

The purpose of this zoning is to ensure that new development is compatible with adjoining uses and to protect the amenity of existing residential areas.

### New Residential

This zoning provides for new residential development and other services associated with residential development. While housing is the primary use in this zone, recreation, education, crèche/playschool, sheltered housing and small corner shops are also envisaged, subject to the preservation of neighbouring residential amenity. Permission may also be granted for home based economic activity within this zone, subject to the preservation of

residential amenity, traffic considerations and compliance with Section 5.5 in Chapter 5 of this Plan.

### **Residential Serviced Sites**

Residential serviced sites offer a real alternative to individuals wishing to build and design their own houses in an urban setting with established services rather than the open countryside. Suitable edge-of-town lands have been identified within the LAP boundary that provide the opportunity to cater for these lower densities, so as to provide an alternative to sporadic development in the rural areas. Proposals for the development of serviced sites shall comply with objective H3 in Chapter 4 of this plan.

### **Mixed Use**

This zoning objective reflects existing commercial uses generally located on the edge of the town and outside of the core area of the town. See also Section 5.5 in Chapter 5.

### **Open Space and Recreation**

The purpose of this zoning is to protect, improve and maintain open space and recreational areas.

### **Education and Community Facilities**

The purpose of this zoning is to facilitate the necessary development of these facilities.

### **Enterprise and Employment**

It is envisaged that these lands will accommodate high quality and sensitively designed enterprise and employment development and complementary uses as indicated in the zoning matrix. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location having regard to surrounding land uses and scale.

### **Semi Natural Open Space**

This zoning recognises the importance of the natural habitat of the River Feale and its designation as part of the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation.

### **Tourism**

The purpose of this zoning is to encourage the development of tourist facilities which are presently lacking in Abbeyfeale. The specific tourism zoning proposed on the northern fringe of the LAP area is intended to be linked to the Great Southern Trail greenway.

### **Agriculture**

The purpose of this zoning is to provide for the development of agriculture by ensuring the retention of agricultural uses, protect them from urban sprawl and ribbon development and to provide for a clear physical demarcation to the adjoining built up areas. Uses which are directly associated with agriculture or which would not interfere with this use are open for consideration. Dwellings will be considered for the long-term habitation of farmers and their sons or

daughters and subject to the terms and conditions of the rural housing policy as set out in Section 3.9 of the Limerick County Development Plan.

### **Utilities**

The purpose of this zoning is to provide for essential public services, existing and planned, such as waste water treatment plants.

### **11.4 Land Use Matrix**

The approach of the Council to land uses is determined by the zoning objective for the area in which they fall. This is depicted in the following land use matrix which should be cross-referenced with the Zoning Map (Appendix One).

**Table 11.2 Abbeyfeale Land Use Zoning Matrix 2014-2020**

Development	Existing / New Residential	Residential serviced sites	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Town centre	Mixed Use	Education/Community Facilities	Agriculture	Semi Natural Open Space	Tourism
Dwelling	/	/	X	X	O	O	X	X*	X	X
Apartments	/	X	X	X	/	O	X	X	X	X
Guesthouses	O	O	X	X	/	O	X	X	X	O
Hotel/Hostel	X	X	O	X	/	O	X	X	X	/
Local Shops	O	O	O	X	/	O	X	X	X	O
Retail Warehousing	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
Supermarket >900 sq.m	X	X	X	X	/	O	X	X	X	X
Take Away	X	X	X	X	/	O	X	X	X	X
Pub	X	X	X	X	/	O	X	X	X	O
Restaurant/Café	X	X	O	X	/	/	X	X	X	O
Cinema, Theatre	X	X	X	X	/	O	X	X	X	X
Community Hall	O	O	X	O	/	O	/	X	X	X
Nursing Home / Nursing home integrated with retirement homes	O	O	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
Health Centre/Clinic	O	O	X	X	/	O	O	X	X	X
Hospital	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
Church/School	/	/	O	O	O	O	/	X	X	X
Open space/Recreational/Leisure	O	O	O	/	O	O	/	X	O	O
Office	X	X	O	X	/	O	X	X	X	X
Car Repair/Sales	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
Petrol Station	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
Industry	X	X	/	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
Wholesale/Warehouse	X	X	/	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
Logistics	X	X	/	X	X	O	X	X	X	X
Garden Centre	X	X	O	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
Bank	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X
Group Housing, Halting Sites & Transient sites for Travellers	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Childcare Facilities	/	/	O	X	/	/	O	X	X	X
Bring Centre/Bank (e.g Bottle Banks)	/	/	O	O	/	/	/	/	X	O
Burial Ground	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	/	X	X
Allotments	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	O

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

# **Appendix 1**

## **Maps**

**Map 1: Abbeyfeale Zoning Map**

**Map 2: Amenity Map**

**Map 3: Protected Structures Map**

**Map 4: Predictive Flood Zones**

## Appendix 2

### FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

#### 2.1 Introduction: Flood risk In Abbeyfeale

This is the stage 1 flood risk identification for the changes suggested following the first public display of the draft Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan. Please note that the zoning pattern may change as the review process progresses.

#### 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:

- 1 OPW Preliminary flood risk assessment indicative fluvial flood maps.
- 2 National Coastal Protection strategy study flood and coastal erosion risk maps.
- 3 Predictive and historic flood maps and benefiting land maps.
- 4 Predictive flood maps produced under CFRAM studies.
- 5 River Basin Management Plan and reports.
- 6 Indicative assessment of existing flood risk under Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment.
- 7 Previous flood risk assessments
- 8 Advice from Office of Public Works.
- 9 Internal consultation with Local Authority personnel, in particular water services engineers.
- 10 Topographical maps - in particular LIDAR
- 11 Information on flood defence condition and performance.
- 12 Alluvial deposition maps.
- 13 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.
- 14 Local Libraries and newspaper reports.
- 15 Local consultation e.g. local groups.
- 16 Walkover surveys to assess potential sources of flooding and likely routes of flood waters and flood defences.
- 17 National, regional and local spatial plans and previous planning applications.

#### 1. OPW preliminary flood risk assessment indicative fluvial flood maps

The maps indicate that further work is needed in Abbeyfeale, but indicate the possibility of fluvial flooding, north of the town and within the development plan boundaries.

## 2. 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 Abbeyfeale.

## 3. Predictive and historic flood maps and benefiting land maps (flood maps.ie)

These maps were consulted. No benefitting lands were shown within or adjacent to the plan area. On Flood Maps.ie three locations are shown as having had previous flood events. Two are at the Allaughan bridge area to the north of the town centre, heading towards Athea. No further development zoning will occur in this location. The third was just south east of the central square in the town. This area is a mix of existing residential and open space. This zoning has not been altered as it reflects existing land use and is not likely to be intensified thereby increasing vulnerability.

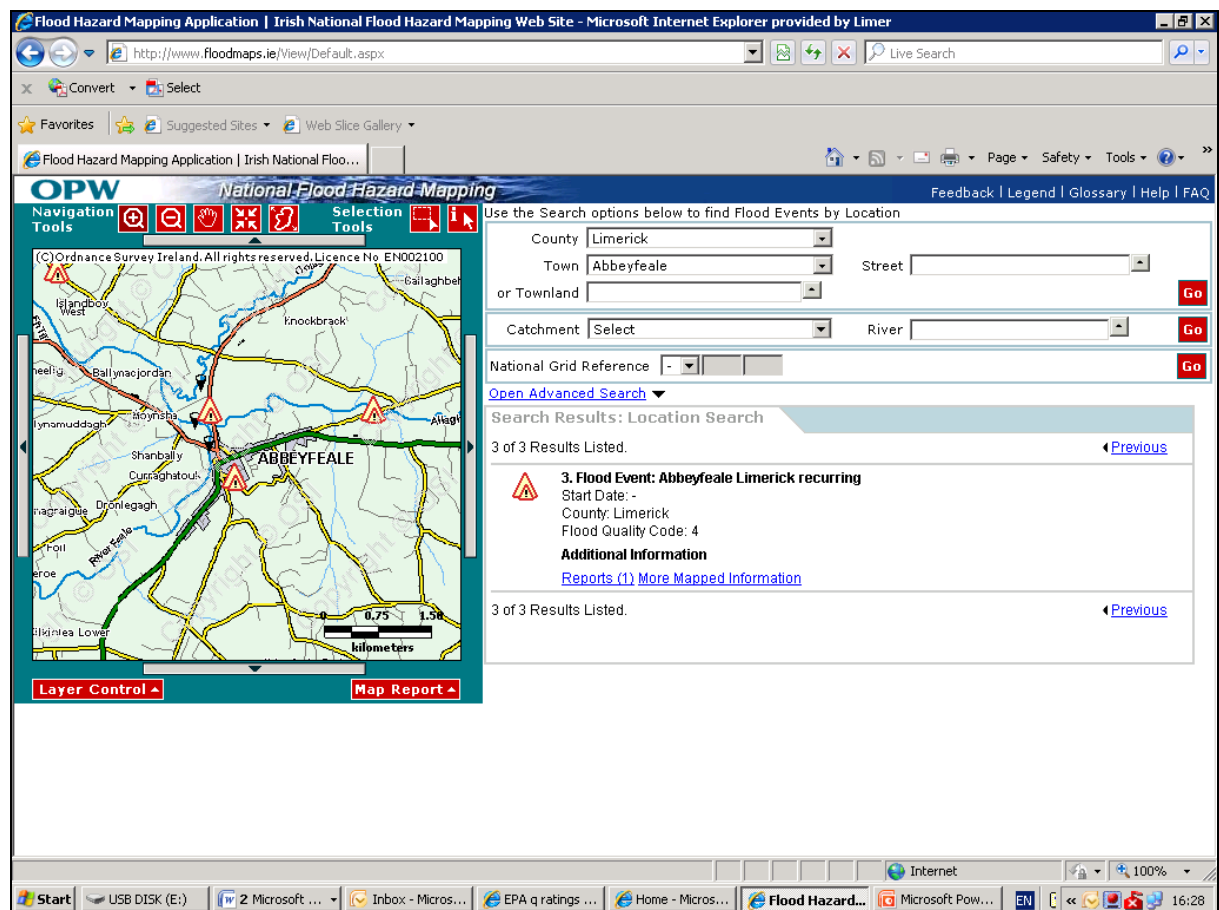


Figure 2: screen grab from floodmaps.ie showing location of flood incidents.

The older six inch map series was consulted and no areas liable to flooding were shown in the plan area. Streams were shown to the south on the six inch series. These are draining from the higher ground to the south and run through areas that are currently zoned residential. Soils are referred as poorly drained mineral with peaty top soil. This coincided with the results of field surveys which showed the surface soils as being dark, with a high organic

content. The run-off from this area runs through field drains and is piped downslope through concrete pipes running into the town centre.

In the current plan 20ha of residential land has been de-zoned to open space or agriculture. One of the largest areas to be de-zoned is that of serviced sites in the north east of the plan area. Map 1 in the new draft shows the revised zoning pattern while Map 4 shows the flood risk areas superimposed onto the zoning. This has the effect of reducing the potential area subject to flood risk. It ensures that within the plan boundary the amount of land that has permeable surfaces has increased. This is an important factor in reducing run off, in terms of flood risk control but also offers enhanced opportunities for bio-diversity (Green City Guidelines 2008, pg. 86-87).



**Figure 3:** Immediately to the south of the numbers 1 and 2 are streams running west towards the town centre. These are piped down slope when they reach the built up area.

#### **4. Predictive flood maps produced under CFRAM studies**

The Preliminary CFRAM maps have been consulted and incorporated. With their input, supplemented by walkover surveys, the current draft zoning map was produced. When the final OPW CFRAM maps become available the LAP shall be amended if there are significant discrepancies between the Preliminary maps and the final maps.

#### **5. River Basin Management Plan and reports**

Insufficient detail available to inform responses at LAP level.

## **6. Indicative assessment of existing flood risk under Preliminary Flood Risk assessment**

Not all the areas indicated as being subject to flood risk have been supported by other evidence such as alluvial soil distribution and flood events on the OPW website. However Abbeyfeale has been subject to flooding in 2009 in particular. Three factors influence the zoning decisions in the town. The first is the existence of the flood risk as presented by the draft OPW CFRAM map which has become available. The second is the vegetation study and the third is site visits carried out. The six inch map series (second edition) showed streams running through residentially zoned lands to the south of the plan area - west of the Clash Road area - see above. Given the excess in residential zoned land it makes sense to zone lands that are at least risk of flooding. Residentially zoned areas are to be reduced from 66ha to 46ha.

## **7. Previous flood risk assessments**

Flood maps.ie consulted - see 3 above.

## **8. OPW advice**

This will be sought as the review progresses.

## **9. Internal consultations with Council personnel**

Discussions regarding drainage and flooding issues took place with council engineers, which did not indicate any particular issues. They broadly agreed with the proposal to de-zone undeveloped lands that were subject to flood risk.

## **10. Information on flood defences and condition**

Works were carried out on the Allaughan River and Bridge in 2012 and earlier in 2010. The 2012 works in particular were in response to bank-side erosion which endangered housing close to the Allaughan bridge. These works improved the capability of the river to carry flood waters downstream thereby minimising flood risk. In addition a rock ramp for fish passage was installed in 2010/2011 replacing a poorly designed weir and fish pass which further improved river flow, reducing the chances of water backing up in the plan area.

## **11. LIDAR maps:**

The council has purchased LIDAR mapping which has been used to provide more accurate information in relation to flood risk. This has been used with the draft CFRAM maps.

## **12. Alluvial deposition maps**

Alluvial soils are those deposited by rivers. Their extent helps to indicate the extent of historic flood events. Along the Allaghaun river these are shown as a band between 5 and 114m in width, while along the Feale they vary from 10 - 144m in width. These areas are shown as open space, semi natural open space or agriculture.

## **13. Liable to flood markings on old 6 inch maps**

Areas liable to flood were not shown on the 6 inch maps (maps 48 and 56 revised in 1923-24) and the editions dating from 1938. No such areas are shown in the plan area.

## **14. Local libraries and reports**

Flooding reports were present on the OPW website in relation to the flood incidents in the town.

## **15. Local consultations**

These discussions took place during the public consultation process. Public meetings were held on the 23rd October 2013 and on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

## **16. 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 and local topography, and were designed to inform zoning decisions. Vegetation surveys took place from August through to November 2013.

## **17. National, regional and local spatial plans**

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

## **18. Previous planning applications**

No relevant information was found in planning application files.

## **2.3 Overall Conclusion**

The zoning system within the plan has been updated and much of the plan area has been rezoned as agriculture or open space where flood risk exists. The area of vacant enterprise and employment zoned land in the north west of the plan area has been omitted from the plan area.

## **Appendix 3**

### **SEA/AA Screening Report**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This screening document was prepared following the draft public display period including a public consultation meeting held in February 2014. This document should be read with the zoning map for the town and the Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment, in Appendix 2. A number of changes have been made to the plan. Chief amongst these has been the reduction in the amount of residentially zoned land from 66ha to 46ha, over three phases, to ensure that the provision of residentially zoned lands ties in with the provisions of the Core Strategy. The LAP boundary has been reduced with the omission of residential zoned lands at the southwestern side of the town and adjacent to the Clash road. Agricultural zoned land has increased to 62.43ha reflecting its current land use. Another change is the alteration of part of the zoning of previously designated Residential Serviced Sites Phase 1 to Enterprise and Employment with only 0.47ha of the total site area (1.68) remaining zoned for residential use. This is on the northside of the Killarney Road. This change was proposed by the elected members. This reduces the overall area of residentially zoned land in the form of serviced sites on this specific site by 1.19ha. This means that instead of a total of 16 serviced sites in this area of land only 5 remain. It is considered that this reduces the overall intensity of development pressure on this area. 1.19ha is zoned for Enterprise and Employment. This change to the zoning in the plan is not considered significant in that it does not mark an extension of zoned land outside the existing plan boundaries, rather an alteration of existing zoning. It is also considered that enterprise and employment zoning will place less pressure on waste disposal infrastructure, rather than any form of residential use. Other more minor changes have occurred as zonings have been altered in specific locations. Additional walkways have been included. Another issue that has been dealt within this screening and specifically in the Flood Risk Assessment section is the de-zoning of vacant enterprise and employment zoned land in the north west of the plan area due to the issue of flood risk. Other alterations to the plan have been the inclusion of a town centre zoning and the designation of specific sites as mixed use. This is in contrast to the previous plan where there were a number of mixed use zoned sites on the Killarney Road, which owing to the range of uses permitted by mixed use designation, could lead to the risk of uncoordinated development. By confining mixed use zoning to specific sites with active enterprises or to key locations close to the town centre, this approach would be better for the overall development of the town.

#### **3.2 Screening Statement**

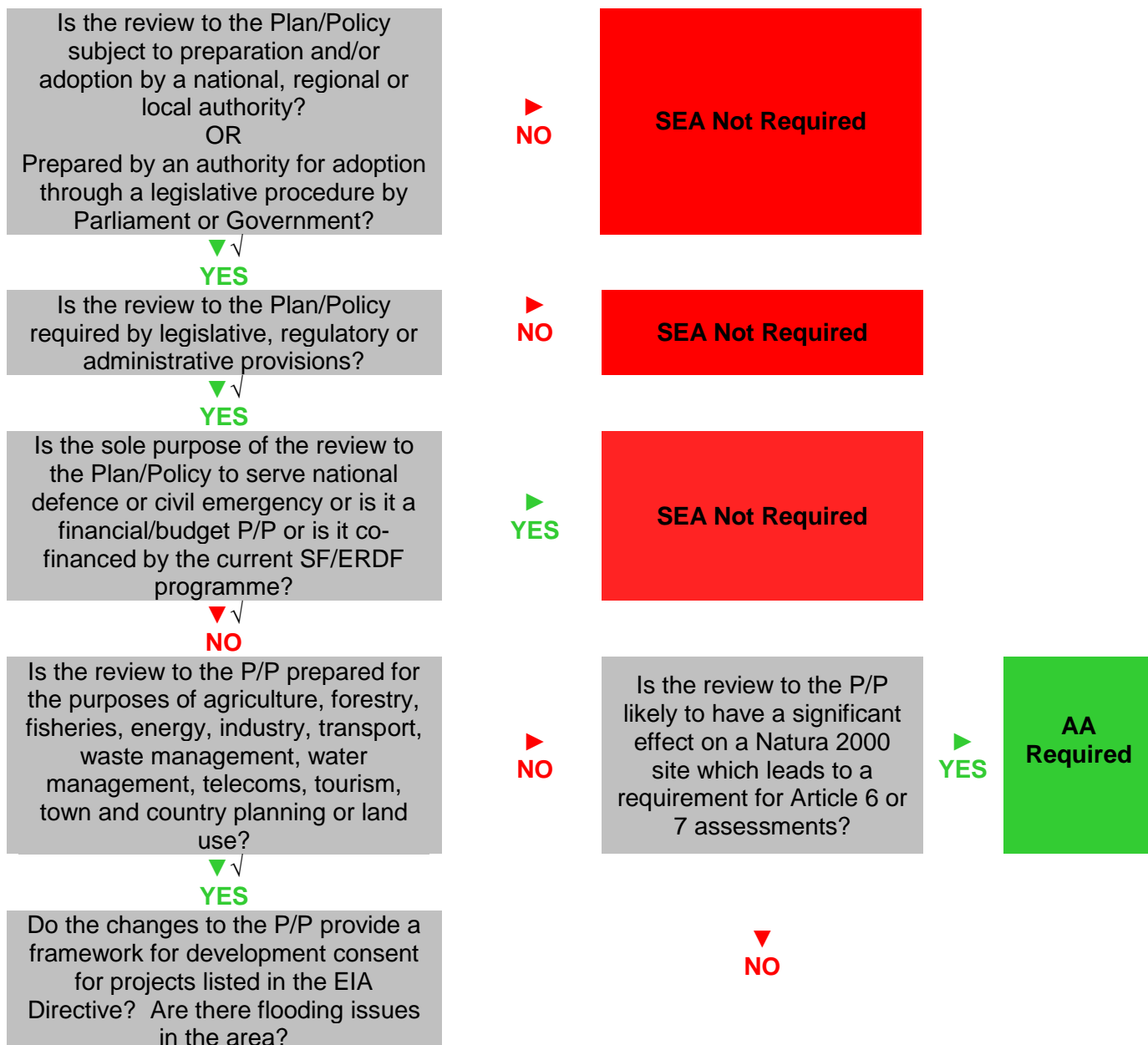
The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004-2013 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004, SI 201 of 2011) require case by case screening of individual plans and programmes based on the criteria in

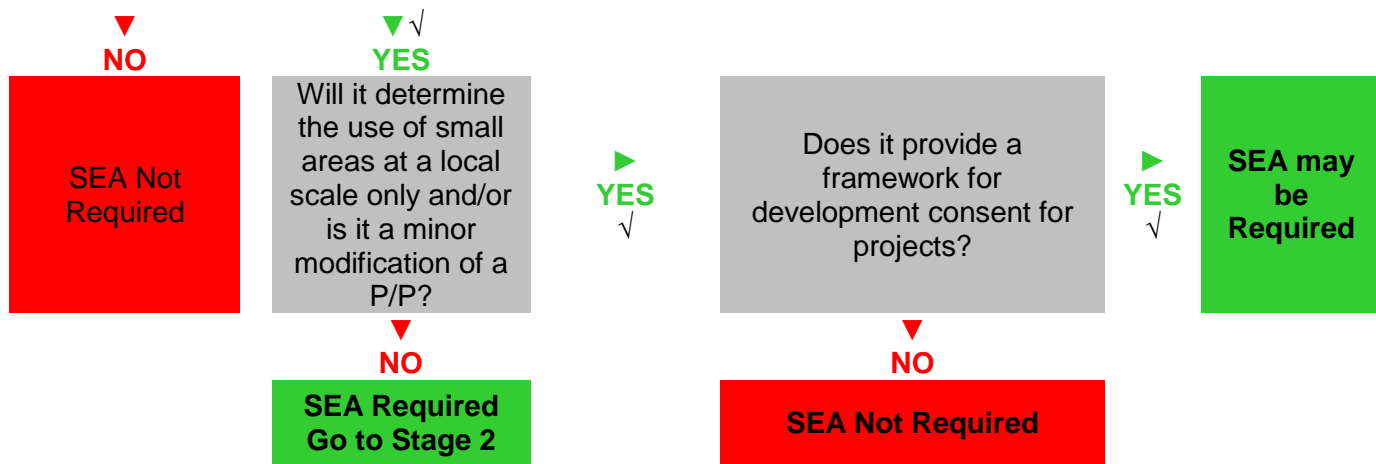
Schedule 2A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. These criteria must be taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise. The population of Abbeyfeale is 2007 (2011 census) and the area zoned is 295ha. These thresholds are below the thresholds for statutory SEA. The population threshold above which SEA is mandatory is 5000, while the area threshold is 50km<sup>2</sup>.

### Stage One - Pre-Screening

The first step in determining whether the review of the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan would require an SEA involves a pre-screening check.

**Figure 1 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 modifications to Plans/Policies. Annex II (2) of Directive 2001/42/EC sets out the “statutory” criteria that should be addressed when undertaking a screening assessment.

### 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 boundaries of Abbeyfeale and in its current draft has reduced residential zoning and has revised large portions of the zoning map as a result of the Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment which has been carried out as part of the review. As a result of this, the policy framework put forward by the plan takes into account the provisions of the core strategy and the concept of a compact settlement. The area of green space and agricultural zoning has increased while that of residential zoning has decreased. A total of 20ha of residential land is de-zoned to agriculture or open space. The remainder of the residential land has been put in three phases which will further increase the time line of development and lessen the overall impact of development activities through the lifetime of the plan.

Another issue that arises is vacant newly built and incomplete dwellings. In Ellis Wood Estate on the Killarney Road there are 14 units fully completed and occupied, 4 units are constructed to wall plate level and 18 units are constructed to base level. A total of 97 dwellings and a crèche were permitted under this permission which was granted a 5 year extension of duration in November 2010 (10/7034). In Cois na Féile (04/769) permission was granted for the construction of 24 houses. All are up to wall plate level but some have

not had windows fitted. A sewer will be laid along the Clash Road to connect this estate to the main sewer. This plan encourages the use and further development of existing vacant and partially completed dwellings with a view to enhancing local surroundings and to maximise the use of the existing built environment. These sites have been included in residential phase 1 lands in order to encourage completion.

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

The Local Area Plan is set within the context of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and the provisions of relevant planning guidelines issued by the DECLG and the National Spatial Strategy. These tend to influence the contents of the Abbeyfeale LAP rather than the other way around. The plan will guide individual projects and planning permissions within the LAP, both through the zoning mechanism and the policy content of the local area plan. The core strategy, prepared by the DECLG allocated population target to settlements through the medium of higher level plans such as the Regional planning guidelines, which allocate the targets for Abbeyfeale. This requires a total of 32.12ha. This has resulted in de-zoning of 20ha of land in the town, while the remainder that has been zoned has been divided into three phases. This indicates how higher plans and strategies influence the draft Local Area Plan tier.

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

The Abbeyfeale LAP and the proposed significant changes are being prepared under the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2013 and takes into account relevant environmental considerations, in particular that of the core strategy which has resulted in an altered and reduced zoning pattern in the town. 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 (pg. 2-3), 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 Acts state 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 reduction in the zoned area and the open space zoning and semi natural open space zoning adjoining the River Feale and the agricultural zoning adjoining the River Allaughan will act as a buffer zone and prevent the encroachment of development on what is a designated site (Lower River Shannon SAC), a flood risk area and an important natural amenity in the town.

This riparian zone also functions as a wildlife corridor. See also AA screening documents.

*iv environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;*

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

- Sensitive development of the historic townscape of Abbeyfeale.
- Avoidance of pollution to the Allaghaun and Feale rivers.
- Preservation of key features of the town's natural environment and protected structures and listed buildings.
- Incorporation of flood risk concerns into the zoning strategy.

The reduction of the zoning and the de-zoning of areas at risk of flooding will lessen the overall impact of development on the existing town and its surroundings. As indicated in the flood risk assessment substantial de-zoning has reduced the potential amount of land that may have impermeable surfaces thereby reducing run off which would have downstream effects. This also has beneficial effects for bio-diversity. The open space zoning and semi natural open space zoning adjoining the River Feale and the agricultural zoning adjoining the River Allaghaun will maintain a buffer between potential development and these rivers. Reduction in residentially zoned lands also means that the potential loadings on the treatment plant are reduced during the timeframe of the plan.

*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 review of the LAP was considered under the Limerick County Development Plan 2010. In addition, the Abbeyfeale LAP was prepared with the Regional Planning Guidelines as a backdrop which takes 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*

The rezoning of residential areas and their subsequent zoning as agriculture or open space will lessen the effects of development in the plan area.

The plan encourages the reuse and further development of existing vacant and partially completed dwellings with a view to enhancing local surroundings and to maximise the use of the existing built environment.

*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 reducing zoning patterns, with such lands being zoned for agricultural or open space use would lessen overall cumulative negative effects.

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

There are no trans-boundary effects.

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

None. The Council is currently in the process of appointing consultants to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant. The waste water treatment plant in Abbeyfeale to which waste is pumped has a Population Equivalent capacity of 2860, but is receiving a loading of 4680 population equivalent. Improvement both in capacity and storm water management are required. This is dealt with in more detail in the AA screening statement. See below regarding note on reduced residential zoning which will reduce potential pressure on the WWTP. The Plant discharges into the Feale River which forms part of the western plan boundary. Part of the Feale is in the Lower River Shannon SAC site.

*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 Abbeyfeale - see zoning map in the LAP. The estimated population for 2011 was 2007 with a projected increase to 2747 by 2020. The area zoned for development is less than that in the 2008 plan and is 296ha. This is also below the 50Km<sup>2</sup> area that is the mandatory SEA threshold.

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

*- special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;*

The vacant enterprise and employment lands to the north west of the plan area which are liable to flooding have been omitted from the plan area. The open space zoning and semi-natural open space zoning adjoining the River Feale and the agricultural zoning adjoining the River Allaughan provide a buffer between potential development and these rivers.

In terms of cultural heritage there are two historic monuments located within the plan area and a further monument lies on the northern perimeter abutting the plan boundary. The City and County council has an archaeological monitoring policy on development locations where there might be an impact on archaeological sites. Objective EH3 sets out the archaeological protection objectives of the council.

Potential Archaeological impacts can also be dealt with at development management stage. During the plan preparation process changes to the zoning layout was monitored for possible effects on archaeology. This was

done in house with successive drafts being forwarded to the council archaeologist for comment.

The continued presence of an Architectural Conservation Area, will help protect the built and archaeological heritage of the town as does individual protected structure designations.

- *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 review. The reduction in the amount of land zoned for development use lessens the chances of any standards being breached.

- *intensive land-use;*

As outlined above with a reversion to agricultural and open space zoning from residential zoning the intensity of potential land use within the plan boundaries is lessened.

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

No effects, none located within the development boundaries of the plan area.

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

At this stage in the plan process, no strategically significant environmental problems can be identified in relation to the above issues.

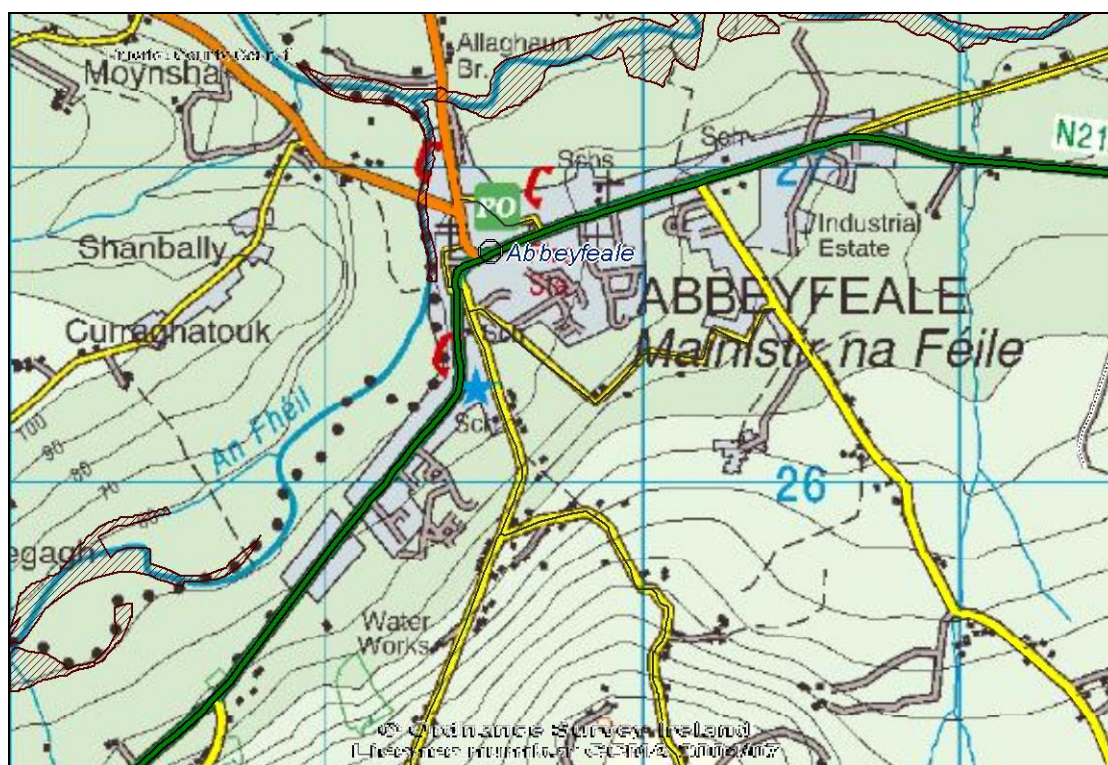
Following the screening process whereby the specific context of the review to the Abbeyfeale LAP has been assessed against the environmental significance criteria as contained in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive, **it is concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the review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

## ***Appropriate Assessment Screening***

This is an Appropriate Assessment Screening of the proposed review to the Abbeyfeale LAP, in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The existing Abbeyfeale LAP had originally been prepared in 2008. This review needs to be screened for 'Appropriate Assessment'. Based on the *Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, a 'Screening Matrix' and a 'Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix' have been completed. The conclusions were that the revision of the LAP **did not require** an Appropriate Assessment.

In this case the initial stages of the revision are subject to screening.



**Figure 1:** Showing the Lower River Shannon SAC site to the north and south west of the town.

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 (SAC's and SPA's) are Natura sites. The Lower River Shannon SAC site forms the western boundary of the plan area. 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 is recommended that the following text is added to the plan:

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

This provides additional safeguards for areas of natural history significance. This policy together with proposed phasing of development to ensure that infrastructural capacity such as sewage infrastructure is managed in a better fashion should help to prevent damage to the Lower River Shannon SAC site. In addition it is proposed the area along the river with open space zoning be retained. In the northern part of the plan area, sites which were zoned serviced sites i.e. a form of residential development have since been zoned as agricultural which reflects their current land use and is a less intensive form of land use than residential. This also provides feeding and resting areas for wildfowl during the winter months. This will facilitate the passage of otters a species of conservation concern generally and is important in the specific context of the Lower River Shannon SAC site.

The Great Southern Trail which is also within the plan boundaries, (to the north) has been the subject of previous screening exercise prior to its construction in 2012-2013.

The conclusion is at this stage that the review of the LAP **does not require** an Appropriate Assessment.

### Screening Matrix

Brief description of the project or plan:
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<p>This LAP is intended to provide for a framework for the planning and development of Abbeyfeale for a duration of six years, unless amended. The plan is aimed at regulating development while providing sufficient zoning for the land uses designed to respond to the needs of the town.</p>
--

The desirable outcome of the implementation of the plan is a town that:

- Has a sustainable level of development appropriate to the character, heritage, amenity and strategic role of Abbeyfeale as a tier 3 town (centre on a transport corridor) in the County Settlement Strategy, and that allows for the preservation and enhancement of the town character, services and amenities;
- Supports and protects the environment, heritage, character and amenity of the town, and in particular the setting of the Allaughan and Feale rivers and the architectural and archaeological heritage of the town centre;

- Has a high quality built environment with a well developed public realm and appropriate building forms, materials, heights and associated landscaping that complement and enhance the distinctive character of the town;
- Has a suitable range of community and educational facilities and amenities to serve the local community, the wider rural catchment area and visitors to the town;
- Has a safe network of amenity walks within and through the town and linking the various natural and heritage features;
- Has an adequate level of service infrastructure to support existing and future populations in a manner that protects and complements the environment, including an adequate road network, traffic management and parking facilities, improved public transport and safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists, and adequate wastewater disposal, water supply and surface water drainage.

**Brief description of the Natura 2000 sites:**

The Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) site runs close to the northern boundary of the Plan area and also lies to the south west of the town, where parts of the Feale are designated - see Figure 1. The River Shannon and Fergus SPA (004077) is 20km to the north. The SAC 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. The SPA site has been selected because of its importance for wintering and migratory wild fowl.

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

The main way in which ex-situ impacts could be created is through pollution that would affect water quality in the Lower River Shannon SAC site. Since the Allaughan is part of the river Shannon system should pollution occur elements of this may eventually end up in the Shannon itself which is also an SPA.

The addition of text referred to below which takes into account the requirements of article 6 of the Habitats Directive seeks to minimise any chances of ex-situ impacts and lessens the possibility of such effects on the designated sites. This text is as follows:

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

The SEA screening document indicates that there is insufficient capacity in the WWTP infrastructure to cater for development in the plan area. The waste water treatment plant in Abbeyfeale to which waste is pumped has a Population Equivalent capacity of 2860, but is receiving a loading of 4680 population equivalent. A 2013 report commissioned by Limerick County Council and a 2009 Discharge Licence report indicates that the excess loading includes the transport of sewage sludge from four villages to the plant for treatment. The 2013 report also indicates the need to improve management in the plant to deal with freshwater incursion. The council is currently in the process of appointing

consultants to upgrade the plant which would alleviate this issue. The reduction of the overall amount of residentially zoned land in the plan area will also help to reduce potential loadings in the lifetime of the current plan. EPA Quality ratings both up and downstream of the discharge point do not show any difference in water quality indicating that the dilution capacity of the river is sufficient to prevent any decline in water quality. The Feale into which the WWTP discharges has a water quality (Q) rating of 4 indicating unpolluted status, both up and downstream of the WWTP. However this situation, though not seeming to cause any significant pollution issues, is a cause for concern.

Given the 6km distance from the West Limerick Hills and Mullagharierks Special Protection Area (004165) site it is not considered that the plan review would have any effects on this site. Afforestation, land improvement and wind energy development are considered to be the main factors affecting the SPA and control of some of these activities are the preserve of the County Development Plan.

**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;**

The reduction of the amount of residentially zoned land in the town will reduce the scale of potential development during the lifetime of the plan. The open space zoning and semi-natural open space zoning adjoining the River Feale and the agricultural zoning adjoining the River Allaughan provide a buffer from inappropriate development.

- **Land-take;**

The boundaries of the plan area have been reduced. Alteration of zonings within the development boundaries will also ensure that more open space remains within the plan area. The agriculture zoning in the north-eastern part of the plan area will provide a buffer area for the Allaughan river and will have a beneficial effect on bio-diversity.

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

The River Shannon SAC site is within the plan area. The Mullagharierks SPA is 6km to the north east. The River Shannon and Fergus SPAs are within 20km of the plan boundaries.

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

No policies within the plan indicate the need for abstraction of water from the Feale and Allaughan rivers. However abstraction does take place to provide potable water for the town. This has been on-going for over 30 years and has not had any significant ecological effects.

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

The issue of the overloaded treatment plant has already been mentioned. Despite this it is considered that the best course of action would be to permit development within the plan boundaries with Objective IN2 specifying that 'adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure are provided for prior to further development to avoid any deterioration in receiving water'. This has the effect of concentrating development in an area where infrastructure can be more readily updated and expanded in order to minimise environmental effects in the future.

- **Excavation requirements;**

Any excavation which may be permitted under the scope of the plan will take place within the LAP boundaries. The buffer zone provided by the Open Space designation ensures that there will be minimal requirement for excavation in the vicinity of the SAC site. This will minimise the risk of direct disturbance and sedimentation.

- **Transportation requirements;**

It is not considered 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 as a result of the open space, semi natural open space and agriculture designation providing a buffer.

- **Other**

None.

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

- **reduction of habitat area:**

The proposed walkway in the western part of the plan area have been moved to higher ground and where possible onto improved grassland habitat. This moves the walkway out of the flood plain, indicated by vegetation composition, thereby removing any potential alterations to overland flow patterns which might have downstream effects. In addition the location further from the water will minimise any possible impacts during the construction phase. The proposed walkway close to the Allaghaun River is through wet grasslands, a common habitat and only reaches the SAC for a short length along the river which has been previously altered through flood defence and erosion works. The effects of this are not regarded as significant

- **disturbance to key species;**

No projects giving rise to disturbance to key species for Natura 2000 sites is likely within the boundaries of the plan due to the buffers provided for the Feale and the Allaghaun.

- **habitat or species fragmentation;**

The presence of the buffer area close to the designated site, 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;**

It is not considered that any reductions in species density will take place. 2010 works have introduced a rock ramp fish passage on the Allaghaun which is intended to facilitate the upstream movement of both salmonids and lamprey. The lack of capacity of the WWTP is cause for concern and while not affecting water quality, due to the dilution capacity of the river, there is an urgent need to upgrade the plant to cater for present and future demand. As stated previously in this report, consultants are currently in the process of being appointed to upgrade the plant.

- **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 presence of the zoned buffer lands within the plan boundaries.

- **Climate change:**

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

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

- **interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;**

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

- **interference with key relationships that define the function of the site;**

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

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

- **loss;**

Not applicable.

- **Fragmentation;**

Not applicable.

- **Disruption;**

Not applicable.

- **Disturbance;**

Not applicable.

- **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>	Abbeyfeale LAP 2008 revision
<b>Name and location of Natura 2000 sites:</b>	Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code 002165) on northern boundary of LAP. River Shannon and Fergus SPA site (004077) to the north of the town.

	West Limerick Hills and Mullaghareirks SPA 6 km to the west.
<b>Description of the Project or Plan</b>	As given in Screening Matrix above.
<b>Is the Project or Plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details) ?</b>	No. The revision of the LAP is intended to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of Abbeyfeale and includes policies and objectives to protect and manage in a suitable manner the natural heritage of the town.
<b>Are there other projects or plans that together with the project of plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?</b>	The LAP has been formulated to ensure that the uses, developments and effects arising from proposals and/or permissions based upon the policies and objectives of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives. These concerns are also reflected in the County Development Plan.

### **The Assessment of Significance of Effects**

<b>Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 sites:</b>	Effects are likely to be limited to zoned areas within the plan. While the WWTP is overloaded the dilution factor in the river ensures that the Feale is deemed to be unpolluted (Q4). Also consultants are in the process of being appointed to upgrade the WWTP.
<b>Explain why these effects are not considered significant:</b>	Natura 2000 sites are protected by a buffer within the plan boundaries and policies, including those set out in the CDP (2010), 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 were sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEA Section, Environmental Protection Agency</li> <li>• Planning System and Spatial Policy Section</li> <li>• Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government</li> <li>• Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food</li> <li>• Department of Communications,</li> </ul>

	<p>Energy and Natural Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Applications Unit, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht,</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Summary of Responses received</b></p>	<p>SEA Section, Environmental Protection Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In light of the existing capacity issues at the Abbeyfeale WWTP, consideration should be given to ensuring that further development and increase in population is linked to the ability to provide adequate and appropriate critical service infrastructure in advance of permission being granted.</li> <li>• Where the Flood Risk Mapping has identified areas of likely significant flooding (Flood Zones A and B), it should be ensured that the requirements of the <i>Planning system and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i> (DEHLG/OPW, 2009) are fully integrated as appropriate in finalising the Plan.</li> </ul> <p>Development Applications Unit, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SEA cultural heritage section should look to addressing all monuments within the proposed jurisdiction of the Local Area Plan. This to include National Monuments and Protected Structures, recorded monuments and underwater cultural heritage in the riverine environment and other water courses.</li> <li>• Recommend that an objective in relation to the protection of the Lower River Shannon SAC be included.</li> <li>• A screening for appropriate assessment must assess potential effects of the plan on downstream species and habitat for which the SAC has been designated.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Data Collected to Carry out the Assessment</b></p>			
<p><b>Who carried out the</b></p>	<p><b>Sources of Data</b></p>	<p><b>Level of assessment</b></p>	<p><b>Where can the full results of the</b></p>

Assessment?		Completed	assessment be accessed and viewed
Heritage Officer, Forward Planning Section, Limerick City and County Council.	Existing NPWS. Site Synopses. Site visits during plan preparation process.	Desktop study, site visits	Within plan documentation on request.

**Conclusions - drawing together the recommendations of the SEA and AA screening and Flood Impact Assessment:**

**SEA Screening;**

It is recommended that the land currently zoned as open space and semi natural open space along the River Feale is retained and the lands adjoining the River Allaghaun are zoned for agriculture reflecting their existing use. The inclusion of a buffer zone along the rivers also helps to avoid encroachment on the rivers.

With the architectural sensitivity of Abbeyfeale it is recommended that existing policies in the plan for the preservation of its built heritage are retained and expanded.

That the zoning patterns as presented with reduced residential and more open space and agricultural zoning be retained.

**Flooding impact assessment:**

That flooding policies and plan content be updated to take into account the new provisions of the 2009 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management guidance.

That the land currently zoned as open space and semi natural open space along the River Feale is retained and the lands adjoining the River Allaghaun are zoned for agriculture reflecting their existing use. These areas can serve as a flood residence area in addition to an ecological buffer.

Lands indicated as liable to flooding in the northwest have been omitted from the plan boundary.

**Appropriate Assessment Screening:**

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

That the land currently zoned as open space and semi natural open space along the River Feale is retained and the lands adjoining the River Allaghaun are zoned for agriculture reflecting their existing use.

The indicative walk way along the Feale has been moved away from the river bank to minimise impacts such as disturbance and construction impacts.

Highlight the need to upgrade the WWTP to Water Services.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Protected Structures**

**and**

### **List of Traditional Building Materials found in County Limerick**

#### **Architectural Heritage**

Part IV [Architectural Heritage] of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2013 allows for two grades of protection for our built heritage under its provisions. In the first instance there is the Protected Structure. Secondly, there is the Architectural Conservation Area.

Protecting the built heritage under the provisions of Part IV of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2013 has positive benefits for the structures concerned in that they become eligible for consideration under the provisions of the Conservation Grant Scheme operated by Limerick City and County Council.

The listing of an individual structure, or the protection of an area through the establishment of an Architectural Conservation Area, provides recognition for those elements of the built heritage that are of significance. This significance can be divided into 8 basic categories: Architectural, artistic, archaeological, historical, social, cultural, scientific, technical. Many buildings, structures or features carry more than one category of significance.

#### **Record of Protected Structures (R.P.S)**

The Record of Protected Structures is a statutory document maintained by each planning authority under the provisions of Part IV [Architectural Heritage] of the Planning and Development Act, 2000-2013. Under the provisions of the legislation the R.P.S. is an integral part of Limerick City and County Council's Development Plan. The listing provided here is an extract from the current Development Plan, (in force between 2010 – 2016) and the entries in that document are those which have statutory force. However, provisions in the Act allow buildings, features and structures to be added to the Record when such an action is deemed to be either desirable or necessary. Consequently anyone contemplating undertaking works to a structure which can reasonably be believed to be of architectural, artistic, archaeological, historical, social, cultural, scientific, or technical interest should make inquiries with the Council's Conservation Officer, Forward Planning Section, Planning and Development Department, as to whether a particular structure is protected or not. Furthermore, full protection is afforded to those elements of the built heritage where a 'Proposed Protected Structure Notice' is issued under the

provisions of S.55 of the Act, pending the final resolution of the matter by the elected members of the City and County Council.

A protected structure is deemed, under the provisions of Section 2 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2013, to consist of the following:

- (i) the interior of the structure,
- (ii) the land lying within the curtilage of the structure,
- (iii) any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, and
- (iv) all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in *subparagraph (i) or (iii)*".

Elements comprising the fabric of the structure (which at first glance may not be considered to be of importance or significance), such as lath and plaster finishes, external render, window and door frames and their associated joinery and fixings (such as latches and catches, and so forth), glazing, natural slate roofing and the supporting structures, painted timber, as well as the more obvious elements of the structure such as decorative plasterwork, are deemed to be protected. Protection is also afforded to the plan and layout of the building. For example, an internal partition dividing the entrance hall from the stairwell or a wall that separates a sitting room from a dining room, and so forth.





Works to the exteriors and interiors of protected structures or proposed protected structures (including the area deemed to be the curtilage of these structures) or in their settings, which may directly impinge upon the fabric of the protected structure or the character of those buildings may require planning permission. Owners or occupiers may obtain clarification through the use of the Declaration Process set out in Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended in 2002.





It must be emphasised that alterations to protected structures are not prohibited. However, they should be considered interventions - all alternatives should be explored and the proposed changes must demonstrate that they are justifiable in the context of the structure's significance and the owner's needs. Furthermore, interventions that are made should be capable of being reversible without loss of historic fabric or damage to the structure. Limerick City and County Council's Conservation Officer is available to provide a general advice service to owners and occupiers. However, the planning authority recommends that those proposing to make changes engage the services of an appropriately qualified advisor to act on their behalf. The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland has instituted an accreditation programme for conservation architects.





### List of Protected Structures in Abbeyfeale

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
750	Allaghaun Bridge	Abbeyfeale West	Bridge	
<p>This bridge is a fine example of eighteenth-century engineering with graceful camber-headed arches enhanced by unusual limestone cutwaters and an uncomplicated limestone stringcourse. Entered onto NIAH Interim list Reference no 2904203.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
751	P.M. Aherne	New Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Two storey stucco decorated commercial premises, considered of such special architectural, artistic and technical interest as to warrant its entry on the Record of Protected Structures</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
752	Teach na Féile	New Street	Former school house	
<p>Detached five-bay double-height former boys' national school, dated 1913, includes tall window openings and gable-fronted traversing blocks, finely crafted tooled limestone sills, and steps. Entered onto NIAH Interim List Reference no 21833001</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
753	Wards	New Street	Former commercial premises	
<p>Terraced two-bay two-storey house, built c. 1915. Historically in use as shop, having timber shopfront to front (east) elevation, sash windows and decorative cornice. Entered onto NIAH Interim survey Reference no 21833002.</p>				





RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
754	Harnetts Shop	New Street	Former commercial	
<p>Terraced two storey building with simple shopfront, slated roof, stucco work on the façade, including rusticated quoins and the surrounds of the first floor windows. At either end of the building pilasters rise to meet a string course which forms the top of the name board.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
755	O'Connells shop	New Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Five bay, two storey terraced building with stucco shop front spanning the entire front façade and slate roof. Stucco quoins frame the building. The ground floor consists of two shop entrances with shop windows on each side.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
756	O'Connells Bar and grocery	New Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Two storey two bay terraced building with timber double sash windows, slate roof, plaster quoins, and a vitrolite and chrome shopfront.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
757	Lane's Shop	New Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Terraced six-bay two-storey building formerly 2 houses, built c. 1915, having render shopfront to front, camber headed windows, corbelled cornice to shopfront, arcaded windows on ground floor, red brick chimneys. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref 21833004 for Lanes shop (northernmost 3 bays) and 21833005 for southernmost 3 bays</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
758	formerly Kissane-O'Donovan	New Street	Commercial premises	
Two storey three bay terraced building with stucco shopfront. Camber-headed windows, with moulded brick surrounds and timber double sash frames on first floor. Shopfront consists of centrally placed recessed double door with overhead, with large windows on either side.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
759	J.D. Hartnett	New Street	Commercial premises	
Two storey, three bay terraced building with stucco fascia panel, no pilaster support, and pronounced cornice. Raised plaster quoins frame the building. Windows have raised moulded surrounds. Roof is slate.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
760	Cryle Dry Cleaners	New Street	Previously O'Maras pub	
It is a particularly fine example of spectacular stucco work carried out by the Listowel artisan builder Pat McAuliffe (1846-1921). Stucco is best exemplified here by the render egg and dart stringcourses, decorative corbels, stars and an elaborate balustrade. Entered on NIAH Interim Survey under ref 21833007.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
761	Not named	New Street	Former commercial premises	
Terraced three-bay two-storey former house, built c. 1920, having render shop front to front. The building features decorative window surrounds and keystones that greatly enlivening the façade. Entered onto NIAH Interim Building Survey ref 21833031				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
762	Convent of Mercy	Convent Street	Institutional building	
<p>The Sisters of Mercy established this convent in 1875. Key features on the exterior are the plain worked stone framing the chapel's lancet windows, and around the entrance door, the brackets at eaves level, the limestone bellcote, slate roofs, stained glass windows of the chapel, its altar and magnificent parquet floor. Entered onto NIAH Interim Building Survey ref 21833022.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
763	Roche	New Street	Commercial Premises	
<p>Two storey three bay terraced building with slate roof. Notable features are the folk art in the stucco detailing on first floor quoins, first floor facade and fascia.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
764	McMahons Shop	Limerick Road	Commercial premises	
<p>End of terrace, three bay, two storey building Shopfront extends over two bays and is comprised of door and shop window, fascia and stall riser, with owner name on both set into stucco cartouche. The façade is framed by quoins in stucco and has a ceramic roof ridge with a pierced pattern.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
765	M.J. Maloney	New street	Commercial premises	
<p>Terraced four-bay two-storey former shop, built c. 1890, having render shopfront to front displaying render cornice, quoins and moulded window surrounds with keystones. Entered onto NIAH Interim Building Survey ref 21833008</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
766	Abbey Cinema	Limerick road	Commercial premises	
<p>Detached three-bay, three-storey Art Deco style former cinema, built c. 1940. Its symmetrical design includes towering pilasters which coupled with an angular parapet wall creates a sense of increased height to this impressive façade. Entered onto NIAH Interim Building Survey ref 21833021.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
767	McEnery's Bar	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Terraced two-bay two-storey former house, built c. 1880, having render shopfront, now in use as public house. Many artistic features including a corbelled eaves, pilasters and decorative consoles greatly enliven the façade The pebble dash frieze is another attractive feature. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey Ref no 21833024</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
768	Emerald Jewellery	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>A modest, two bay, two storey terraced premises, with rendered walls and slate roof. The shopfront on the ground floor is off-centre comprising of plate glass window with low stall riser and shop door. The original pilasters that supported the original fascia remain.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
769	Abbey Bar	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Three storey three bay terraced building, with well proportioned façade. The retention of render quoins, a decorative sill band, window surrounds, and pilasters adds artistic interest. An elaborately decorated shopfront. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey Ref no 21833025.</p>				





RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
770	J.D.Daly's	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>End-of-terrace, two-bay three-storey former house and pub, dated 1859. Notable features include the arabesque decoration on the first floor pilasters, corinthian capitals to the ground floor pilasters, and the diamond pointed quoins on the second floor. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833019</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
771	Donal and Anne's	Main Street	Commercial Premises	
<p>Two-storey three-bay terraced building with slate roof and elaborately stuccoed façade. Notable features include the balustrade surmounting the fascia of the ground floor, the triangular pediment in the centre of the first floor facade, the pilasters framing the first floor windows and the fluted pilasters and carved motifs on the first floor.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
772	Anne's Diner	Main street	Commercial premises	
<p>Two bay two storey terraced building with a simple and strongly unified shopfront, with pilasters and console bracket at either end. The two windows on the first floor, arranged symmetrically are of one over one timber double sash type. The roof is of natural slate.</p>				





RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
773	O'Sullivan's	Main street	Commercial premises	
<p>Terraced four-bay three-storey public house, built c. 1940, having render shopfront. Mixture of decorations with masked keystones contrasting against modern styled geometric shingled panels. Masked capitals depict figures associated with the fight for Irish Independence. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833026</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
774	Fuschia Hair and Beauty	Main St.	Commercial premises	
<p>Terraced two-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1900, having recent timber shopfront to front and a slate roof. Heavily rusticated quoins coupled with a dentilated cornice and interlacing motifs. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833027</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
775	Murphy's Bar	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>End-of-terrace three-bay two-storey former shop, built c. 1920, having render and timber shopfront to front elevation. Unusual render window surrounds with decorative interlacing to the keystones and a dentilated cornice to the eaves. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833028.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
776	Cistercian Abbey	The Square	Medieval site-Cell	
<p>Site of the medieval abbey which gives the town its name; also of former R.C.Chapel no longer extant, in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century, to be replaced by St. Marys church north of this site, now the site of a school. The site is now occupied by the cemetery.</p>				





RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
777	O'Connors	Main St	Commercial	
<p>Terraced six-bay three-storey former bank, built c. 1850, with considerable alterations c. 1905-10. Having render shopfront to front. The building's façade is rich in Celtic Revival decoration. Other notable features include the unusual moulded corner with its raised lettering in Latin, followed by a quotation in Old English. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no.21833029.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
778	Steve's Barbers Shop	Main St	Commercial premises	
<p>Detached five-bay two-storey former bank, built c. 1950, having single-storey addition to east side. Now in use as house, veterinary clinic and barber shop. The building is an interesting mix of materials with red brick walls, render quoins and window surrounds. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833018.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
779	Esther/Daniel Casey	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Corner building three storeys in height, with two bays facing the Main street and three bays facing New street. Shopfronts extend over both façade. Classical influenced details including its dentillated cornices and imposing pilasters'. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833030.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
780	formerly O'Connells pub	Market Square	Former commercial premises	
<p>Corner two storey three-bay building facing the Market Square with gable to Church street. Glazed facing brick on ground floor and smooth render on the first floor façade to the Market Square.</p>				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
781	Bobby's Bar	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Two bay three storey mid terrace building with slate roof. The most distinctive features are the corbelled eaves, the pronounced raised quoins, and the moulded window surrounds.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
782	D.P. Ahern	New street	Commercial premises	
<p>Corner-sited three-bay two-storey former drapery shop, dated 1938, having render shopfront to front. Repetitive interlacing to pilasters on the upper floor and an unusual fret plat band below an attractive dentilated cornice forming a delicate shopfront. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833009.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
783	"The Bobbin Case"	Market Square	Commercial premises	
<p>Stucco detailing on the front façade. The shop front extending over three bays of a six bay detached building.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
784	Sue Ryder	Main street	Commercial premises	
<p>Façade is on mid terrace, two bay, three storey building. Notable features are the traditional shopfront with large fascia board, the quoins on the upper floors and the hood mouldings over the windows.</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
785	Formerly Adrenalin sport	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>Terraced three-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1900, having recent timber shopfront. Forming part of a pair of identical buildings, this building is distinguished by the utilisation of red brick as the main fabric. Artistic details include moulded red brick sill courses and window surrounds. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref 21833017</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
786	Harnetts	Main Street	Commercial premises	
<p>End-of-terrace three-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1900. Forming one half of a pair of identical buildings, the building is distinguished by the use of red brick. The mosaic tile shopfront draws further attention to this fine building. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833016.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
787	Stack Auctioneer	Market Sq	Commercial premises	
<p>Five bay, two storey, mid-terrace building with rendered walls and slate roof. Distinctive features are the coloured quoins and plinth; the stuccoed bowed fascia moulding, and the signage. The arrangement of windows suggest that this was originally two separate units.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
788	O' Connells	Market Sq	Commercial premises	
<p>Three bay two storey terraced building with rendered façade on street front and slate roof. Formerly the windows were cast iron 'Crittall' casement windows, but these have recently been replaced by wooden framed casements.</p>				



RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
789	AIB	Market Square	Commercial premises	
<p>Attached four-bay, two-storey bank, built c. 1870. This displays numerous neo-classical influences including an impressive cornice, frieze, substantial pilasters and elaborate capitals that are typically found on many late nineteenth-century financial buildings. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833104.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
790	Leen's Hotel	Main St.	Commercial premises	
<p>Detached five-bay three-storey double-pile hotel, built c. 1840. The building retains its historic form and character through the retention of key historic features such as timber sash windows, slate roof, rendered quoins and raised window surrounds. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref 21833015.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
792	Fr. Casey Statue	Market Square	Civic Structure	
<p>Freestanding bronze statue, erected in 1910 representing Reverend William Casey, designed by the Dublin sculptor Edmund Sharp. Fr. Casey was a prominent figure in the land league campaign and as local parish priest. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref 21833010</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
793	D.O'Connell	Market Square	Commercial premises	
<p>Three bay two storey terraced building with rendered façade on street front and slate roof. Formerly the windows on the first floor were notable for being cast iron casement windows, but these have recently been replaced by wooden framed casements</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
794	Former Vegetable Shop	Market Square	Commercial premises	
Mid-terrace three bay two-storey building with slate roof, rendered front façade and traditional stucco shopfront.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
795	Paddy Powers	Market Square	Commercial premises	
Mid-terrace, three bay, two storey building with slate roof, exposed stone masonry wall on its front façade. The first floor windows are accentuated with red brick surrounds. The first floor is dominated by a timber shop front of traditional design				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
796	O'Rourkes Bar	Market Square	Commercial premises	
End of terrace, two bay, three storey building with slate roof, and exposed masonry wall on its front façade facing the Square. All four upper floor windows are accentuated with red brick surrounds. The first floor is dominated by a timber shop				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
797	The Cellar Bar	Market Square	Commercial premises	
Detached corner-sited, three-bay, two-storey public house, built c. 1870. Key features include sash windows and a curious highly pitched slate roof. Bowed corners to its fascias and varied form of hood mouldings enhance the façades. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref. no 21833011				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
798	Funeral Home	Off Market Square	Commercial premises	
The funeral home includes stucco shop front and detailing around window opens.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
799	Not Named	Limerick Road	Bungalow	
Single storey hipped roof detached house, consisting of red brick with cream coloured mortars and plaster panels. Interesting wrought iron features and metal casement windows including the two bay windows to front.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
800	Not Named	Bridge street	Formerly the post office	
End-of-terrace three-bay two-storey back-split house, built c. 1915. Key features include timber sash windows and a historic render shopfront, decorative render quoins, panels and mesh window guards. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833012				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
801	Not named	Bridge St	Former commercial premises	
Two storey, three-bay, end of terrace building with slate roof. Modest well proportioned building. Notable for its segmental headed windows on the first floor.				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
802	Not named	Bridge street	Private dwelling	
Two storey section, mid terrace, comprising of two residential units, one three bay and the other four bay. Modest well proportioned building with slate roof harmonious with streetscape. Notable for its segmental headed windows on the first floor.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
803	O'Connor Solicitors	Bridge street	Commercial premises	
Four bay, two storey mid-terrace building, with slate roof. Has an extensive stucco shopfront spanning the entire façade.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
804	Begleys	Bridge street	Commercial premises	
Six bay mid-terrace, two-storey building, slated. Includes shopfront with recessed timber door including overlight centrally located between two shop windows. The shopfront is surmounted by a moulding in stucco with bow ends to frame the shop name.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
805	Supervalu (formerly Maloneys Garage)	Bridge Street	Commercial premises	
Now a supermarket but formerly a garage, the original openings and decorations in the façade have been retained. Vernacular interpretation of Modern Movement architectural style.				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
806	Courthouse	Bridge Street	Civic Structure	
<p>Built as a courthouse c1900, it continues to accommodate the district court, but also the local branch library. Single storey building with high eaves and a large centrally located door and tall windows.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
807	M.D.Ahern	Bridge St	Commercial premises	
<p>Now the Credit Union premises. Two storey, three bay, end of terrace building with slate roof. Notable features include the large centrally placed front door with decorated pilasters near to both corners on the first floor. First floor windows have surrounds stuccoed in a classical style, with raked heads and raised keystones.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
808	Feale Ville	Bridge St	Dwelling	
<p>Detached three-bay, two storey house with bay windows rising through both floors flanking the centrally placed doorway. Pitched slate roof to projecting bays and rendered chimneystacks. Roughcast rendered walls with rendered plinth band to ground floor of front and side elevations</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1695	Tobins	Main Street	Dwelling	
<p>End-of-terrace, three-bay, two-storey house, built c. 1940, having render shopfront to front. Formerly in use as shop. Key features include elaborate plasterwork including decorative pilasters with various forms of interlacing flanking both to the shopfront and window openings. Entered onto NIAH Interim Survey ref no 21833020</p>				

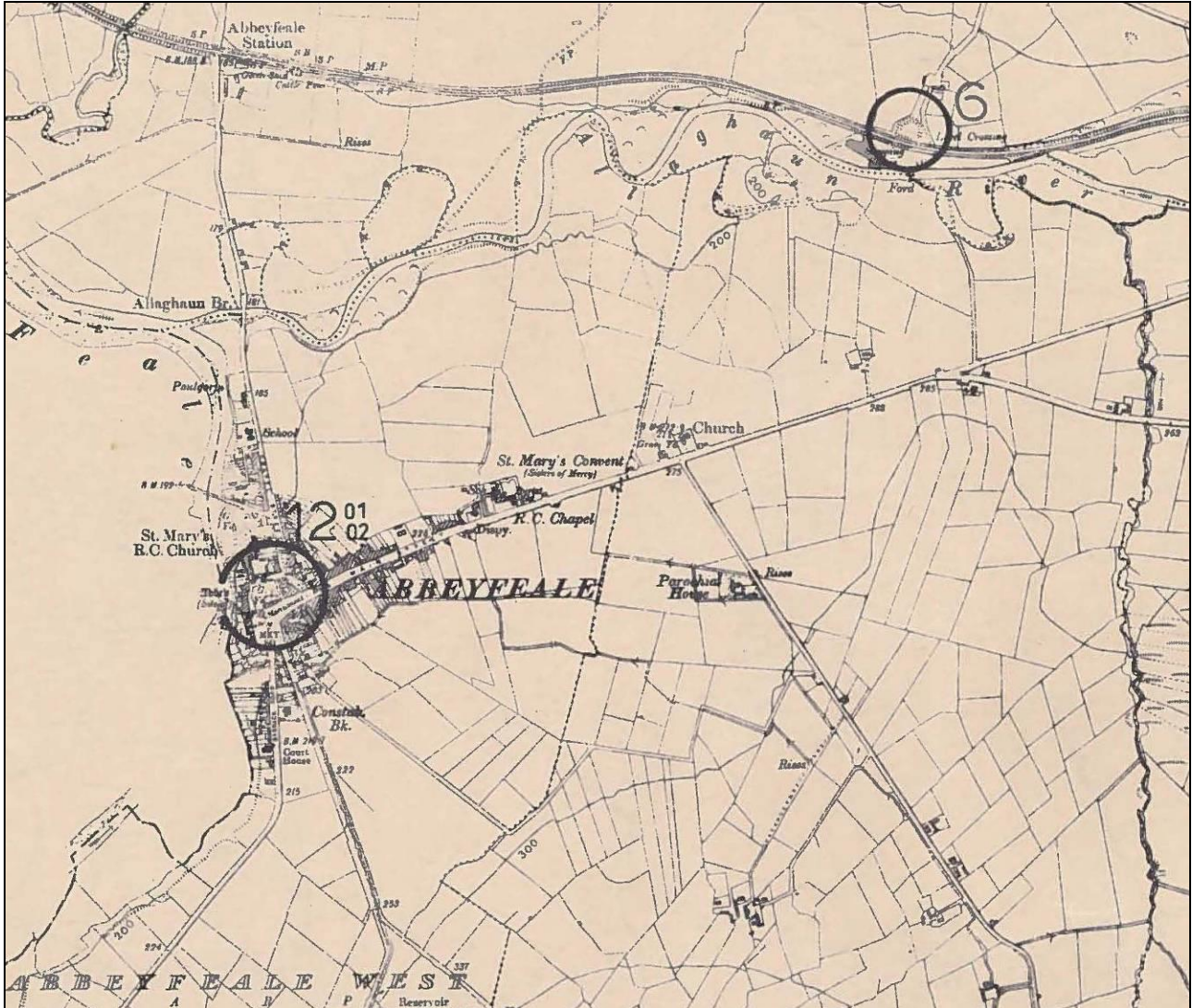
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1696	O'Connells	Market Square	Terraced dwelling	
<p>Terraced four bay two-storey dwelling with steeply pitched slate roof. The windows on the first floor are small in size. There is unusual painted scroll like decoration painted on the plaster at fascia level in a folk-art style.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1702	P.Downey	New Street	Former commercial premises	
<p>Two bay 2 storey mid-terrace building in former part use as shop. Notable features include stucco detail over shop, natural slate roof and first floor window surrounds.</p>				

## List of Traditional Building Materials found in County Limerick

Fabric:	Limestone, brownstone, sandstone or brick, bound with lime mortars
Roofing:	Natural Slate, Reed or Straws, with certain exceptions found in some areas
Rainwater Goods:	Cast iron or galvanised sheet iron / mild steel
Windows:	Primarily Sash windows of varying patterns and designs, with some exceptions
Finishes:	Painted lime renders of varying consistencies, often with stucco detailing at returns, along floor lines and roof level, and on window or door opes; Alternatively either well-worked or quality rubble stone, with appropriate joints in both cases were left bare or were or have had multiple layers of limewash applied over the generations.
Paint:	The use of any paints or other materials of modern composition, which seal the surfaces to which they are applied, should be avoided as they have a deleterious impact on lime based materials, whether used in renders or other finishes. The use of garish colours on walls or details of structures (such as quoins), which clash with the traditional range of pigments must be avoided as they impact negatively on the cohesiveness of the streetscape. If individuality is sought, it can be imparted to a building through highlighting the timberwork of doors and their frames, windows and gates - features which are recessed slightly and out of direct view of those looking along the length of the conservation area.

## Appendix 5

### Recorded Monuments in the Abbeyfeale LAP area



RMP Number	Classification	Townland
LI042-12001	Church	Abbeyfeale West
LI042-12002	Graveyard	Abbeyfeale West
LI042-006	Ringfort	Knockbrack

## Appendix 6

### Abbreviations and Glossary

Abbreviation	Details
AA	Appropriate Assessment
ACA	Architectural Conservation Area
BATNEEC	Best Available Technology Not Exceeding Unreasonable Cost
CDP	County Development Plan
CFRAM	Catchment Flood Risk and Management Studies
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DEHLG	Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
ED	Electoral Division
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
DED	District Electoral Division
HSE	Health Service Executive
LAP	Local Area Plan
MWASP	Mid-West Area Strategic Plan
NATURA 2000	European Network of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas
NDA	National Disability Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NSS	National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, People Places and Potential
OPW	Office of Public Works
RPS	Record of Protected Structures
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System

#### **Affordable Housing**

Housing or lands made available by the planning authority to persons who need accommodation but whose income would not be adequate to meet the payments on a mortgage for the purchase of a house to meet his or her accommodation needs.

#### **Appropriate Assessment**

An Appropriate Assessment is required under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and is an evaluation of the potential impacts of a plan on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site, and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects.

**Architectural Conservation Area**

A place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

**Backland Development:** Development which takes place to the rear of existing structures fronting a street or roadway.

**Biodiversity:** The variety of life (wildlife and plant life) on earth.

**Brownfield Sites:** An urban development site that has been previously built on but is currently unused.

**Convenience Goods**

Those goods that are required on a daily or weekly basis by individuals and households (such as food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-durable household goods).

**Development Charges**

Charges or levies placed on developers relating to the cost of services and utilities, which are provided by Limerick City and County Council.

**Environmental Impact Assessment**

The process by which we measure anticipated effects on the environment of a proposed development or project. If the likely effects are unacceptable, design measures or other steps can be taken to reduce or repair those effects.

**Greenfield Sites:** A piece of open land that has not been built on and is therefore a vacant lot.

**Hedgerows:**

A natural or semi-natural row of bushes, shrubs and/or trees forming a boundary. Hedgerows help define places, act as shelterbelts, and add to biodiversity. They also offer significant wildlife habitat, including wildlife corridors which allow wild animals to move across open countryside, and provide food, nesting and roosting places.

**Household:** One or more persons occupying a dwelling which has kitchen and bathroom facilities.

**Infill Development:** Refers to development taking place on a vacant or undeveloped site between other developments, i.e. an infill site.

**Infill Site:** Small gap sites, unused or derelict land usually located in urban areas.

**Infrastructure**

Drainage, water supplies, sewage treatment plants, sewerage networks, lighting, telecommunications networks, electricity and energy network, railways, roads, buildings, schools, community facilities and recreational facilities.

**Manager's Report**

A document outlining the submissions made during the preparation of the Development Plan, the Manager's comments and recommendations on the submissions.

**Monument (Recorded Monument)**

An archaeological monument protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendments) Act, 1994.

**National Spatial Strategy (NSS)**

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is a coherent 20-year national planning framework for Ireland. It's about people, places and potential, making the most of our cities, towns and rural places to bring a better spread of opportunities, better quality of life and better places to live in. Key to the strategy is the concept of balanced regional development.

**Protected Structure:** A building, feature, site, or structure identified in the Development Plan as worthy of protection or preservation in accordance with Part IV of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2013.

**Residential Densities:** The number of residential units per area unit (hectare).

**Social Housing**

This is housing provided for persons who are registered with the Local Authority on the Social Housing Waiting List, and assessed as being eligible for social housing. The broad categories of households who are eligible for social housing are set out in Section 9(2) of the 1988 Housing Act and include the homeless, travellers, persons living in unfit or overcrowded accommodation, the elderly, persons with disabilities, persons who cannot reasonably afford to provide their own accommodation.

**Social Impact Assessment**

This is a systematic documented analysis of the availability of social facilities in a community/settlement. The purpose of a SIA is:

- To give a broad overview of existing social infrastructure (services/facilities) currently provided within the vicinity of a proposed development site.
- To determine what measures could be proposed as part of a development scheme in order to provide for social infrastructure (services/facilities) which are considered by the Planning Authority to be deficient in the area.

Some planning applications are required to submit an SIA as part of their application as required by Section 10.3 of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.