

Traveller Accommodation Programme

Limerick City and County Council

2019-2024

DRAFT

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Introduction

The provision of Traveller Accommodation is a key element of the functions of Housing Authorities and this programme has been prepared in accordance with legislative requirements as set out in the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. The programme was prepared having regard to differences between the Traveller and non-Traveller communities and the different needs and accommodation preferences within the Traveller community itself. In March 2017, the Government announced formal recognition for Travellers as a distinct ethnic group within the state.

Due regard has also been given to all relevant statutory and national policy requirements in the preparation of this programme. The National Housing Policy, “ **Rebuilding Ireland – Action Plan for Housing & Homelessness** ” and other national guidelines will impact on the delivery of all local services, including Traveller accommodation.

Limerick City and County Council will be referred to as “the Council” in this programme.

It is envisaged that this accommodation programme will lead to improved accommodation circumstances for those Traveller families that are assessed as having an accommodation need. The success of the programme will not only be dependent on available funding but also on the positive engagement of all key stakeholders, including members of the Traveller community. The Council will work in collaboration with relevant agencies and Travellers to ensure a co-ordinated delivery of services with the aim of achieving positive outcomes for all involved.

Section 1

Legislation, Local Government Structures and Policy

Legislative Background

The accommodation programme for the period 2019-2023 has been prepared in accordance with the provisions set out in the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998.

The programme will be implemented having regard to all relevant housing and other legislation and will take into consideration the requirements of relevant policies and departmental guidelines and circulars.

It is the intention of the Limerick City and County Council when implementing the accommodation programme that where possible agreement by all stakeholders will be achieved. In any event, actions implemented will be on the basis that they meet the accommodation needs of families having regard to local community needs and circumstances.

The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 provides a legislative framework to support the Government's commitment to the provision of Traveller accommodation. The Act amended the Housing Acts, 1996-1997 and the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 1963 to 1998. The purpose of the Act and subsequently the Accommodation Programme is to put in place the necessary procedures, resources and facilities to ensure the accommodation requirements of Travellers are strategically addressed by Housing Authorities.

A summary of the main provisions of the Traveller Accommodation Act:

- Each housing authority is required to prepare a 5-year programme of Traveller Accommodation for their area.
- The adoption of the Traveller Accommodation Programme is a reserved function. In the event that the Council fails to adopt the Programme within the timeframe specified by the Minister, the Manager, by way of a Managers Order, could adopt the programme.
- The Housing Authority is required to provide appropriate notification to, and consultation with, the public in respect of the preparation and adoption of the programme.
- The Housing Authority is required to take reasonable steps to secure the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme.
- The Planning Authority is required to include objectives concerning Traveller Accommodation Plans in Development Plans.
- The establishment of the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee on a statutory basis to advise the Minister on aspects of Traveller accommodation.
- The establishment of the Local Accommodation Consultative Committee on which Local Authority Members, Officials and Travellers are represented.
- The Act extends statutory backing for the provision of financial support available to Housing Authorities and the Voluntary Sector for provision and management of Traveller Accommodation.

- To apply relevant provisions of Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1997 in particular relating to anti-social behaviour to Halting sites provided by local authority or by voluntary bodies with the assistance of the Local Authority.
- The Act improves the powers of Local Authorities to deal with unauthorized temporary dwellings where alternative serviced accommodation is available, or within one mile of existing accommodation regardless of whether alternative accommodation is available.

Local Government Structures

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 led to significant changes in the delivery of local authority services in Limerick and led to the establishment of a unitary authority for Limerick City and County. These new Local Government structures provide for increased co-ordination of the delivery of Traveller accommodation and associated supports for members of the Traveller Community in Limerick. In addition to accommodation related issues the new structures also provide for a strengthened strategic approach to community supports, including the Traveller Community via the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) and the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC). The Council also has a key role in the delivery of various funding programmes including Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and the EU LEADER Programme. All local government services will be available to members of the Traveller Community in accordance with their needs and entitlements as citizens within the local authority area.

The administrative area of Limerick City and County Council comprises of four Municipal Districts which are the Limerick Metropolitan District and the Municipal Districts of Adare/Rathkeale, Newcastle West and Cappamore /Kilmallock.

The Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan outlines proposed measures to improve the living circumstances and quality of life for residents living in the Regeneration areas. Some members of the Traveller community live within these areas and it is acknowledged in the Plan that they, as members of the local community, should benefit from the regeneration programme. The engagement and inclusion of the Traveller community in the regeneration process will be supported to maximise the benefits, social, physical and economic, for all residents within the regeneration areas. The Traveller Accommodation Programme will be implemented having full regard to the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan.

Policy

- It is the policy of the Council to assist Travellers who are assessed as having an accommodation need with accommodation that will address their need.
- Travellers are defined in Section 13(1) of the 1988 Housing Act (as amended by the 1998 Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act as “persons belonging to the class of persons who traditionally pursue or have pursued a nomadic way of life”. Limerick City and County Council recognise the different lifestyle, traditions and needs of the Traveller community as a distinct group and this programme endeavours to provide accommodation and associated accommodation supports having regard to this.
- Accommodation need will be assessed in accordance with generic housing legislation and the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998.
- An application for accommodation must be made by means of the standard application form for accommodation and all applications will be considered. Advice and assistance will be provided to applicants and/or their representatives, if requested by the applicant, to address any difficulties that may arise in completing the application process.
- Applicants for accommodation will be assessed and considered in the context of this programme and the Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011. Qualified applicants will be considered for available accommodation in accordance with the Scheme of Letting Priorities and other relevant policies including the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy as applies to all qualified applicants.
- It is the policy of the Council that, where feasible, the preferred option in terms of the type of accommodation requested will be considered. If this is not possible, other accommodation options will be considered and may be offered to individual families. If this is refused by individual families, without good reason, their application for accommodation may be given a reduced priority in line with statutory provisions.
- The Council will implement this programme based on consultation with individual families, other statutory agencies, the Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee, the voluntary sector and other relevant bodies and organisations as appropriate. Regard will be given at all times to the statutory obligations of the Council, available funding and to the feasibility of recommendations and suggestions made in relation to the implementation of the programme.
- Applicants must meet the statutory requirements to qualify for housing/accommodation support. If applying from the roadside or an unofficial site they must provide evidence that they have pursued other accommodation options. If other options are available as interim solutions the Council must be satisfied that a family’s decision to opt for the roadside or an

unofficial site is reasonable taking individual circumstances into account. If the Council is satisfied that applicants have no other option, an application from a roadside or an unofficial site will be approved if the applicants are considered to be in need of assistance and meet the other qualifying criteria.

- In circumstances where families vacate Local Authority accommodation and re-apply for accommodation all factors will be taken into consideration when assessing the new application. The Council must be satisfied that the reasons given for vacating previous accommodation are reasonable, in the family's best interest, and were not for the sole purpose of securing alternative accommodation.
- It is the policy of the Council that priority will be given to the provision of permanent accommodation and that the provision of sites with limited facilities as defined in Section 29 Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act will be considered only in exceptional circumstances as determined by the Council.
- Sites with limited facilities as defined in Section 29 Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 will not be provided, if an offer of accommodation is refused, or to families who already have been accommodated or who have the resources to provide their own accommodation save in exceptional circumstances as determined by the Council.
- An assessed need has not been established for transient site provision in the functional area of the local authority. However, regard has been given to the special circumstances in Rathkeale and specific site provision will continue to be provided in Rathkeale within existing resources. In addition to this, the construction of private sites in designated areas of the town is provided for in the Local Area Development Plan. This is to facilitate local Travellers families who lead a transient lifestyle and develop their own property which is their preferred option.
- It is the policy of the Council that Travellers themselves must take primary responsibility for their economic activities including horse husbandry and care. Where it is possible and feasible to do so consideration will be given to supporting Travellers in the pursuit of legitimate economic activities.
- Persons who own horses are obliged to comply with the requirements of the Control of Horses Act 1996, animal welfare legislation and the Control of Horses Bye - Laws.
- It is the policy of the Council to adopt an inter-agency approach in the delivery of Traveller services. New accommodation provision and/or support services will be provided as part of the inter-agency strategic approach to service delivery.
- The Council will assist families prior to and after the allocation of accommodation and training will be provided in conjunction with the Council's pre-tenancy training programme. The Council in conjunction with other agencies will support families to participate in tenant and community programmes.
- Traveller accommodation will be managed on the same basis as the Council's policy for the maintenance and the management of its housing stock. Accommodation provided will be to

a high standard and maintenance of this accommodation will be provided in accordance with the Council's policy in relation to the general housing/accommodation stock.

- The requirements of National Guidelines will be considered in the construction, maintenance and management of Traveller accommodation.
- All tenants will be required to meet their responsibilities as outlined in the Letting Agreement entered into between themselves and the Council and will be subject to the conditions contained in the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy.
- All tenants will be provided with support as part of the Council's Tenant Support Services to participate fully in their own living environment and have a meaningful input in the development of this environment.
- Failure on the part of tenants to comply with the requirements of the Letting Agreement, including the provisions relating to anti-social behaviour, may lead to such tenants being required to surrender their accommodation. If necessary legal proceedings may be initiated, by this Council, including an application for an excluding order.
- Travellers who present as homeless will be afforded the supports and services contained in the Homeless Strategy for the Mid-West Region. Unauthorised encampments will be dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation as appropriate. Prior to families being asked to move or vacate an area which is not authorised for caravan parking, the Homeless Action Team will investigate the circumstances of the family to establish if they are included in the accommodation programme.
- Nothing in this section will prevent consideration being given to assisting Traveller families with accommodation in exceptional cases.

Section 2

Progress during last Programme, Existing Provision & Assessment of need

2014-2018 Programme Outcomes

Targets were set in the previous five-year programme. A key target or performance indicator was number of offers of permanent accommodation for Traveller families assessed as having an accommodation need. Limerick City and County Council exceeded this target set at 90 and with 94 offers made (See Table 1). This was achieved during a period of serious challenges in the social housing provision sector.

In addition to the targets set out below, refurbishment works were completed in some of the residential caravan sites in the Metropolitan District.

Table 1. 2014 -2018 Targets/Outcomes

| Target | No. of Families offered permanent accommodation | |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| | Target | Output |
| Number of Families | 90 | 94 (23 refusals of offers) |
| Transfers | 9 Families offered transfers. | |
| Mobile Home Provision | 41 Mobile Homes provided. (Emergency Provision) | |

Supports were also made available to Travellers by Council Staff when required The Local Authority Social Workers, for instance arranged specialist clinics to assist families in relation to their accommodation or

accommodation related issues. During the period January 2018 to April 2019, eighty support clinics were held and 789 clients availed of this support option.

Existing Accommodation Provision

Limerick City and County Council has assisted Traveller families with accommodation over the last five years. The accommodation provided has included Traveller specific accommodation and generic housing. The majority of Traveller families throughout Limerick reside in housing. There has been a strong tradition of Halting Site (Residential Caravan Sites) provision within the Limerick Metropolitan District but during the period of the most recent programme seventeen families transferred from Halting Site accommodation to generic housing. The majority of families who continue to reside in Halting Sites have expressed a preference for housing particularly Group Housing. In general, families are supported to avail of a range of social housing options which best suit their accommodation need.

The following table summarises the existing types and location of Traveller specific accommodation.

Table 2

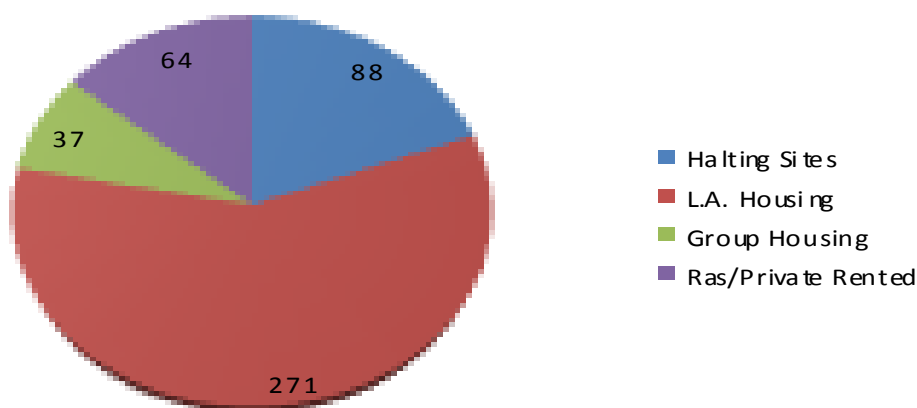
| Residential Caravan Sites | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Bawneys Bridge |
| | Boher (Temporary) |
| | Childers Road |
| | Clondrinagh |
| | Clonlong |
| | Kilmurray View, Castletroy. |
| | Kilmallock |
| | Longpavement(Temporary) |
| | Rathkeale |
| | Toppins Field. |
| Group Housing | |
| | Rathkeale |
| | Rhebogue |
| | |

Table 3 outlines the type of accommodation provided by Limerick City and County Council and the number of Traveller families living in such accommodation. This does not include private sites or privately owned houses resourced by Travellers themselves. The majority are accommodated in Local Authority-rented housing.

Table 3

Accommodation provided with Local Authority Assistance. (No. of families)

Limerick County Council November 2018



Assessment of need

An assessment of accommodation need was undertaken in March 2018 by the local authority as prescribed under Section 9 of the Housing Act 1988. This statutory assessment of need assessed all applicants seeking assistance with accommodation. An additional assessment of need was undertaken in August 2018 to assist in the formulation of this programme and included an assessment of need for sites as per Section 6 of the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. In May 2019 a Summary of Social Housing Needs Assessment was completed and the number of approved Traveller family applicants seeking assistance with accommodation from Limerick City and County Council was 159 families.

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Limerick Metropolitan District | 83 |
| Adare – Rathkeale | 25 |
| Newcastle West | 32 |

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cappamore – Kilmallock | 19 |
| Total | 159 |

In the functional area of the Limerick Metropolitan District an additional 80 families residing in Traveller specific local authority accommodation are also seeking support with regard to their accommodation needs. These families expressed a wish to transfer to alternative accommodation or have their existing accommodation upgraded and this is referred to later in the programme.

Families can only be included in the assessment of need, and therefore be considered for accommodation if the appropriate application forms are completed, and submitted to the local authority. When submitted, an assessment will be undertaken to determine the accommodation need in accordance with the statutory assessment regulations. Families will be supported in this process and the onus to complete and submit the appropriate forms is on the applicants themselves.

Projected need

In addition to the current assessed need, consideration has also been given to the projected need for accommodation during the period of this programme. Experience gained from previous programmes and consideration of other factors indicate that the projected increase is at least an increase of 7% per annum. Based on this it is projected that an estimated 60 additional families may seek accommodation assistance from the Local Authority during the period of this programme. It must be acknowledged that expectations have to be realistic with regard to accommodation targets. The availability of social housing supply and the reality that there is a waiting period for all new approved applicants before local the authority accommodation comes on stream needs to be taken into account.

Section 3

Performance, Monitoring & Measurement

Accommodation options to meet social housing needs have changed dramatically in recent years with the introduction of new housing supply options such as Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), Long Term Leasing and the Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS). National policy provides for mechanisms to be in place to ensure that the new supply options can be sourced, and made available, by the local authority. The change in national policy has been influenced by the increased demand for housing and lack of availability of housing in the private sector. The performance at local level is dependent on the availability of national funding and the realisation by applicants that consideration needs to be given to the new supply options. The changing landscape of the social housing sector impacts on the delivery at local level and this has to be borne in mind by all stakeholders.

Having considered all the factors involved, it is proposed that 105 families will be assisted with new or improved accommodation within the range of housing supply options during the period of the programme. The supply options include but are not limited to local authority accommodation (generic and Traveller Specific), Approved Housing Bodies and Housing Assistance Payments. The proposed targets will be monitored on an annual basis (21 X 5)

This target is proposed in the context of the current economic climate and the achievement of these targets will be dependent on supply, available resources, statutory requirements and the co-operation of the applicants.

The Housing Development Directorate will be responsible for the strategic delivery of the programme including implementation of targets and the development of the capital works related to the programme. Monitoring Returns will be submitted to the Department of the Housing, Planning & Local Government as required.

A new Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee will be established for Limerick City and County Council and reports on the delivery of this programme will be submitted to the committee on a regular basis. The Committee will meet at least four times per year.

A summary of the activities in relation to Traveller accommodation will also be included in the Annual Report of the Council and reports will be submitted to other Local Authority Committees as required.

Section 4

Implementation Strategy and Proposed Measures

Strategy

The Council will, within the period of this five year programme, endeavour to meet the accommodation needs of Travellers who are approved applicants. Accommodation, social work services and accommodation related supports will be provided in an integrated manner that is inclusive and reflects the needs of the Traveller community.

The Traveller Accommodation Programme will be implemented in conjunction with the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan.

The desired outcome of this programme is not only the provision of quality accommodation for members of the Traveller community but that benefits will result in other aspects of their lives, thus improving their quality of life.

Tenant support and community sustainment is a guiding principle in the delivery of social housing/ social accommodation in Limerick and will be at the core of implementation of this programme. The requirements of local and national policies will be central in the delivery strategy of the Traveller Accommodation Programme.

Limerick City and County Council will promote the full range of social housing options for Traveller families, which are set out hereunder:

- Standard Local Authority Housing
- Rebuilding Ireland Home loans
- Group Housing
- Residential Caravan Sites
- Caravan Loan and Grant Scheme
- Annuity Loans/Traveller Grant for purchase of a house.
- Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme
- Housing Aid for Older People
- Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability
- Long term leasing
- Choice based letting
- Approved Housing Bodies
- Rental Accommodation Scheme **(RAS)**
- Housing Assistance Payments **(HAP)**

Officials of Limerick City and County Council will ensure that applications for funding from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government will be made and that Traveller Accommodation needs will be included in appropriate Council plans

Consideration will be given to the accommodation needs of Traveller families when preparing strategies for housing in Limerick. Likewise, the issue of Traveller accommodation and the provisions of this programme will be taken into account in the preparation of/or review of the Local Economic Community Plan and Development Plans.

The Council will develop and deliver its accommodation programme in an integrated manner and will consult and liaise with other service providers via existing and new structures as appropriate.

The provision and management of accommodation for Travellers by the voluntary housing sector will be encouraged and supported by the Council, notably **CENA** a Traveller led Approved Housing Body.

On the basis of an assessment of current and projected need, the proposals in this programme are included for the purpose of addressing the assessed needs as far possible, bearing in mind the availability of resources to do so, legal requirements and restrictions, co-operation from applicants, and where possible, community support.

The Traveller Accommodation Programme adopted by the Limerick City and County Council will be reviewed within three years from the time it has been adopted or at any other time as directed by the Minister for the Housing, Planning & Local Government. A review of the programme can be carried out at any time if considered necessary by the Housing Authority.

Support will be given to community-based initiatives that will facilitate Travellers and the settled community to work more closely together and will enable Travellers to have an active role in their local communities. Additional resources will be sought by the Council to assist meaningful Traveller participation.

Consideration will be given to supporting projects for families who own their property but who need assistance with accommodation to improve or develop these properties to meet their, and/or extended family accommodation needs.

Families who own their own property will be encouraged to improve these properties if necessary and the Council will use the appropriate statutory provisions to deal with areas of dereliction.

Proposed Measures:

The implementation of the following measures is critical in the delivery of the targets set out in this programme and the delivery of the programme requires the commitment of all stakeholders. The targets will be achieved via the provision of generic housing supply and Traveller specific accommodation. It also includes the upgrading of some existing accommodation. The Council is required to operate within the constraints of the economic climate and the limited funds available. Applicants will also have to be realistic in their aspirations and the priority is that accommodation needs will be met. This may not always result in the preferred option of the applicants being provided.

The measures to achieve the objectives will be met under two main headings.

1. Generic Housing Supports.

The accommodation needs of Traveller applicants who express an accommodation preference for housing will be met via the various housing supply options as set out in the implementation strategy in this programme. The purchase of single instance houses will only be considered in exceptional cases where special needs exist and appropriate accommodation cannot be sourced within the Local Authority housing stock or via the available housing supply options. The programme does not include proposals in relation to specific generic housing supply options. These apply to individual families who reside throughout the city and county and will be assessed and considered for such accommodation in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements in place including the Scheme of Letting Priorities. Traditionally, families have opted for generic housing supply options in Abbeyfeale, Askeaton, Cappamore, Kilmallock, Newcastle West, Patrickswell, Rathkeale and Limerick City. Families wishing to apply for generic housing supply options can indicate their areas of preference in the application form and are not confined to the areas listed above. Traveller families residing in a private site on the Ballysimon Road have the option to apply for housing supports to Limerick City and County Council.

The Approved Housing Body sector will also be supported to assist members of the Traveller Community.

2. Traveller Specific Accommodation

The Council will prioritise the improvement of the living circumstances of families living in Traveller specific accommodation where the existing accommodation does not meet current needs. The achievement of this is challenging for all involved and the following actions will be pursued during the period of the programme. The delivery of the proposed actions is subject to funding being made available to the Council and successful compliance with statutory requirements, including Planning and Development.

Bawneys Bridge Residential Caravan Park

The site comprises of an eight bay permanent halting site, with service units in each bay. The Health & Safety Authority have directed that no new developments or expansions to existing developments will be allowed within the zonal area of the Sevoso site. (*Council Directive 96/82/EC on the control of major-accident hazards.*). The option of extending this site to cater for the accommodation needs of extended family members is not possible due to the restriction of new developments in the area. Some families residing on the site have indicated that they would like to be accommodated in a

Group Housing Development or generic housing. The Council will continue to work with families by actively identifying land or generic housing to meet their accommodation needs.

Boher, County Limerick

Temporary Site (1 extended family)

The permanent accommodation needs of this extended family need to be addressed. The family has expressed a desire to remain at its current location and their preference is to be accommodated in two bungalow type houses on the current site. The provision of new permanent accommodation at this location will be explored having full regard to statutory Planning and Development requirements and having regard to the location of the site on a national primary route. The provision of permanent accommodation for the extended family at this location is dependent on funding being made available. The mainstream housing supply options will also be available to the families as possible alternative options should they apply for same.

The Council will continue to liaise with the family in relation to progressing this option.

Castletroy/Kilmurry Residential Caravan Park

There are three bays and four houses in this development. Funding has been sourced for the conversion of the three bays to housing, based on the accommodation needs of the families residing in Kilmurry View. The refurbishment of the Community Centre is also part of these works.

Works will commence in the second quarter of 2019 and is due for completion early 2020.

When completed, this development will be a seven unit Group Housing Scheme.

Families seeking assistance with accommodation can also apply for generic housing supply options.

Childers Road (New Crescent) Residential Caravan Site

This residential caravan site consists of 11 bays and a disused community centre. It is proposed to do some improvement works to this site during the period of the programme to help alleviate overcrowding currently on the site. The option of converting some units from halting site accommodation to a group housing development was explored during the last programme and no progress was made. Following agreement on the proposal with the families, funding was secured from the Department. The proposed development has yet to proceed due to the reservations of some families residing on the site.

The Council will endeavour to address the reservation of the families with the intention to improve the accommodation circumstances for these families. It is envisaged that if the project is to proceed, the option of CENA* leading the delivery of the project will be explored in the consultation with the families.

Families seeking assistance with accommodation can also apply for generic housing supply options.

** CENA is a Traveller led Approved Housing Body.*

Clondrinagh Residential Caravan Site

This development consists of 10 residential bays and 4 small type houses. There are currently 14 family units resident on the site.

The option of converting all units from a halting site to a group housing development remains the preferred option of the residents. A refurbishment programme was completed and funding was sourced for the conversion of three residential bays to housing as part of the overall strategic plan. These works are due to commence in 2019.

The Council in its commitment to achieving the long-term strategic plan for this development will seek funding for the conversion of the remaining seven units to group housing during the period of this programme.

New applicants can also apply for generic housing supply options.

Clonlong Traveller Accommodation

This development consists of 3 houses and 15 Bays.

The Council is in ongoing discussions with the families with regard to their accommodation options. There is agreement that a long-term strategic plan is required to meet the current and projected needs of the families.

It is proposed that issues can be best resolved by the reduction in size of the existing site, which will require the relocation of some residents. The plan therefore is to reduce/redesign the existing site to a Group Housing Project and some families will be relocated to achieve this.

Funding has been secured for this proposal and the intention of the Council is to deliver this on a phased basis over the period of the programme.

It is envisaged that, once completed, the site will provide for improved living conditions for the remaining families and assist in improved management structures.

Families seeking assistance with accommodation can also apply for generic housing supply options.

Kilmallock

Traveller applicants in the Kilmallock area have expressed a preference for housing and applicants will be accommodated via the generic housing supply options. The provision of group housing accommodation for extended Traveller families in the area will be considered where a family member owns a property and is deemed not to have the required resources to develop it. This can only be achieved with the agreement of the property owners and is an option open to consideration should the families request it. Consideration will be given to source suitable accommodation to meet the needs of overcrowding in the existing group housing scheme subject to funding being available.

Long Pavement Temporary Halting Site

This site consists of 12 temporary bays.

This site is a temporary site and it is not possible to provide a permanent accommodation solution for the families at this location. An environmental assessment report commissioned by Limerick City Council in 2005 (White, Young and Green Consultant Engineers) stated that the current site is not suitable for the provision of a Traveller Specific Group Housing Project. Extensive improvement works to the temporary site were completed since then. The footprint of the site has been reduced as requested by the tenants over the last five years.

Some families have expressed a preference for group housing and it is proposed that suitable site/sites be identified in the area for providing same as recommended in the previous programme. Families on this site will also be considered for mainstream housing supports.

The completion of this project is dependent on funding being available.

Rhebogue Group Housing

This development consists of five houses which accommodates one extended family grouping. A previous proposal to accommodate the families at different locations was not achieved during the period of the last programme. The current situation has been reviewed as part of the preparation process for this programme. The footprint of the site has been reduced during the last programme and the aim is to reduce the footprint further during the period of the new programme.

Having considered all the factors involved and the feasibility of delivering improved accommodation for the families it remains the intention of the Council to comply with its statutory responsibilities and

to respond to the accommodation needs as assessed, and where possible, the accommodation preferences of the residents of Rhebogue Group Housing Scheme.

However, it remains the intent of the elected members to oversee the closure of Rhebogue Group Housing Scheme.

Toppins Field Residential Caravan Site

This development consists of three bays. The footprint of the site has been reduced during the last programme at the request of the residents. This site currently does not adequately meet the accommodation needs of the families residing on the site. Having considered all the factors in this case the provision of Group Housing would meet their long-term accommodation needs and would be a sustainable accommodation solution for these families. It is proposed in this programme that Group Housing be provided for these families.

The delivery of the accommodation options for the families will be undertaken in consultation Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan for the area.

This proposal is dependent on funding being available and the co-operation of the families.

Hillview Halting Site, Fairhill, Rathkeale

This development consists of twelve halting site bays. It is proposed to refurbish all existing units on this site.

This proposal is dependent on funding being made available.

Section 5

Conclusion and Review

This programme outlines the existing and projected need for Traveller Accommodation and proposed measures to improve the accommodation circumstances for Traveller families in Limerick City and Limerick County for the period 2019 to 2023. It outlines the policies in relation to Traveller Accommodation, strategy for implementation and targets. The Council will work with Travellers, Traveller Representatives, Local Communities and other agencies to deliver the programme and provide quality accommodation for members of the Travelling community. The programme is based on consultation, recognition of the needs of the Travelling Community and the statutory provisions pertaining to accommodation and equality.

The implementation of this programme requires a commitment from all involved to work together in collaboration and to commit to the implementation of the agreed proposals. The proposals contained in the programme are also subject to the necessary funding being available.

This programme will be reviewed within three years of adoption or at any time as the Council or the Minister for the Housing, Planning and Local Government deem necessary.

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