

A night photograph of a city street intersection. On the left is a modern building with many lit windows. On the right is a brick building with a street sign that reads 'HENRY ST' and '18 ABBAY'. In the center, there are traffic lights and a few cars. A large blue circle is overlaid on the image, containing the number '10' and the text 'Compact Growth and Revitalisation'.

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Compact Growth and Revitalisation

10.1 Introduction

The City, Environs, towns and villages in Limerick have significant capacity for revitalisation of the built environment and the development of infill, brownfield and underutilised urban lands. Development within existing settlements will ensure the efficient use of infrastructure, achieve compact growth objectives and cater for the residential and employment targets for Limerick set out in the National Planning Framework, in a sustainable manner. The highest quality built environments will be achieved through the principles of place-making outlined in this chapter. This chapter also outlines the various types of sites which will facilitate the achievement of compact growth in our urban settlements and the measures of active land management in place, to stimulate development on public and private owned lands.

Limerick has plans for unprecedented, transformative, dynamic and compact revitalisation, that will reposition it as an extremely attractive European destination in which to invest, work and live, now and in the future. The economic, physical and social revitalisation of Limerick is changing the face of the City and County and leading the transformation of the Mid-West of Ireland, into an attractive and dynamic national and international destination. This chapter outlines in brief a number of revitalisation projects and opportunities, which will contribute to the transformation of Limerick's urban environments.

10.2 Policy Context

10.2.1 National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework's National Strategic Objective for Compact Growth, aims to strengthen and grow our cities and metropolitan areas, harnessing the combined strength of our four regional cities, as a counterbalance to Dublin, through quality development, revitalisation and compact growth.

The NPF recognises that in order to achieve more compact development, focus is required on the following four key areas:

- The 'liveability' or quality of life of urban places;
- Making the continuous revitalisation and development of existing built up areas as attractive and viable as greenfield development;
- Tackling legacies such as concentrations of disadvantage in central urban areas;
- Linking revitalisation and redevelopment initiatives to climate action.

The National Planning Framework acknowledges that there are many examples of vibrant rural communities across Ireland in towns and villages, as well as within the open countryside. However, the NPF also acknowledges the challenges facing rural communities. The role of rural towns as local drivers for their surrounding area, supporting homes, jobs, clusters of services and transport hubs is recognised. The NPF acknowledges that changing settlement patterns have resulted in increased building vacancy within many towns and villages, adversely impacting on the vitality of these settlements. The NPF objectives therefore seek to strengthen and diversify rural towns to be a focus for local housing and employment growth, based on compact growth, revitalisation and development of vacant and derelict sites and utilising new technology and digital connectivity. The decline of villages also needs to be tackled by sustainable-targeted measures that address vacant premises and deliver sustainable reuse and revitalisation outcomes.

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10.2.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

The Regional Planning Objectives (RPOs) of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region support the compact growth, revitalisation, brownfield and infill development objectives of the National Planning Framework. To achieve compact growth, the RSES seeks to prioritise housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing urban footprints, where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling networks. Strategic initiatives, which will achieve the compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites, are sought, including site assembly for revitalisation and the promotion of brownfield lands over greenfield developments in all urban areas. The RSES also seeks the targeting of measures to reduce vacancy in our building stock and investment in refurbishment, to bring underutilised properties into residential use.

10.2.3 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) Policy Objectives aim to promote a cohesive Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area with:

- The City Centre as the primary location at the heart of the Metropolitan Area and Region;
- Compact growth and revitalisation of Limerick City Centre and suburbs;
- Active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner.

The MASP supports the consolidation, revitalisation and continued investment in Limerick City through Limerick 2030 and Limerick Regeneration, to drive its role as a vibrant living, retailing and working City, as the economic, social and cultural heart of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Region. The MASP supports innovative approaches to securing long term transformational and rejuvenation focused compact City growth, including unlocking the potential of centrally located sites. Sustainable densification will be facilitated through the assembly of brownfield sites for revitalisation of the City Centre. High quality, mixed-use sustainable and transformative projects will set national and international good practice standards in innovation, quality design, exemplary urbanism and place-making.

The MASP supports a number of key infrastructure and transformative projects within Limerick City of relevance to this chapter including:

- City Centre Consolidation and Revitalisation based on Limerick 2030, comprising social, physical and economic revitalisation and formation of a higher density Georgian Living City with all essential services and community facilities;
- Densification of development in the City Centre, including identification and assembly of brownfield sites for development;
- Development of key strategic sites including Opera site, Cleeves, Arthur's Quay and continuation of the riverside links;
- Continued investment in the City's Regeneration Areas;
- Public realm improvements in the City Centre including the development of a City-wide interconnected set of public parks, urban renewal within the Georgian Quarter;
- Progressing the sustainable phased development of areas for housing and the development of public transport and infrastructure, in areas such as Mungret;

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10.3 Compact Growth

- The continued expansion of the City's third level institutions and integration with the wider City and Region, including the provision of specific facilities to address educational and social deprivation;
- The World Class Waterfront Project along the River Shannon to reinvent the City Quays as the main entertainment and leisure destination for the City.

In addition to the above, Limerick City and County Council will have regard to the following plans, guidance documents and initiatives (and subsequent relevant publications):

- *Limerick 2030: An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick;*
- *Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan;*
- *Urban Regeneration and Development Fund;*
- *Living City Initiative;*
- *Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025;*
- *Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.*

The National Planning Framework's National Strategic Outcome of Compact Growth is fundamental for achieving the sustainable growth of our urban settlements. Limerick City and County Council acknowledges the social and economic benefits of more compact settlements and is committed to delivering compact growth, through active land management and initiatives to revitalise urban settlements. The policies and objectives in this Draft Plan promote the efficient use of urban lands to achieve compact growth, through the intensification, consolidation and positive revitalisation of the City, towns and villages throughout Limerick.

The compact growth concept requires the provision of higher densities and mixed-use developments in urban settlements, in order to ensure a more efficient use of scarce lands and optimise public investment in infrastructure. This requires the integration of land use and transport, an intensification of use of existing underutilised lands and the consolidation of the built environment through the development of brownfield and infill lands, as well as the reuse of vacant and derelict buildings in urban settlements. In conjunction with the provision of social and green infrastructure, the principles of compact growth set the foundations for a higher quality of life, through the promotion of mixed-use settlements, served by sustainable modes of transport and the creation of an attractive environment in which to live, work and do business.

Successful compact growth requires enhanced connectivity and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as the provision of viable public transport services through the concentration of higher density developments at strategic employment locations and along public transport nodes. There are many sustainability benefits of the compact growth concept compared to that of urban sprawl or greenfield developments at the edge of settlements. Such benefits include maximising the viability and cost efficiency of providing public transport and other infrastructure,

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as well as reduced car dependency and commuting times, which will facilitate the mitigation of climate change, through a reduction in traffic congestion, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Strategies such as the *Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy* and the *Climate Action Plan* are essential elements which support the objective of compact growth.

In accordance with the National Strategic Outcome of Compact Growth, the National Planning Framework requires 50% of all new housing in Limerick City to occur within the existing City and suburbs footprint, through the development of brownfield and infill sites and revitalisation. Outside of Limerick City, 30% of all new homes are to be provided within the existing built-up footprints of settlements.

The Local Authority acknowledges the social and economic benefits of more compact settlements as outlined above. Therefore, this Draft Plan will continue to support the sequential approach to the delivery of development, with priority given to the revitalisation of settlements and the consolidation of the existing built environment, through the development of brownfield, infill and backland urban sites.

Policy CGR P1

Compact Growth and Revitalisation

It is a policy of the Council to achieve sustainable intensification and consolidation, in accordance with the Core Strategy, through an emphasis on revitalisation and the delivery of more compact and consolidated growth, integrating land use and transport, with the use of higher densities and mixed-use developments at an appropriate scale on brownfield, infill, backland and underutilised sites within the existing built footprint of Limerick's City, Towns and Villages.

10.3.1 Place-making

Place-making is a collaborative approach to shaping, improving and creating high quality public places that are at the centre of every community. The concept is essential for the successful revitalisation of settlements and achieving compact growth in an attractive manner for all. Place-making involves the planning, urban design and management of public spaces in order to achieve an inclusive high quality of life and create a strong character, sense of place and belonging. Place-making should have cognisance to the physical, environmental, cultural and social characters that define a particular place. The key contributor to and component of good place-making is community engagement.

Urban design principles such as those set out in the *Best Practice Urban Design Manual*, (2009) and *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (2013), play a key role in place-making. Good urban design aims to create public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe, secure and accessible and which promote and facilitate social interaction.

The following principles of place-making should be incorporated into the design of any projects:

- Creation of character and sense of place through valuing and understanding the cultural, built and natural heritage;
- Creating diversity of functions and activities to enable viability and vitality;
- Provision of a highly adaptable urban structure for the future proofing of society and the economy;
- Providing an inclusive, high quality and safe network of connected streets and spaces;
- Providing priority for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, avoid unnecessary street clutter and providing opportunities for improved health and wellbeing;
- Coherent, legible and attractive streetscapes – providing continuity and a strong sense of enclosure, variety of frontages, vibrancy and interest;
- Integration of various characteristics of quality places.

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Place-making offers the opportunity to differentiate Limerick from other locations by delivering competitive and attractive urban areas in which to reside, work, invest and do business. The creation of urban areas that offer an attractive environment and a range of services and facilities to achieve a good quality of life are essential to allow investors attract and retain the skilled workforces and talent necessary to support and facilitate business and economic growth. Limerick City and County Council is committed to place-making and improving the quality of life for all.

10.3.1.1 Universal Design

Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible, by all people regardless of their age, size or ability.

Universal Design involves a considered approach to place-making based on an integrated assessment and understanding of the context and user needs. Universal Design permeates the principles that underpin our national and regional planning priorities and can add value at all levels in our planning system, creating responsive, functional and inclusive place-making and enabling the sustainable development of cities, towns and villages across Limerick.

By considering the diverse needs and abilities of everyone in the design process, Universal Design creates products, services and environments that meet the needs of all people who wish to use them. This concept is not a special requirement for the benefit of a particular cohort of the population, but is a fundamental basis for good design. In this regard, an accessible, usable, convenient and pleasurable environment is of benefit to all of society.

The National Disability Authority's Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) was established in 2007 under the Disability Act 2005. CEUD is dedicated to the achievement of Universal Design, enabling people to participate in a society that takes account of human difference and interact with their environment to the best of their ability. The CEUD sets out seven principles of Universal Design to guide the design of public spaces, products and communications. The Seven Principles of Universal Design include:

- Equitable Use;
- Flexibility in Use;
- Simple and Intuitive;
- Perceptible Information;
- Tolerance for Error;
- Low Physical Effort;
- Size and Space for Approach and Use.

10.3.1.2 Public Realm

The public realm generally refers to all areas to which the public has access, including roads, streets, lanes, footpaths, cycle lanes, signage, street furniture, parks, squares, open spaces and public buildings and facilities. The public realm therefore can create character and identity and has a significant impact on how the urban fabric functions, on social interaction and quality of life and on competitiveness and attractiveness as a place in which to live, work, invest, hold events or as a tourism destination. The planning, design and management of the public realm is therefore fundamental to successful revitalisation and is a cross cutting theme of this Draft Plan.

Responsibility for the public realm rests with both the public and private sector landowners and service providers. Elements such as overhead cables, utility boxes, excessive or poorly designed signage and shopfronts and a poorly considered mix of street furniture can combine to form poor visual amenity in the public realm. A simple, uncluttered and consistent design approach is fundamental to achieving a successful public realm. In areas of historic importance, traditional style signage, lighting columns and benches should be considered in any project.

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The National Planning Framework references the Limerick 2030 Plan, which aims to create a modern City Centre that includes world-class office accommodation and residential developments, linked through a series of transformational City Centre public realm projects, including the Great Streets Programme. Limerick City and County Council is committed to improving public realm and support projects, which contribute positively to the revitalisation of the public realm of Limerick including for example the O'Connell Street Revitalisation Project and the Wayfinding Strategy.

Objective CGR O1

Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm:

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure that all developments are designed to the highest quality with respect to the principles of place-making, universal design and public realm including the guidance set out under the *Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide* (2009) and the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (2013).
- b) Prepare and facilitate implementation of Public Realm Plans for settlements including Limerick City, Adare and Rathkeale.
- c) Ensure the construction of the highest quality and innovative designed buildings, in particular on the approaches to Limerick City, along the Riverfront/Quays, on important street corners or junctions, corner sites, the end of vistas and gateways, Town Centres and the edges of public squares or open space.

10.3.1.3 Building Heights

Implementation of the National Planning Framework requires increased density (Refer to Chapter 3: Settlement Strategy), scale and height of developments, including an appropriate mix of living, working, social and recreational spaces in urban areas. While achieving higher density does not automatically imply taller buildings alone, increased building height is an essential component in the optimisation of the capacity of urban sites to facilitate compact growth.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2018), a Draft Building Height Strategy for Limerick City has been prepared to accompany this Draft Plan as set out in Volume 6 and should be read in tandem with this chapter. The strategy aims to ensure the preservation of Limerick's character and provide guidance and criteria on the development of new buildings with an appropriate scale and mass in areas across the City and Environs. New developments will be required to comply with the criteria set out in the Building Height Strategy.

Objective CGR O2

Building Heights

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure that all new tall buildings in Limerick City and Environs are designed in accordance with the tall building classifications, recommendations, high-level principles and area based assessment tools etc. of the Draft Building Height Strategy, as set out in Volume 6 of this Draft Plan. All such buildings shall be of an exceptional architectural quality and standard of design and finish.

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- b) Focus delivery of tall buildings in the City Centre, in particular the areas that have been identified as having potential for increased building height. Tall building clusters will be encouraged at The Quays, Colbert Station Quarter, Cleeves Site and The Docklands in accordance with the building classification criteria set out in the Draft Building Height Strategy. There shall be a general presumption against tall buildings in other areas, except at designated areas and the gateway locations identified in the Draft Building Height Strategy.
- c) Protect the unique intrinsic character, scale and significant views of Limerick City, the skyline and key landmark buildings in the delivery of increased building heights, through the application of the Tall Building Classifications, Recommendations, High Level Principles and Assessment Tools and Criteria set out in the Building Height Strategy.
- d) Ensure applications for tall buildings are supported by the following assessments and any additional assessments required at the discretion of the Planning Authority - Environmental Assessment, Wind Analysis, Sunlight and Daylight Analysis, Verified View Analysis, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Architectural Design Statement, Traffic Impact Assessment including a Mobility Management Plan for non-residential uses, Building Services Strategy.

10.3.1.4 Brownfield Sites

Brownfield land is a term used to describe previously developed land that is not currently in use and which has the potential for redevelopment. Often such lands are of large scale and have previously been in use for industrial or commercial purposes and became derelict due to obsolescence, vacancy or demolition of structures. Some brownfield sites may have a legacy of contamination from operational activities or waste disposal.

Redeveloping brownfield sites provides opportunities for revitalisation of the built environment and reuse of existing infrastructure including roads and utilities. The Planning Authority will encourage the redevelopment of brownfield sites in settlements throughout Limerick, in accordance with the concept of compact growth and the Development Management Standards of this Draft Plan.

A number of strategic brownfield sites have been identified for redevelopment in Limerick City Centre, which will have transformational effects on the revitalisation of the City. Such strategic sites include, for example, the Opera Centre, Cleeves Riverside Quarter, the University of Limerick Riverside Campus and Colbert Station Quarter. Some of these projects are briefly outlined under the Limerick City Revitalisation Projects and Opportunity Sites section further below.

10.3.1.5 Infill Sites

Infill land is a term used to describe vacant or underutilised sites of all scales within existing developed areas of settlements. Such sites tend by definition to be relatively small and comprise lands that fill gaps in otherwise continuously built-up frontages. A large number of infill type sites have been identified for development throughout Limerick City and County. The development of infill sites will facilitate the most sustainable use of urban land and existing infrastructure, while facilitating compact growth. Infill development can often form one aspect of larger revitalisation schemes, including in the Regeneration Areas in Limerick City.

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The Planning Authority will encourage the appropriate development of infill sites in accordance with the Development Management Standards of this Draft Plan. However, in certain limited circumstances the Planning Authority may consider a justified relaxation of planning standards in the interest of achieving sustainable compact growth. Infill developments should be appropriate to the character of the streetscape, enhancing its context and integrating with its surroundings. In this regard, infill development should respect and complement the prevailing scale of the built environment while ensuring the preservation of the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

10.3.1.6 Backland Sites

Backland is a term used to describe sites which are located to the rear of existing buildings, often with no street frontage and usually within predominantly residential areas. A backland site is usually a section of large garden with road access at the rear or side of a property. Larger backland sites can be formed through the amalgamation of a number of large adjoining rear gardens. Along with rear gardens, which may contain garages or other ancillary buildings, backland sites often comprise larger areas of lands left over after development, or perhaps, industrial or other non-residential structures.

The Planning Authority will encourage the development of backland sites where appropriate opportunities exist in accordance with the Development Management Standards of this Draft Plan. When poorly designed, the development of individual backland sites can conflict with the established pattern and character of development in an area and result in the loss of potential access to larger amalgamated backland areas. Therefore, the Planning Authority will encourage landowners to prepare masterplans for the development of all backland sites in a particular row to avoid a piecemeal approach and ensure the long term maximum development potential of such lands are realised. The design of

any backland development shall avoid significant loss of amenity to existing residential properties by reason of loss of privacy, overlooking and excessive overshadowing.

Objective CGR O3

Urban Lands and Compact Growth

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Deliver 50% of new homes within the existing built up footprint of Limerick City and Suburbs and 30% of new homes within the existing built up footprint of settlements, in a compact and sustainable manner in accordance with the Core and Housing Strategies of this Draft Plan.
- b) Encourage and facilitate sustainable revitalisation and intensification of brownfield, infill, underutilised and backland urban sites, subject to compliance with all quantitative and qualitative Development Management Standards set out under Chapter 11 of this Draft Plan.
- c) Encourage residential development in the City Centre zone by requiring at least 20% of new development comprise residential use. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis, where residential use is not deemed compatible with the primary use of the site e.g. museums/tourist attractions etc.
- d) Require multiple owners of large scale urban sites to develop a masterplan for the coherent and sustainable development of such lands, addressing issues of the sustainable use of available lands, preservation of existing residential amenity, access, urban design and connectivity.

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10.3.2 Active Land Management

The creation of compact, dense and sustainable urban centres as envisaged in the National Planning Framework, requires the use of active land management to bring vacant and underutilised land in urban areas into beneficial use. Such management ensures a more effective return on State investment in infrastructure and counteracts unsustainable patterns of development, namely urban sprawl. Publicly owned land plays an important role in active land management allowing for integrated urban development, the construction of high quality affordable housing and the provision of timely and cost effective infrastructure.

Through the functions of the Community and Housing Directorates in relation to paint schemes, vacant homes, dereliction, vacancy and re-use initiatives, the Local Authority will continue to actively pursue the revitalisation of settlements across Limerick. In addition, through the development of projects by Limerick 2030 and the Land Development Agency, significant tracts of brownfield lands in Limerick City Centre will be revitalised in a compact manner.

Limerick City and County Council envisages that effective approaches to revitalisation by the public sector will facilitate and encourage the mobilisation of development land in private ownership, to generate housing supply and create high quality neighbourhoods in the settlements. Key legislative components of active land management with respect to private owned lands are the Vacant Site Levy, Derelict Site Levy and incentives of the Development Contribution Scheme. This Draft Plan sets a framework to secure the revitalisation of areas in need of renewal and supports the active land management mechanisms to address areas of urban decay, dereliction and vacancy in the urban environment.

Objective CGR O4

Active Land Management

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Promote an active land management approach through cooperation with relevant stakeholders and infrastructure providers to deliver enabling infrastructure to achieve compact growth.
- b) Support and facilitate the reuse and revitalisation of derelict, vacant and underutilised sites and disused buildings throughout Limerick for residential, economic, community and leisure purposes.
- c) Establish a database of strategic brownfield and infill sites in the City Centre to be updated on an annual basis to monitor the progress of the active land management measures.

10.3.2.1 Vacant Site Levy

The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (the Act) provides for the imposition of a vacant site levy. The vacant site levy is a key active land management tool in delivering the goals of the NPF, such as ensuring the efficient use of land, limiting the sprawl of urban development, regenerating urban areas and in doing so making a positive contribution to meeting housing needs. The levy is aimed at incentivising the use of vacant sites and buildings in urban areas for residential and regeneration purposes.

Limerick City and County Council will continue to examine lands within the City and County, as appropriate, for the purposes as set out in the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, in relation to the vacant site levy.

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The vacant site levy aims to promote the appropriate development and renewal of urban sites and areas, identified having regard to the core strategy, that are in need of regeneration, in order to ensure there is no:

- i) adverse effects on existing amenities and facilities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land;
- ii) urban blight and decay;
- iii) anti-social behaviour; or
- iv) shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses.

This objective shall relate to all zoned lands in Limerick.

Under the Act, Limerick City and County Council has compiled a register of vacant sites within its functional area that are suitable for the provision of housing, but are not being progressed for development. The Vacant Site Register was established on January 1st 2017 with levies being charged on an annual basis since January 2019. An identified vacant site can be entered onto the Register when the Local Authority is of the opinion that it has been vacant for a minimum of 12 months preceding its entry onto the Register. The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018 amended certain provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act including an increase in the vacant site levy from 3% to 7% of the market value of the lands.

Objective CGR O5

Vacant Site Levy

It is an objective of the Council to utilise the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (as amended), including the continued maintenance of a Vacant Site Register to facilitate the appropriate re-use and development of vacant and underutilised sites on zoned lands in Limerick that are in need of renewal or revitalisation.

10.3.2.2 Derelict Sites

While the Vacant Site Levy is a land activation mechanism aimed at encouraging landowners in urban areas to develop residential or regeneration land, primarily for the purposes of housing, the Derelict Site Levy is a mechanism aimed at improving the character of an area, by addressing derelict buildings and sites. In accordance with the Derelict Sites Act 1990 (the Act), a Derelict Site is defined as any land which detracts, or is likely to detract, to a material degree from the amenity, character or appearance of land in the neighbourhood in question because of:

- a) Structures which are in a ruinous, derelict or dangerous condition;
- b) The neglected, unsightly or objectionable condition of the land or structures on it, or;
- c) The presence of litter, rubbish, debris or waste on the land.

Derelict Sites can have a negative impact on the social, visual and commercial aspects of a neighbourhood. The Act places a duty on every owner and occupier of land to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the land does not become or continue to be in a derelict state. The Local Authority maintains a Derelict Sites Register and actively takes all reasonable steps to ensure that any land situated in this administrative area does not become or continue to be a derelict site.

Under the Act, the Local Authority is entitled to:

- Serve a Notice on the owner/occupier specifying works to be carried out to prevent or abate dereliction;
- Acquire by agreement or compulsorily any derelict site situated within its administrative area;
- Impose an annual levy on any derelict site, which is considered to be urban land, within its administrative area which stands entered on the Derelict Sites Register on the 1st of January of that year. The levy shall be 3% of the market value of the land or site.

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Limerick City and County Council is proactive in identifying and seeking the improvement of such sites to address incidences of decay, prevent deterioration of the built fabric of our urban settlements and bring buildings back into active use. There are a small number of unfinished housing estates in Limerick, which are being pursued through the Derelict Sites Act. The Council will continue to work with developers, residents and all relevant stakeholders to secure the satisfactory completion of all developments in the County and to ensure that residential developments are taken in charge in accordance with the requirements of Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

Objective CGR O6 **Derelict Sites**

It is an objective of the Council to utilise the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990, including the maintenance of a Derelict Site Register and CPO powers to address instances of dereliction and decay in the urban environment and bring properties back into active re-use.

Objective CGR O7 **Unfinished Estates**

It is an objective of the Council to actively work with all relevant stakeholders to secure the satisfactory completion of unfinished developments in the County in accordance with *Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments* (DoECLG 2011).

10.4 Strategic Revitalisation

Limerick City and County Council will encourage and facilitate the continuous revitalisation and redevelopment of existing settlements across Limerick, to create more desirable places in which people can live, work and visit.

With respect to Limerick City, parts of the City Centre suffers from a lack of concentration of economic activity, urban decay and social issues including:

- Urban decay in parts of the City core;
- High commercial and residential vacancies in the City Centre. A land use and vacancy survey, undertaken in January 2020 revealed vacancy rates of 23% amongst commercial properties and 8% amongst residential units;
- A low employment rate and above average unemployment rate in some areas;
- A relatively slow rate of population growth for an urban area;
- A legacy of social inequalities including neighbourhoods with concentrations of poverty and social problems.

The National Planning Framework seeks to secure long term transformational and revitalisation focused compact City growth and address issues such as those outlined above. In accordance with the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy Objectives, Limerick City and County Council has a number of proposals for revitalisation over the lifetime of this Draft Plan. Such projects aim to capitalise on the potential of underutilised, publicly owned, centrally located and strategic sites and their potential to have transformational effects, boosting the residential population, employment opportunities and economic output levels of a compact and sustainable City Centre as a driver for the wider Mid-West Region.

10.4.1 Revitalisation Initiatives

The development of centrally located and strategic brownfield and underutilised lands present Limerick City with an opportunity to achieve the economic and social objectives associated with the targeted population growth for Limerick City in a

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sustainable manner. The key tool for the revitalisation of Limerick is the *Limerick 2030 – An Economic and Spatial Plan*. The Limerick 2030 Plan sets out a blueprint for the economic and spatial revitalisation of Limerick City, to reposition it as a world-class City in Ireland and Europe. The NPF sees its implementation as a growth enabler, which can act as an exemplar to other cities not just nationally but internationally.

The establishment of the Limerick Twenty Thirty Strategic Development DAC (Designated Activity Company) has accelerated the implementation of the Limerick 2030 Plan, with actions proposed over a 20-year period. The DAC is the first entity of its kind created by a Local Authority to deliver a City and countywide programme of investment. It is the biggest single Irish commercial property development programme undertaken outside of Dublin.

Over €1 billion is being invested in enterprise and investment infrastructure as part of the Limerick 2030 vision, which aims to transform Limerick through economic, social and physical investment. The revitalisation and densification of Limerick City Centre is identified as a key objective of the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan. The MASP supports initiatives including the development of the Opera site, Cleaves Riverside Quarter, Mungret College lands and the proposed World Class Waterfront project, which will link strategic brownfield sites and enhance the amenity and attractiveness of Limerick's waterfront.

The revitalisation of brownfield sites and the tackling of dereliction and vacancy will secure the long term transformational and rejuvenation of the City Centre, resulting in focused compact City growth. Unlocking centrally located sites represents a unique opportunity to develop high quality mixed-use developments in a more sustainable manner than developing a greenfield site on the outskirts of the City.

Objective CGR O8 Revitalisation

It is an objective of the Council to promote and support the utilisation of targeted incentives, investment opportunities and various funding sources such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund and the Town and Village Renewal Scheme to facilitate the revitalisation and transformational renewal of Limerick's City, towns and villages for residential, employment, community and recreation purposes.

10.4.2 Limerick City Opportunities Sites

Limerick is setting a blueprint for successful revitalisation of the built environment and creating an attractive place for business, innovation and inward investment. Limerick City and County Council welcomes opportunities for revitalisation across the City Centre. A number of projects and opportunity sites are briefly outlined in the following sections in order to provide an example of the potential opportunities for revitalisation across the City.

Any development proposed on the identified Opportunity Sites, shall be carried out in accordance with the specific objectives for the site. Developers should prepare masterplans as part of the planning application process for large-scale sites to demonstrate how their proposals will achieve high quality urban design and place-making objectives.

Other opportunity sites not identified hereunder can be presented for appraisal. Such proposals should have cognisance to the key strategic objectives of Limerick City and County Council as outlined in this Draft Plan. An emphasis on compliance with the principles of urban design and public realm should be demonstrated in any proposal.

Some of the sites may be owned by different parties and would require an element of site assembly for a coherent development strategy to progress. This approach to re-development will be encouraged over a piecemeal approach.

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10.4.2.1 Living Limerick City Centre Initiative

The Living Limerick City Centre Initiative (LLCC Initiative) was awarded funding in 2021 under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund. The LLCC Initiative seeks to make positive, innovative and transformational change to revitalise the centre of Limerick City. The regeneration of the City Centre is identified as a growth enabler under the NPF. The Initiative is a 7-year programme focused on targeted interventions to:

- Renew vacant and underutilised building stock by embedding emerging economic and employment opportunities in derelict buildings;
- Lead the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient City, deliver compact growth, strengthen the economy through the development of innovation and enhance existing public amenity and heritage;
- Transform the public realm of the City through a targeted programme of renewal that will increase footfall and support the development of the emerging economic, employment and residential models.

These interventions are underpinned by the integration of innovative and proactive collaboration practices from the outset, which include not just public organisations but private companies, communities of interest and the wider population. Together these interventions aim to develop a City that is more resilient to economic and environmental events. The interventions are briefly outlined below:

1. The Living Georgian City Programme supports two key pathfinder projects demonstrating new residential living in the City Centre in two vacant historic properties in Limerick City and County Council ownership. These developments are delivered by a Revolving Fund managed by a structured Governance model overseeing Investment Modelling and Feasibility for differing forms of housing provision and groups.

A Smart Design Code is also to be developed recording the methodologies used in the restoration.

2. The Digital Innovation Cluster will develop a block within the City Centre to attract new companies, start-ups, accelerators and other related entities, creating a dense cluster of innovators and entrepreneurs to enable rapid innovation in the region. The cluster will offer niche features enabling the growth of the film and creative arts sectors. The project will develop two current vacant building (Nos 29 and 30 Cecil street) and will incorporate the existing Engine building and Digital Collaboration. The proposal comprises development of a new 6-storey building and the refurbishment of the Theatre Royal building into a Film School and City Cinema. The project includes the creation of a Citizen Observatory to act as an access point for community-based collaboration, data gathering and analysis. The Digital Innovation Cluster will be connected to the existing Mid-West E-hub network to drive employment and job creation in towns and villages of the Mid-West.
3. The Futureproofing Place Programme reimagines the logic of the grid of streets and the supporting laneways of the City Centre. This element will support the vision in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) by reinforcing the physical spine of the City Centre to achieve compact growth. This programme will accommodate new mobility and energy services, future data infrastructure and enabling rapid problem solving of liveability and business issues in the City Centre, together with the users of these spaces. A critical element of this is to animate the streets with installations, events, markets, etc. while demonstrating the new Limerick brand.

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4. The Citizen Collaboration Programme is the first of three programmes of work that are elevated by their integration with each other and by being supported by the Innovation ecosystem, established as part of the +CityxChange programme of works in three cross cutting Activities:

- Liveable Limerick City Centre Strategic Framework: A review and update of the Limerick 2030 strategy will align existing strategies to address the complex needs of the City, including a local liveability and urban condition survey;
- City Animation Partnerships: The development of new programmes and partnerships with all stakeholders to support the social, cultural and economic viability of the City Centre specifically:
 - A canopy on Cruises Street;
 - The installation of public infrastructure to support public events;
 - Lighting of signature buildings;
 - A digital retail and business strategy to support the digital transition with a specific emphasis on supporting the food strategy through the development of a City Centre food hub;
- Citizen Solutions Programme: The development of an active programme of citizen led solutions targeted at liveability issues in the City Centre.

10.4.2.2 Limerick Laneways Project

The Limerick Laneways Project is part of the wider Living Limerick City Centre Initiative. This project will develop a strategy to guide the repurposing of twenty-five laneways in the City Centre, through examining issues such as movement, planting, lighting and refuse. The strategy will initially include detailed design proposals for seven laneways. The laneways are an important asset to the City that provides not just alternative routes through the City Centre, but are also capable of providing important recreational and amenity space, as well as supporting new development in the curtilages of older buildings.

The strategy will complement a number of other initiatives such as LSMATS, the Wayfinding Strategy and other public realm initiatives.

Objective LL O1

Limerick Laneways

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Promote reuse of vacant buildings and support existing uses within the City Centre.
- b) Improve connections and maintain linkages within and through the City Centre.
- c) Promote high design quality and improve the public realm.

10.4.2.3 Opera Site

The Opera site represents Limerick 2030's principle response to transform the social and economic profile of Limerick City Centre and stimulate growth that will benefit not just its immediate environs but also the entire Mid-West Region.

Project Opera on a 1.62ha. site zoned City Centre, will be a landmark commercial development reflecting Limerick's status as a leading destination for inward investment. Works have commenced on the development which will be a LEED Gold and nZEB standard Campus, consisting primarily of commercial offices supported by a range of retail and non-retail services, an Apart Hotel and new City Library in the historic Georgian Town Hall. The development will extend to over 555,000 sq. ft. of accommodation with over 5,800m² of public realm and high-quality streetscapes. The campus will provide a day-time employment hub, transforming into a bustling night-time destination complete with restaurants, bars and open entertainment spaces. The design will also be entirely complementary to and protect important Georgian architecture on the site.

Project Opera will be a key driver for increased economic activity in the City Centre, delivering significant employment opportunities on brownfield lands while acting as a catalyst for other major City Centre investments.

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10.4.2.4 World Class Waterfront

The World Class Waterfront development is a key revitalisation and transformation project under the Limerick 2030 Plan. The World Class Waterfront project comprises three elements – the Riverside Infrastructural Works, Cleeves Riverside Quarter and the University of Limerick City Campus. The project focuses on mixed-use brownfield regeneration, adaptive re-use and reversal of vacancy and dereliction in Limerick City Centre.

The World Class Waterfront project will deliver on the NPF objectives of compact growth, sustainable mobility and place-making/public realm, which has the potential to make a transformational difference to Limerick City. In combination, the three elements of the project will facilitate an increase in the population residing and working in the City Centre, thus enhancing critical mass and footfall and the City's retail, hospitality and service sectors. In addition, the project will create cross-cutting benefits for the City Centre in terms of an increase in the viability of land and infrastructure, enhancement of the City's natural and built heritage, as well as contributing to Limerick's unique riverside skyline. The project will provide health and well-being benefits through the inclusion of green infrastructure which itself will create improved air quality, reduced heat stress and lower storm runoff rates through the inclusion of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).

1. The design and development of the Riverside Infrastructural Works' public realm and sustainable travel links proposed on the waterfront is being progressed in conjunction with the Office of Public Works' Flood Relief Scheme for the City Centre as part of the Shannon CFRAM programme. The Limerick 2030 Plan recognises that the City's quays represent a principal asset. The plan advocates their re-invention as the main entertainment and leisure destination for the City. This element will provide a cohesive linear link to other revitalisation sites being progressed under the Limerick 2030 Plan as outlined above. The World-class

Waterfront Riverside Infrastructural Works include:

- Public realm works along the quayside from Limerick Docks to the south along the central Quays to Merchant's Quay, King John's Castle and George's Quay and returning along the north bank of the River Shannon;
 - Proposed walkways/cycleways and pedestrian bridges, one of which will cross the Shannon and three smaller bridges that will span the Abbey River;
 - Re-alignment of the public road at Arthur's Quay and Honan's Quay to facilitate a comprehensive re-development project at Arthur's Quay including a new riverside park and public square.
2. The Cleeves Riverside Quarter is proposed at the former Cleeves factory site near O'Callaghan Strand in Limerick City. The former Salesian Secondary School, Fernbank House St. Michael's Rowing Club, the existing car park and an area to the rear of Landsdowne Hall are all within the development boundary. The site is suitable for a large scale residential and office development with the potential for a cultural/visitor attraction and educational use also. The property is a brownfield site zoned City Centre and will be regenerated by Limerick Twenty Thirty. The development will include conservation and adaptive re-use of a number of protected structures and other historic buildings. The site will provide public spaces and is likely to benefit from improved connectivity via a pedestrian bridge to be constructed across the River Shannon by Limerick City and County Council. This new bridge will connect the Cleeves Riverside Quarter on the Western side, to the core City Centre and Georgian Quarter on the Eastern side of the river. The project will deliver City Centre living and employment creation opportunities, while addressing the economic and social dereliction of this area of the City through large-scale revitalisation.

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Objective CRC O1**Cleeves Riverside Quarter**

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the following are addressed in any redevelopment:

- a) Implement a high-quality urban design solution with a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, tourism/ancillary retail and amenities connecting to the City core.
- b) Respond to the site context to generate a sustainable solution that creates a distinct riverside quarter, respecting the significant historic buildings, enabling the potential for greater height and density, while creating a landmark City gateway.
- c) Investigate, assess and integrate the historic buildings and industrial heritage of significance, protect key features of historical merit and implement conservation principles to assist in the appropriate management of protected structures, in a manner that facilitates the practical regeneration and reuse of the site.
- d) Enhance permeability of the public realm by removing and/or decreasing the effects of existing barriers to and within the site, through initiatives including:
 - Public access, walking and cycling networks;
 - Enhanced streetscape and legibility;
 - Removal of section(s) of the existing Cleeves wall; and
 - Improving road and traffic circulation.
- e) Enhance the legibility of the natural and built environment and landscape and connections between place and space, whilst ensuring delivery of a high quality public realm that relates and links to the City core and the River Shannon.
- f) Identify and enhance natural heritage areas and features, particularly where opportunities exist to improve biodiversity and provide for quality public realm.
- g) Support sustainable modes of transport and use of the public realm.
- h) Facilitate a holistically sustainable and low carbon development that is energy efficient and future proofed for a changing climate.

- i) Promote a site-specific approach, reflecting emerging best practice, in addressing flood risk and in the adaptation of protected structures and buildings of significance.

3. The University of Limerick City Campus is proposed at the former Dunnes Stores site at Sarsfield Bridge zoned City Centre. The campus development on this brownfield site will include two linked buildings comprising a university teaching building and a student accommodation residence. The project will support the delivery of a number of objectives as outlined in the University of Limerick's Strategic Plan UL@50. The proposal also directly links to the NPF growth enablers for Limerick through the implementation of the Limerick 2030 strategy, the revitalisation of a key brownfield City Centre site and the expansion of the third level institute. The project will deliver an educational, economic and social footprint, which will stimulate the transformation of industry, commerce, housing and amenity in the core of the City Centre.

Objective ULCC O1**UL City Campus**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Facilitate and support the establishment of the UL Limerick City Campus at the former Dunnes Stores site at the junction of Sarsfield Bridge and Honan's Quay.
- b) Deliver an education campus with considerable capacity for high quality student accommodation and ancillary uses.
- c) Develop a landmark tall building on this gateway site in accordance with the provisions of the Building Height Strategy.
- d) Ensure the highest quality design of the public realm.
- e) Ensure the provision of green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout including connections to existing green infrastructure assets.
- f) Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance.
- g) Incorporate pedestrian and cycling connectivity and facilities.

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10.4.2.5 Arthur's Quay

Arthur's Quay encompasses the Arthur's Quay Shopping Centre, the surrounding streets, Arthur's Quay Park and Sarsfield House all zoned City Centre. Under the Limerick 2030 Plan, Arthur's Quay will be transformed through major redevelopment of the existing Arthur's Quay Shopping Centre and adjoining lands, to provide a new mixed-use retail, residential, leisure and office development. A new City Square will be created connecting across O'Connell Street to Cruises Street. The redevelopment of Arthur's Quay will secure the City's role as a premier retail destination, increasing visitors, footfall and spin off benefits for restaurants, hotels, tourism and culture destinations.

Objective AQ O1 Arthur's Quay

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Facilitate creation of a mixed-use retail, residential, leisure and office development, including a new retail development to replace the Arthur's Quay Shopping Centre and expand onto a series of new blocks addressing Arthur's Quay Park, with a retail anchor and a range of other shop units/bars and restaurants fronting onto a new City Square.
- b) Create a more pedestrian focused character and active uses that engages with the public realm along the River.
- c) Ensure the highest quality of landmark design and public realm with active facades and entrances creating frontage to the Waterfront.
- d) Facilitate renovation of the Penneys and Debenhams Stores sites, including redevelopment of the underutilised and brownfield lands to the rear of the Penneys store.
- e) Ensure delivery and service arrangements are updated to minimise impact on the public realm, particularly during daytime and evening hours.

10.4.2.6 Colbert Quarter

Under Project Ireland 2040, the Land Development Agency (LDA) is tasked with building 150,000 new homes over the next 20 years. The LDA has a focus on managing the State's own lands to develop new homes and regenerate under-utilised sites. In the long term, the LDA will assemble strategic land banks from a mix of public and private owned lands, making these available for housing in a controlled manner, which will bring essential long-term stability to the Irish housing market. In Limerick, the LDA is responsible for overseeing the development of the Colbert Quarter area, briefly outlined below.

Objective LDA O1 Land Development Agency

It is an objective of the Council to support and work with the Land Development Agency in the planning, co-ordination and development of large-scale and strategic land banks, particularly lands in state ownership, in order to achieve compact growth, sustainable development and economic and physical revitalisation.

The Land Development Agency is preparing plans for the development of the proposed Colbert Quarter area. The Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework Strategy 2021 – 2041, which is currently being prepared, will aim to develop a 69ha. brownfield site zoned City Centre, surrounding Colbert Station including the railway and bus stations, St. Joseph's Hospital Campus, recreational lands and lands in private ownership. The redevelopment of the lands is being led by the LDA along with other State Bodies including Limerick City and County Council, CIE and the HSE.

The Colbert Quarter site has the capacity for the development of a walkable neighbourhood of new homes for 6,300 people, employment, education, health, transport and leisure facilities, with a connected public realm and high quality architectural design to characterise and punctuate the area. The new quarter will be compact, dense and sustainable, based around an important regional and national transport hub.

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The Colbert Quarter provides an opportunity to create a model for potential future urban revitalisation in Limerick and other cities.

The strategy for the Colbert Quarter will analyse the land banks, set out a vision for redevelopment and the actions necessary for a coherent and integrated redevelopment to be facilitated. The Framework Strategy will be used to guide the future development of the area.

Objective CSQ 01

Colbert Quarter

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Create a vibrant and sustainable new urban quarter with work, living and recreational opportunities, based around high-quality public transport nodes.
- b) Create a place with distinctive urban character, based on urban design principles with strong linkages to the City core.
- c) Provide for sufficient densities to sustain public transport and a viable mix of uses.
- d) Provide for an integrated sustainable mobility network, with walking, cycling and public transport as the main components.
- e) Provide for the integration of new and established communities.
- f) Provide for a balanced mix of residential tenure.
- g) Enhance the new identity of the area by providing for buildings of City, gateway and landmark design and heights, which act as place-markers, signifiers and location finding identifiers. (Refer to Volume 6: Draft Building Height Strategy).
- h) Provide for a mix of residential, employment and leisure uses in the area and ensure that the key historic and existing deficits with regard to access, layout and movement are addressed in any redevelopment.

10.4.2.7 Ellen Street

Limerick City and County Council acknowledges the potential opportunity for the development of surface car parks throughout the City Centre. In particular, the Council notes the potential opportunity for development of a large brownfield site located on Ellen Street, which is currently utilised as a surface car park. The brownfield site zoned City Centre is located in a prime City Centre location, opposite the Opera Site. Development of these underutilised lands would contribute to the overall revitalisation of this area of the City, which has suffered from dereliction and decline over recent years. Development of this site would facilitate improvements to the visual amenities of Ellen Street, which is a key tourist route linking O'Connell Street to the Milk Market.

Objective ES 01

Ellen Street Car Park

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Facilitate the creation of a mixed-use City Centre development incorporating employment and residential opportunities.
- b) Enhance the character of the area through the highest quality urban design and public realm.
- c) Ensure integration of connectivity to surrounding streets.
- d) Ensure the provision of green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout.
- e) Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance.

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10.4.2.8 Thomond Park

Limerick City and County Council acknowledges the potential economic opportunities arising from development of Thomond Park and the Munster Rugby Brand. The Thomond Park Stadium and adjoining lands have the potential to accommodate a mixed-use development such as a multi-functional event centre and hotel, creating opportunities for employment in this area of the City. The development of an event centre would also enhance Limerick's tourism assets and ability to attract national and international scale concerts, festivals, exhibitions, conferences and trade shows.

Objective TP O1

Thomond Park

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Facilitate creation of a mixed-use development providing employment, tourist and leisure related opportunities.
- b) Enhance the character of the area through urban design and place-making, incorporating buildings of landmark design, having cognisance to the Thomond Park Stadium.
- c) Require provision of an integrated sustainable mobility network, with walking, cycling and public transport as the main components.
- d) Ensure green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout.
- e) Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance.

10.4.2.9 The Bays, Moyross

These mixed-use zoned opportunity lands of 1.85ha. are located adjoining The Bays in the Moyross Regeneration Area. The principle uses shall be for employment creation and the provision of a broad range of employment opportunities. The vision for development of these lands will be focused on job creation in a high quality environment in terms of design and layout. A deficit of convenience retail floor space has been identified in Moyross. On this basis, a convenience retail element will be open for consideration, but is seen as ancillary to the primary use as an employment zone. No residential use will be permitted in this zone.

Objective BM O1

The Bays, Moyross

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Facilitate creation of a mixed-use employment zone enhancing a broad range of employment opportunities for the local community. No residential use shall be permitted in this zone.
- b) Consider provision of a single convenience retail unit, which shall not exceed a net floor area of 1,500m² subject to a Retail Impact Assessment.
- c) Require the highest quality environment in terms of design and layout. Surface car parking shall be adequately screened and integrated into the site.
- d) Ensure the maximisation of connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.
- e) Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance.

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10.4.2.10 Mungret Masterplan

The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises the potential for sustainable residential development in Mungret. Limerick 2030 DAC commissioned the preparation of a masterplan for residential zoned land comprising 59.6ha, including 27.1ha. of lands owned by Limerick City and County Council.

The masterplan will deliver much needed housing for Limerick. The plan aims to create a vibrant neighbourhood that accommodates and facilitates a variety of uses and that nurtures a strong sense of community. The masterplan seeks to ensure that the new neighbourhood at Mungret is a place that is safe, with people friendly streets and spaces that relates well to its surroundings, including Mungret Village and the adjacent neighbourhoods of Dooradoyle and Raheen.

Objective MM O1 Mungret Masterplan

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Deliver an exemplar new neighbourhood with a clear identity and character that responds to the natural and historic environment and provides a great place to live.
- b) Deliver a green neighbourhood that encourages healthy lifestyles, offering easy and safe access to amenities and opportunity for play, recreation and learning.
- c) Create a strong and legible structure that leads people to a mixed-use centre at Mungret College, integrates the site with the wider area and strengthens existing centres.
- d) Grow the existing community hub at Mungret College so that it forms a heart for the new neighbourhood and is accessible to all residents.
- e) Protect and celebrate the site's historic assets including the College, Mungret Abbey and medieval ringforts.
- f) Embrace the wider landscape and create a green framework across the site that retains the site's green assets and enhances biodiversity.
- g) Create a walkable and cycle friendly neighbourhood that provides easy access to schools and amenities through a safe and attractive network of streets and paths.

- h) Create a legible network of streets defined by new buildings and laid out as part of a clear hierarchy.
- i) Incorporate bus routes through the heart of the neighbourhood, reducing the need to travel by car.
- j) Provide a mix of high quality homes that give the opportunity to up or downsize within the neighbourhood.

Funding has been secured through the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) to deliver a link street, which will unlock substantial lands within public and private ownership and allow construction of residential development supported by community and employment uses. This opportunity area has the potential to deliver approximately 1,950 dwelling units. The first phase will deliver approximately 250 dwelling units. All dwellings will be located within 100m of a pocket park and 400m of a small park.

Two new primary school campuses (Educate Together and Gaelscoil An Raithin) have been constructed on the lands, while a third campus has been reserved for a new secondary school.

In addition, a Neighbourhood Park of 11ha. including a fully equipped inclusive playground and walking track has already been completed. The pedestrian connection between these facilities and Mungret Village has undergone public realm improvements along the R859 and in Mungret Village. Additional cycle facilities have also been introduced on the R859. The masterplan will accommodate bus services on the link streets, which will link into existing bus routes in the wider area. These measures, in addition to delivering a more connected network of walking routes that can enable people to walk to and from destinations within the neighbourhood and wider area are essential to create a shift away from use of the car and facilitate a more sustainable form of development.

The masterplan will have cognisance to the environmental and historical assets in the area including Loughmore Common proposed Natural Heritage Area and the Mungret Monastic Complex.

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10.4.2.11 Parkway Valley

The former Horizon Mall brownfield site of 16.04ha. comprising a mixed-use zone is located adjacent to the Parkway Retail Park in the townland of Singland. Although permission for a mixed-use development has recently been granted on the site, in the event that construction does not progress it is important to ensure a brief remains applicable to the lands. The vision for development of these lands will be focused on the creation of a high quality environment in terms of design and layout, a mixture of functions, tenure types, unit sizes and the provision of a broad range of on-site facilities for employees. The principle uses shall be for employment creation. A range of other uses are considered open for consideration but are seen as ancillary to the primary use as an employment zone. An element of residential use may be considered, where the proposed development makes a positive contribution to the area in terms of adding to the richness and diversity of uses. The retail needs of the area are being sufficiently met by the adjoining retail parks and shopping centres and the provision of retail development will not be permitted.

Objective PV 01 Parkway Valley

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Require preparation of a masterplan by a suitable qualified person, with accompanying design statements showing how the design concepts are consistent with the following principles:
 - i) Demonstrating the internal organisation of land uses, amenities and the layout of each block, the detailed design of individual buildings and spaces, including private and collective amenity areas, hard and soft landscaping, materials, finishes, street furniture, signage and lighting. Finishes, materials and heights shall be consistent with the overall development of the site.
 - ii) Given the strategic location of the site on the R445 Dublin Road, there is potential for landmark buildings.
 - iii) The purpose of the link street is to improve connectivity within the area and the layout, location and design of new streets/roads will be determined at planning application stage.
- b) Support development of the area as a major employment centre with supporting facilities such as crèches and amenity areas for employees and visitors. A high standard of urban design will be required throughout the site in order to create a high quality environment with a defined sense of place, functionally and physically connected to the existing and permitted development on surrounding lands.
- c) Support development of a civic square and streets with active frontage. The public realm will be characterised by a high standard of finishes and treatments. A network of high quality spaces formed by the highest quality of buildings, paving and landscaping is required. Architecturally designed buildings and open plazas, using high quality finishes will define civic spaces. Development shall be double fronted and shall address the Groody Park, the Dublin Road and streets and civic spaces within the development.
- d) Ensure a sufficient mix of uses, including a maximum of 48% of development for residential use, which shall be appropriately integrated with other development on site to create a successful mixed-use development.
- e) Encourage the use of underground parking, which shall be sensitively located and adequately screened.
- f) Ensure provision of a network of pedestrian and cycle routes through the lands linked to the Groody Valley Green Wedge. Details of these linkages will be required in the masterplan.
- g) Enable access via one entry point only along the R445 Dublin Road, with potential for a new access point to link with the Tipperary Road.
- h) Ensure adequate provision of social and community facilities within the site, to serve existing and future residents. Provision shall be made for childcare facilities, playground and facilities suitable for a range of age groups including walking paths and community meeting space.

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10.4.2.12 Groody Valley

The New Residential zoned lands comprising 2.44ha. is located in the north-eastern corner of the Groody Valley area at the junction of the R445 and the Groody Road. Development of this brownfield site would complement the amenity use of the Groody Valley Green Wedge and facilitate creation of a dual frontage landmark building with the highest quality public realm on the approach to the City from Castletroy. The site has potential to provide student accommodation given the proximity to the University. Connectivity to the Groody Valley Green Wedge shall be central to any development proposals.

Objective GV O1 Groody Valley

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Require a high quality landmark design. The proposal shall include an integrated development incorporating the fuel depot site along the R445 Dublin Road.
- b) Facilitate purpose built student accommodation where deemed appropriate.
- c) Require car parking to be located to the rear of any building, or adequately screened and sympathetically integrated within the site.
- d) Require connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to the Groody Valley zoned lands.
- e) Ensure the design facilitates access to enable complimentary development on the Groody Valley zoned lands.

10.4.2.13 Towlerton

The Towlerton opportunity site of 16.04ha. is located in a highly visible location on one of the main approaches to Limerick and comprises a mixed-use zoning. The lands are bound by the Groody River Valley, the Bloodmill Road, the link road between the Groody Road and the N24 and agricultural lands.

This opportunity site will secure a comprehensive, high quality mixed-use development, which is architecturally distinctive, but respects and makes a positive contribution to the wider locality. The site shall be developed in accordance with an agreed

masterplan, which shall illustrate a permeable network of mixed-use developments with clear hierarchies of public and private open spaces, ensuring a legibility of design and place-making to create a vibrant and pleasant new neighbourhood. A deficit in convenience retail floorspace has been identified in the area of South Castletroy. On this basis a local/ neighbourhood scale retail element will be open for consideration, but is seen as ancillary to the primary mixed-use of these lands.

Objective TN O1 Towlerton

It is an objective of the Council to:

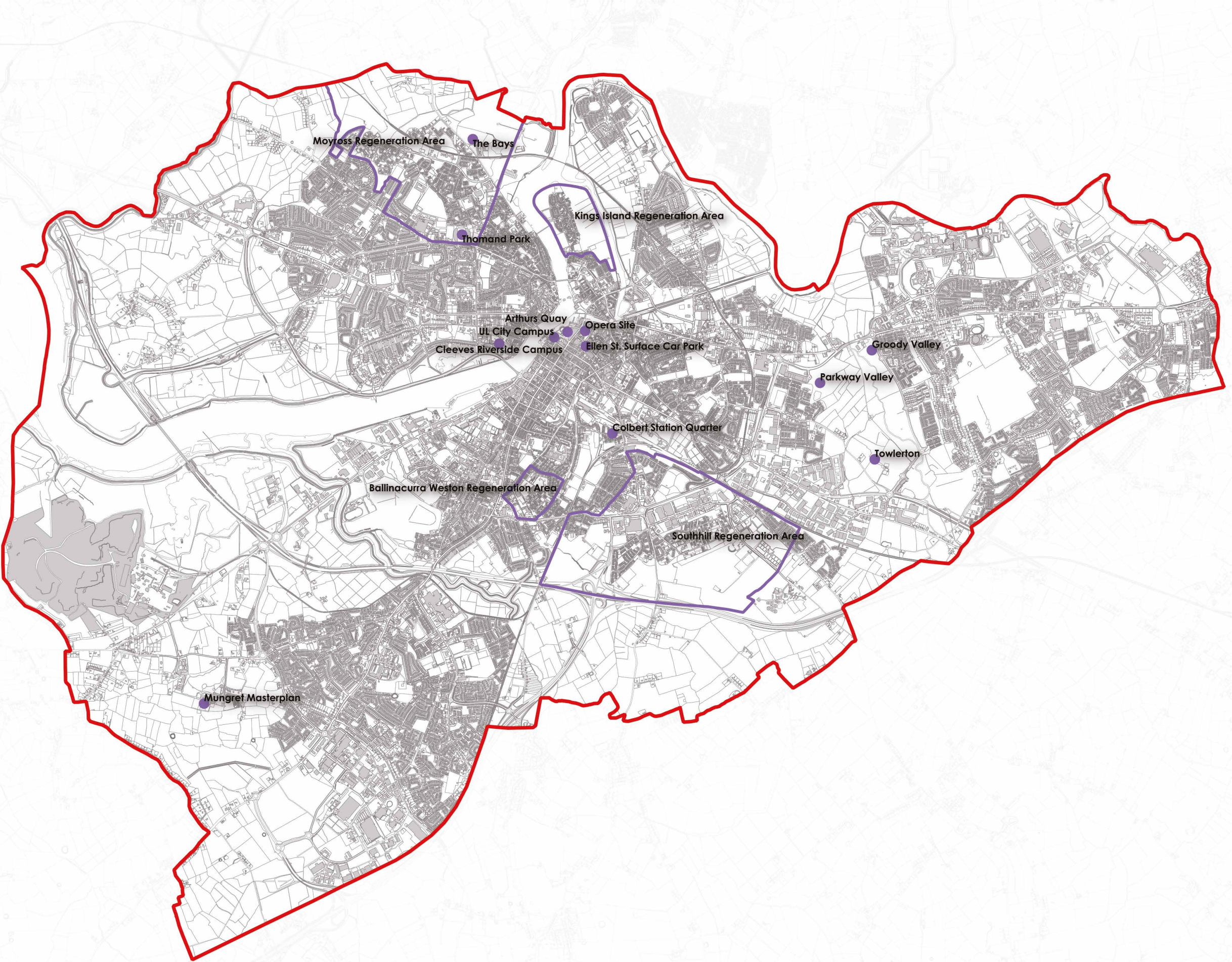
- a) Require preparation of a masterplan by a suitable qualified person, with accompanying design statements showing how the design concepts are consistent with the following principles:
 - i) The masterplan shall demonstrate the organisation of land uses, amenities and layout of each block, the detailed design of individual buildings and spaces including private and collective amenity areas, hard and soft landscaping, materials, finishes, street furniture, signage and lighting. Details shall be to a level that provides a framework on which to base future planning applications, with the use of two-dimensional drawings and three-dimensional massing studies. Finishes, materials and heights shall be consistent with the overall site development. The masterplan shall focus on the creation of a high quality environment in terms of overall design and layout, a mixture of functions, tenure types and unit sizes and the provision of a broad range of on-site facilities for existing and future residents and employees.
 - ii) The portion of land zoned Groody Valley Green Wedge shall be incorporated into the masterplan.
 - iii) All development will be subject to a Mobility Management Plan, a Traffic and Transport Assessment and Road Safety Audit in accordance with Chapter 3 of the *DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines* at planning application stage.

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- b) Require mixed-use development, which shall include residential, enterprise and employment, retail and education uses subject to the following:
 - i) A maximum of 30% of the mixed-use zoned lands shall be developed for residential purposes, which shall include any use such as nursing homes, residential care facilities etc.
 - ii) Retail development shall be of a local/neighbourhood scale with a convenience element not exceeding a net of 1,500m² subject to a Retail Impact Assessment. Any retail element shall not detract from the higher order centres serving the area. Retail warehousing or car repair/sales will not be permitted at this location.
 - iii) Complimentary uses such as Crèches may be considered.
- c) Require high quality urban design on this key site on the approach to Limerick City subject to the following:
 - i) Reference should be drawn from the design of the Northern Trust buildings to the south. High quality contemporary design will be encouraged to give a distinct identity, with a high quality architecturally designed land mark building along the southern section of the site.
 - ii) Any building proposed should respect the established building height in the vicinity and complement the building finishes.
 - iii) Any car parking shall be located underground or to the rear of the building. Surface car parking shall be adequately screened and integrated into the site.

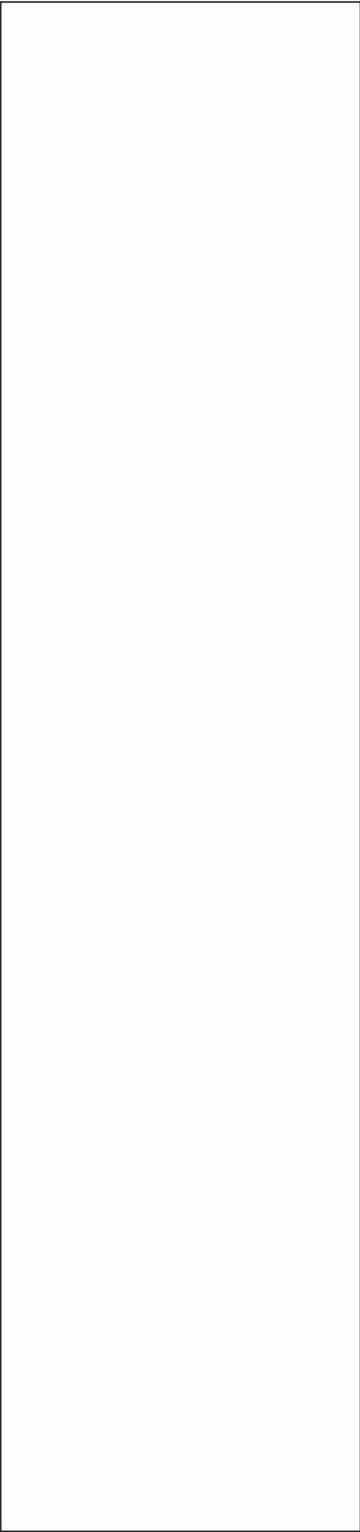
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Map 10.1: Opportunities Sites



Draft Limerick
Development Plan
2022 -2028

Opportunity Sites



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10.4.3 Limerick City Opportunity Areas

The four Limerick Regeneration Areas of Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St. Mary's Park present substantial opportunities for growth, investment and employment creation in the suburbs of the City.

In accordance with the National Development Plan 2018 – 2027, continued investment in the Limerick Regeneration Programme will see the completion of the works identified in the 2013 Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan (LRFIP), which should be read in tandem with this chapter. The regeneration programme includes the delivery of some 593 new homes within a 10 minute walk of primary schools and community hubs and the upgrading of 1,504 homes, across the areas of Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St Mary's Park in Limerick City.

A programme of social and economic initiatives will also be advanced over the coming years to address unemployment blackspots and low education rates. While the scheme is scheduled to be completed by 2023, the cross-cutting objectives of this Draft Plan will support the continuation of all programmes for the physical, social and economic regeneration of the most deprived areas of Limerick City.

The vision of the LRIF is to create:

'Safe and sustainable communities of opportunity where people of all ages enjoy a good quality-of-life, a decent home and a sense of pride about their place. Well-serviced and attractive neighbourhoods will be physically connected and fully integrated with the social, economic and cultural life of Limerick'

The aim of the LRIF is two-fold:

- To improve the quality of life and wellbeing of communities in the Regeneration Areas by responding comprehensively to the problems (physical, social, community safety and economic) that exist, addressing the identified needs of people and adopting a sustainable development approach;
- To promote the social and economic inclusion of the Regeneration Areas into the mainstream life of the City, reducing the gaps between the Regeneration Areas and the average for the City as a whole. This will be achieved by opening access to training, education and work opportunities, harnessing and promoting existing resources and making early interventions.

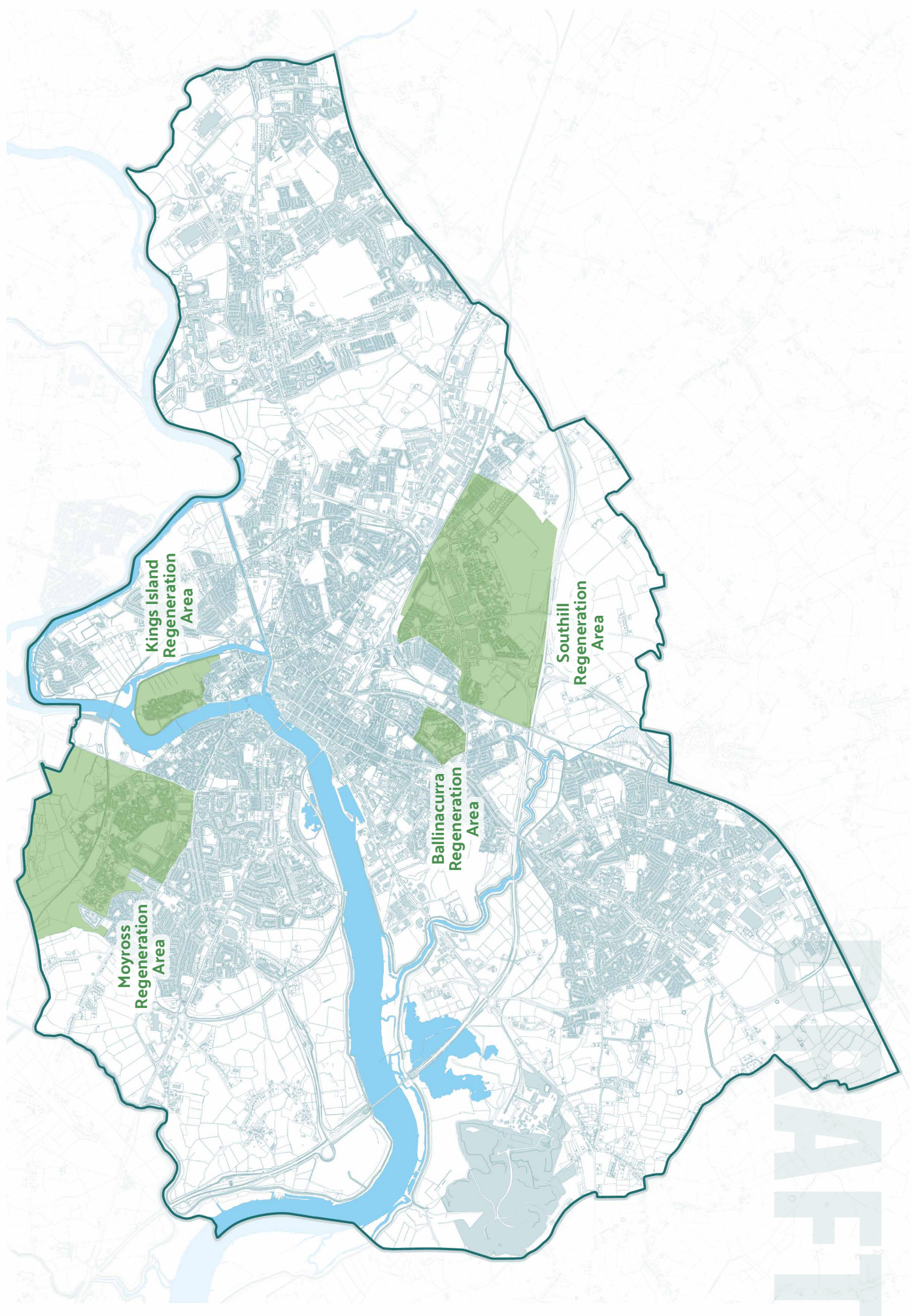
Policy RA P1

Regeneration Strategic

It is a strategic policy of the Council to support the implementation of the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan, in a coordinated and sustainable manner and to co-operate with other agencies in the Region to deliver the goals and objectives set out in the Plan.

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Figure 10.2: Regeneration Areas of Moyross, King's Island, Southill and Ballinacurra Weston



10.4.3.1 Tenure Diversification

Tenure diversification aims to foster greater social, economic and community mix and in turn support thriving and sustainable communities. In 2014, the Local Authority owned 65% of the original 1,125 units in Moyross, 48% of the original 1,125 units in Southill, 37% of the original 464 units in St. Mary's Park and 28% of the original 337 units in Ballinacurra Weston. A number of the original units were vacated over time and many have been demolished to make way for better place-making and strategic connections in line with the LRFIP.

Given the capacity of residentially zoned lands and lands within the overall areas, it is envisaged that the Regeneration Areas are capable of catering for substantial new and infill residential development over the lifetime of the Draft Plan. Such development would enable the maintenance and achievement of a more diverse tenure mix over time. The delivery of a much stronger social mix of social and affordable/privately owned dwellings is paramount to the success and sustainability of new developments in the Regeneration Areas. Such a mix has to be greater than just mixed tenure, it is essential that over the period of the Plan these areas achieve a population that has a greater level of income than at present. This will be achieved by the development of private/affordable housing, the expansion of home-ownership within the existing community and more importantly, improving the prospects of the child population through education and job opportunities, which clearly highlight the sheer importance of Social and Economic Regeneration.

The specific objectives and associated interventions of the Framework Implementation Plan are structured around three pillars, Social, Physical and Economic as outlined below:

Objective RA O1

Regeneration Opportunity Areas

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Integrate Regeneration Areas and communities into the mainstream social, economic and community life of the City through a long-term commitment to support social, economic and physical regeneration of the most deprived areas.
- b) Improve the tenure diversity within the Regeneration Areas.
- c) Deliver the Social, Physical and Economic Framework Strategies of the adopted Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan.
- d) Undertake an annual Monitoring Report of the adopted Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan to establish key trends emerging and measure progress.
- e) Actively support the implementation of the Key Local Objectives set out in the Physical Framework Strategy for each of the Regeneration Areas.

10.4.3.2 Social Framework Strategy

The Social Framework Strategy of the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan is a robust and evidence-based strategy reaching across key service areas. The key focus is to 'bend' the mainstream as part of a 'whole of government' approach, with a focus on the State working in tandem with local resources. The plan recognises that implementing such an approach is challenging, requiring multi-agencies to work together.

Objective SF O1

Social Framework Strategy

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Improve the quality of life of residents in the regeneration communities, focused on improving health and well-being, closing gaps in health with the average population, improving the social environment and safety on the estates, stabilising community life and supporting civic engagement in the community.

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- b) Address the needs of the population so that they can access opportunities, closing gaps with the average population. This covers improved access to economic and social opportunities linked to preventive interventions in early years, interventions to improve attainment in education from the earliest stages and access to further education, training and work.
- c) Improve the coherence of service provision across the statutory and voluntary/community sector, with a view to improving effectiveness in responding to needs of the population and to achieve better value for money invested by the totality of the services.
- d) Continue to support and develop Community Enterprise Centres as Community Hubs.
- e) Continue to support sport, recreation and cultural activities.
- f) Enhance and build civic engagement and community participation.
- g) Continue to support community safety through CCTV, improved communication and community policing.
- h) Enhance monitoring and review of the Social Intervention Fund by providing training and follow up support to local projects.
- i) Progress and strengthen through the role of the Local Strategic Advisory and Monitoring Group, to ensure a whole of Government approach.
- j) Connect the Social Intervention Fund to mainstream programmes so that different funding streams can work together to sustain quality services that meet the needs of the regeneration residents.
- k) Continue to fund a balance of preventative interventions, working with children and young people and targeted interventions to support individuals and families with more complex needs.

To achieve the social objectives, the Social Framework Strategy is structured around five vertical themes and three cross-cutting or horizontal themes in order to achieve stable communities, good quality of life and access to opportunities, as set out in the Figure below:

Figure 10.2: Social Framework Strategy



10.4.3.3 Economic Framework Strategy

The creation of long-term employment locally and for local people, is a central theme for the Economic Regeneration Pillar. Currently, high unemployment levels, running way above the national average, exist in the Regeneration Areas and serve to exacerbate social exclusion. Successfully tackling the dearth of employment opportunities in these areas will make a very significant contribution towards the overall goal of regeneration but can only be achieved through a multi-agency approach.

The Economic Framework Plan of the adopted Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan is strongly focused on inclusive growth and a range of bottom-up and community-level measures while also considering the wider macro-economy.

Objective EF O1

Economic Framework Strategy

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Promote sectoral training, work experience, work placements and job creation initiatives.
- b) Deliver an economic engagement platform bringing together all stakeholders.
- c) Deliver social innovation/social enterprise hubs with supports for start-ups.
- d) Develop niche economic activities that can develop in line with national opportunity sectors such as green technologies.
- e) Develop a 'knowledge economy' sub-sector in community development and enterprise as skills are built locally.
- f) Strengthen inward investment through incentivisation such as long-term revolving loan financing for new public, social and educational infrastructure.

- g) Develop ICT infrastructure, skills training and usage projects to support economic and social development.
- h) Continue a priority focus on young people and youth unemployment.
- i) Focus on projects of scale that will become a City wide catalyst for economic development that will have a transformational effect on the Regeneration Areas.
- j) Develop and strengthen a Sector Focused Skills Development – Skills training approach to support economic focus on sectors of strength and growth opportunities.
- k) Create platforms for increased levels of private sector engagement in enterprise, training, work experience and employment development (e.g. Corporate Social Responsibility).
- l) Replicate the successful model employed for the Hospitality Education and Training Centre for economic sectors with growth potential through inter agency collaboration and private sector involvement.
- m) Embed the Social Contracts Clause – develop an increased focus on the monitoring and stewardship of the social contracts clause.

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10.4.3.4 Physical Framework Strategy

The Physical Framework Strategy sets out the basis for a more coherent and sustainable use of land in the Regeneration Areas, which makes socio-economic development more likely, improves housing quality and place-making (including safety), making the areas more accessible. Furthermore, a range of strategic infrastructure improvements are identified (both in terms of the natural environment and ICT). The approach is coherent and recognises both past failures and ongoing challenges in improving the liveability of the areas. The Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan correctly identifies the very distinct sets of issues confronting each Regeneration Area. This includes the severity of issues each area faces, not least the varying extent of dereliction and prior poor estate design.

In setting out the Physical Framework Strategy objectives, it is recognised that no single aspect alone will be effective in delivering the change agenda for the physical Regeneration Areas.

Objective PF O1

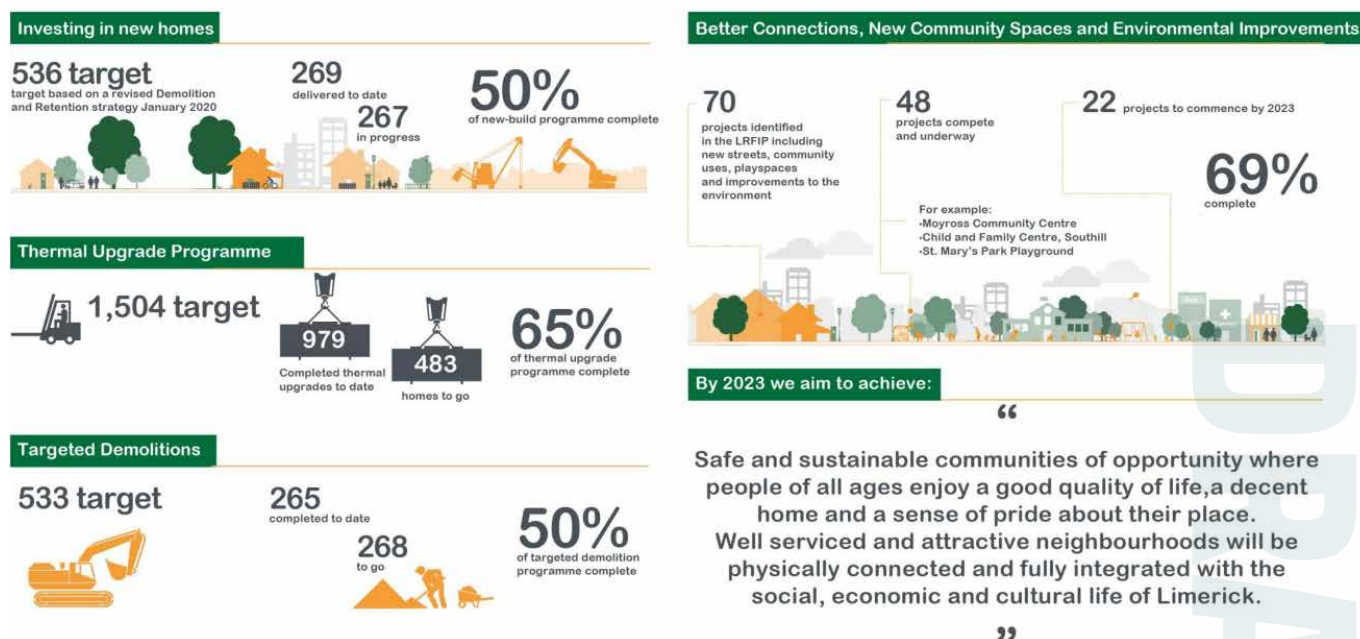
Physical Framework Strategy

It is an objective of the Council to:

- Build a strong competitive economy.
- Promote healthy communities.
- Require good design.
- Promote sustainable movement.
- Deliver a wide choice of high quality homes.
- Support high quality communications infrastructure.
- Meet the challenge of climate change and flooding.
- Conserve and enhance the natural and historic environments.

The physical framework strategies for each Regeneration Area sets out the key local objectives that guide the physical development of the areas into the future. The local objectives shall differ for each of the areas, however the strategic objectives shall remain consistent for each Regeneration Area set out above.

The progress on the Physical Framework of the LRFIP as of November 2020 is set out in the following infographic:



10.4.3.5 Moyross

Moyross lies to the north-west of Limerick City. The Moyross Regeneration Area covers approximately 200ha. (494 acres) and spans almost 2 kilometres from west to east and 1.8 kilometres north to south. Moyross presents the following key challenges:

- Poor connectivity and accessibility with adjacent neighbourhoods, which has resulted in Moyross becoming physically, economically and socially isolated;
- Over-provision of underutilised public open space;
- Several under-used and vacant infill-housing sites, which currently detract from the overall appearance of the estate;
- Due to the demolition of some blocks to date, the layout of the houses provide exposed boundaries which provide little in the way of natural surveillance - undermining the safety and security of the area;
- To the east of Moyross is a significant area of wetland, known as Knocknalisheen Marsh, which is prone to flooding;
- A key challenge in Moyross is to ensure that any development, proposed as part of the LRFIP, does not have a negative impact on the water quality and habitats within Moyross or downstream of the area.

Objective M O1

Moyross

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Develop a large public park that connects the River Shannon, Moyross and Caherdavin for a range of active and passive recreational uses in an ecologically sensitive manner.
- b) Provide for active play space facilities, based on the existing and expected child population projections generated by the existing and future need.
- c) Ensure sufficient land zoning around the Coonagh/Knocknalisheen Road capable of delivering a Northside Business Campus as referred to in the RSES, to attract and enhance job creation and economic investment in the area.
- d) Support the construction of the Coonagh- Knocknalisheen bypass, providing a new western entrance to Moyross to eliminate existing cul-de-sac layout and extend the existing Moyross Avenue to link with the new entrance of bypass.
- e) Upgrade the existing Moyross Avenue from a route that is predominantly designed for the movement of vehicles to a traffic-calmed street where the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users are prioritised. Measures to slow down traffic, for example the narrowing of carriageways and side-road entry treatments to the various residential estates, will be incorporated to improve safety for all road users;

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- f) Provide new and improved connections to improve permeability throughout Moyross at the following locations:
 - i) A safe pedestrian/cycle link from Sarsfield Gardens through existing bridge underpass to Moyross Avenue;
 - ii) Improved existing access from Moyross to Cratloe Road;
 - iii) Improved access from the Civic Heart of Moyross to Thomond Park/Cratloe Road;
 - iv) Provide a new road connection between Moyross Avenue and Cratloe Road;
 - v) Create a new road connection between LIT and the District Centre at Watch House Cross;
 - vi) Improved access to Watchhouse Cross from Ballynanty;
 - vii) Create a new street between Cosgrave Park and Maintenance Depot to eliminate existing cul-de-sac layout.
- g) Improve local connections converging on the community hub of Moyross at the following locations:
 - i) From the Cratloe Road;
 - ii) Thomond Park.
- h) Retain the general arrangement of streets and services infrastructure as existing;
- i) Provide new and improved crossings for pedestrians and cyclists, which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
 - i) Moyross Avenue from College/ Cliona Park to the community hub;
 - ii) Moyross Avenue linking the linear park;
 - iii) Moyross Avenue linking Cosgrave Park to Watchhouse Cross;
 - iv) Cratloe Road;
 - v) Killeely Road.
- j) Protect and enhance the special landscape character and setting of Delmege Estate.
- k) Provide on street parking along existing and new streets where feasible. Lengths of on-street parking will be broken up through the inclusion of a street trees or other landscape feature. Parking areas will be designed so that they do not dominate the street scene. Short term on-street car parking will also be provided adjacent to the existing community hub.
- l) Protect the integrity of all Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity. In this regard the development proposals developed shall be subject to HDAA and SEA.
- m) Protect the existing biodiversity of the area and to provide interpretation for the public.
- n) Promote the redevelopment of the 'Bays' site to add additional local capacity and contribute to the formation of a natural training cluster.
- o) Protect the existing alignment of the Limerick/Galway rail line.
- p) Protect and enhance existing desire lines within Moyross and integrate them as part of public realm improvements within the area.
- q) Promote Watchhouse Cross as the District Centre for the area of Moyross, Killeely, Ballynanty and Parteen in accordance with the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick.
- r) Reinforce existing Employment and Enterprise Uses at Moyross Enterprise Centre.
- s) Retain the existing active playing pitches associated with LIT, St. Nessel's Community College and Thomond Park RFC as sporting facilities.
- t) Provide for greater linkages and improved pedestrian and cyclists connections between Moyross and the adjacent areas, including the educational institutions.
- u) Create a civic area of suitable scale in Moyross that can act as a focal point for community, civic and educational facilities including a rail station.

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10.4.3.6 St. Mary's Park and King's Island

King's Island extends over an area of 170 acres and is bounded on the east by the River Abbey and on the west by the River Shannon. This area represents an important asset to the City, particularly in terms of its ecological importance, archaeological significance and tourism potential. St. Mary's Park and King's Island presents the following key challenges:

- Poor connectivity and accessibility which has resulted in St. Mary's Park becoming physically, economically and socially isolated;
- Unattractive public realm with an over-dominance of hard surfaces with limited soft landscaping;
- Several under-used and vacant infill-housing sites, which currently detract from the overall appearance of the estate;
- The layout of the houses to the east of St. Munchin's Street backs onto the landfill therefore providing little in the way of natural surveillance;
- A key challenge in St Mary's Park is the designation of the majority of the area as Flood Zone A;
- The designation of a Special Area of Conservation with the potential of disturbance to birds as a result of amenity use of lands adjacent to the wetland, loss and fragmentation of habitat resulting from the construction of new replacement housing, streets and new connections;
- The lack of active play facilities for those persons under the age of 15 years and non-sporting related open space recreational amenities;
- Lack of maintenance, repair and care of the overall historic fabric of the wider King's Island area;
- Significant number of derelict sites in key locations, particularly along Mary Street and vacant properties, particularly along Nicholas Street;
- Presence of under-utilised historic assets, e.g. upstanding remains of Fanning's Castle and remains of house with carved stone fireplace on Nicholas Street.

Objective MK O1

St. Mary's Park and King's Island

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Promote the development of the waterways, subject to detailed environmental considerations and requirements to include St. Mary's Park, Moyross to Grove Island and the City as a flagship project with training, employment and tourism potential.
- b) Environmentally improve the existing street network of St. Mary's Park to provide a safe, attractive, accessible and well-designed network of streets in tandem with the upgrade to the existing water network and refurbishment works to existing houses.
- c) Protect the integrity of all Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity. In this regard, the development proposals developed shall be subject to Habitat Directive Assessment and SEA.
- d) Provide opportunities to maximise the educational value of the passive open space surrounding St. Mary's Park.
- e) Support delivery of the CFRAM Limerick Flood Relief Scheme Programme.
- f) Develop a strategy to integrate King's Island into the City Centre core through selective site redevelopment and improved connections.
- g) Return the eastern side of St. Munchin's Street to parkland once demolition of the area has taken place.
- h) Restrict development on the strip of land east of St. Munchin's Street which, was used as a landfill site and filled with domestic refuse.
- i) Examine options to improve connectivity at Island Road from St. Mary's Park to the Medieval Quarter by transforming from a route that is predominantly designed for the movement of vehicles, to a traffic calmed street where the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users are prioritised; whilst ensuring protection of the integrity of the environmentally designated sites.

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- j) Provide crossings for pedestrians and cyclists which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
 - i) At Star Rovers Football Club;
 - ii) At the Primary Health Care facility at Island Road;
 - iii) At St. Mary's Community Centre, Verdant Place.
- k) Promote the development of key strategic sites within Nicholas Street and Bridge Street for potential enterprise development attracting further inward investment.
- l) Promote employment growth in King's Island and St. Mary's Park through the re-use of under utilised sites, derelict buildings and the upgrading of sites already in employment uses.
- m) Improve local connections converging on the existing St. Mary's Park Community Centre including a new street, at Island Gate, from Verdant Place to Dominick Street.
- n) Support the provision of an extended multi-use community centre at St. Mary's Park Community Centre, to provide flexible and accessible spaces adaptable to the communities' needs. The provision of an extended centre at this location, within easy access to the City core will ensure that the centre is used not only by residents of St. Mary's Park but the wider community also.
- o) Explore the potential to upgrade Eel's Weir to provide a connection to the New Road and beyond and ensure that any development proposed does not have a negative impact on habitats.
- p) Support the redevelopment of the Opera Centre site, adjacent to King's Island/St. Mary's Park, which is seen as an economic catalyst for the area, City and region.

10.4.3.7 Ballinacurra Weston

The Regeneration Area of Ballinacurra Weston extends over an area of 14.46ha. and is located in a suburban residential setting to the south-west of Limerick City Centre. Ballinacurra Weston presents the following key challenges:

- Poor connectivity, accessibility and/or awareness of routes to key locations due to the cul-de-sac layout of the area;
- Unattractive public realm with an over-dominance of hard surfaces (especially to Byrne Avenue) and rock armoury with limited soft landscaping;
- Poorly overlooked pedestrian routes;
- A significant amount of vacant land within the Regeneration Area at the site formerly occupied by Clarina Park;
- Several under-used and vacant housing sites, which currently detract from the overall appearance of the estate;
- Due to the demolition of Clarina Park, there is a significant amount of vacant land within the Regeneration Area. A key challenge is to identify interventions for the land in the short to medium term to ensure its protection from anti-social activities;
- Limited overlooking of internal public open space. A key challenge is to provide functional, safe and well-overlooked open spaces within the estate.

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Objective BW 01 Ballinacurra Weston

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Improve permeability and connections from Ballinacurra Weston to its wider context at the following locations in the short-medium term:
 - i) Provide a new vehicular connection from Clarina Avenue to Byrne Avenue. The lack of permeability at this location has resulted in high incidences of anti-social behaviour and crime;
 - ii) Provide a new vehicular connection from Clarina Park to Lenihan Avenue.
Upgrade the existing laneway (Alley Lane) to allow greater access to Prospect Hill and Rosbrien Road to the north;
 - iii) Provide a new street from Beechgrove Avenue to Crecora Avenue.
- b) Support the provision of multifunctional spaces at Our Lady of Lourdes Community Centre to provide flexible and accessible spaces adaptable to communities' needs.
- c) Provide new and improved crossings for pedestrians and cyclists which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
 - i) At Rosbrien Road, to the west of Our Lady of Lourdes Community Centre;
 - ii) At Childer's Road, north of Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School;
 - iii) At Hyde Road from Crecora Avenue;
 - iv) At Hyde Road from Lenihan Avenue to Hyde Villas;
 - v) At Byrne Avenue from Clarina Park.
- d) Promote potential enterprise development in Ballinacurra Weston through the reuse of underutilised sites at the existing local centre, Our Lady of Lourdes Community Centre and lands associated with the ESB Depot and Adapt House.

10.4.3.8 Southill

Southill is located in the southern fringe of Limerick City Centre. The masterplan aims to redefine the south City as a distinctive and popular neighbourhood. Southill presents the following key challenges:

- Poor connectivity and accessibility with adjacent neighbourhoods which has resulted in Southill becoming physically, economically and socially isolated;
- The Radburn layouts that characterise Southill create a place that is difficult to navigate;
- Poorly observed rear courts (as part of the Radburn layouts);
- Poorly observed and confusing pedestrian routes;
- Over-provision of underutilised public open space;
- Several under-used and vacant infill housing sites, which currently detract from the overall appearance of the estate;
- Due to the demolition of some blocks to date, many houses have exposed boundaries, which provide little in the way of natural surveillance. This undermines the safety and security of the area;
- The lack of strategic access into Southill from the M7 Motorway. This greatly limits possible opportunities to attract employment into the area and acts as a barrier to permeability;
- Roxboro roundabout represents a key challenge to pedestrian and cycle movement;
- The lack of connectivity to the wider area, including the University of Limerick to the northeast, presents a key challenge;
- The lack of active play facilities for children under 15 years old within each of the estates.

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Objective OK O1**O'Malley Park and Keyes Park**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Investigate the provision of a more direct access from the M7 and N20 into Southill (subject to a feasibility study examining potential options).
- b) Promote the Galvone Industrial Estate as a hub for green sector focused development.
- c) Consider alternative uses (further education and training) for Southill Junior School.
- d) Expand the footprint of the Southill Area Centre to improve the quality and choice of community focused uses available.
- e) Promote the following local connections within O'Malley and Keyes Park, Southill:
 - i) A new street at eastern boundary of Churchfields site to the church;
 - ii) A new street through the centre of the Churchfields site to the Southill Area Centre;
 - iii) A new east-west connection, south of Rose Court, Keyes Park from the Roxboro Road to the community hub;
 - iv) A new north-south connection from Childer's Road to O'Malley Park through the Fulflex site;
 - v) A new north-south connection from O'Malley Park to the Childer's Road;
 - vi) A new east-west connection from Pike Rovers Football Club to Kilmallock Road;
 - vii) A new connection from Kennedy Park, adjacent to proposed Integrated Educational Campus at St Kieran's, to the Roxboro Road.
- f) Provide crossings for pedestrians and cyclists which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
 - i) At Childer's Road: from O'Malley Park to Kennedy Park and the new Integrated Educational Campus at St. Kieran's;
 - ii) At Roxboro Cross: From Roxboro Road to the District Centre (Roxboro Shopping Centre).
- g) Create a direct connection from Roxboro roundabout (through the 'Galvone Arms' site) to the heart of Southill – the community hub containing the church, health centre and Southill Area Centre.
- h) Enhance the junction of Childer's Road and Roxboro Road as a District Centre in order to fulfil its role as the commercial and retail hub serving Southill and the wider area.
- i) Develop a new integrated educational campus to serve the needs of the entire area.
- j) Strengthen the opportunities for vocational sports development at 'the Factory' which currently occupies the existing Fulflex building.
- k) Promote the development of strategic sites within Southill for the construction of landmark/gateway buildings, subject to urban design and built form parameters.
- l) Promote mixed and employment generating uses along key strategic routes, allowing for a higher efficiency of existing land resources.
- m) Explore the potential to re-establish and environmentally improve the west-east link through the Galvone Industrial Estate from the Roxboro Road to the Kilmallock Road subject to securing an alternative location for the Traveller halting site currently located at Clonlong.
- n) Create a new community park at the centre of the community hub to provide recreation and play facilities in a safe, overlooked location and provide a focus for local events and celebrations.
- o) Consider the reuse of St. Enda's complex as a focal point for education and sports related projects.
- p) Promote mixed and employment generating uses at Kilmallock Road Enterprise Centre.
- q) Ensure any future development of the Clonlong site be in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 - 2024 and any subsequent programme adopted by the Council.

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Objective KC O1**Kincora and Carew Parks**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Transform the Roxboro Road, the main access road dividing O'Malley Park and Keyes Park from Kincora and Carew Parks, from a route that is predominantly designed for the movement of vehicles to a traffic calmed street where the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users are prioritised.
- b) Protect and enhance the special landscape character and setting of Southill House.
- c) Promote the development of Barry's Field as a large scale community garden/orchard to facilitate horticulture training and community garden enterprise and provide for active frontage in the form of residential use to the rear of Carew Park.
- d) Promote the following local connections within Carew and Kincora Parks, Southill:
 - i) Create a new east-west connection from John Carew Park to Yeats Avenue;
 - ii) Create a new north-south connection through the green at Carew Park to improve accessibility;
 - iii) Create a new east-west connection from Elm Place, Rathbane to John Carew Park Links Road;
 - iv) Create a new north-south connection from Childer's Road through the LEDP site and the Aldi Discount Store to connect with Kincora and Carew Park;
 - v) Create a pedestrian link from Markievicz Drive across Collins Avenue to the community hub.
- e) Provide crossings for pedestrians and cyclists which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
 - i) At Collins Ave from Keyes Park to Southill House;
 - ii) At Collins Ave from Lilac Court in Keyes Park to Markievicz Drive in Kincora Park.
- f) Provide new traffic-calming measures at O'Higgins Drive in Carew Park to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists and slow traffic speeds.
- g) Promote the expansion of a 'service industry training' centre at the LEDP complex which can facilitate programmes to build local capacity for a broad range of roles in re-emerging businesses e.g. call centres and hospitality training.
- h) Ensure any future development of the Toppin's Field site be in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 and any subsequent programme adopted by the Council.

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10.5 Revitalisation of Towns and Villages

The towns and villages outside of Limerick City have distinctive roles to play in the County's economy and as places for communities to live, work and visit. Limerick's towns and villages are providing various levels of employment and services for people in the settlements and surrounding areas including education, retail, recreation, primary health and social activities. These settlements provide key resources that are essential to the economy and society of rural Limerick, with many being important drivers of their local economies as well as servicing their rural hinterlands.

The settlements provide many opportunities for people to live, work and do business. Limerick City and County Council acknowledges that some settlements are facing difficulties, with vacancy, dereliction and lack of services. Many towns and villages have suffered from a lack of investment, particularly in infrastructure. Such investment could improve their capacity to act as service, employment and residential centres in accordance with the Settlement and Core Strategies. The Local Authority is therefore committed to address vacancy and dereliction and supporting revitalisation and improving the viability of rural towns and villages, to enable economic, residential and social opportunities as well as improvements to the quality of life, in accordance with the objectives of the NPF and RSES. Limerick City and County Council is also committed to working with and supporting local communities seeking funding through various schemes, which contribute to the revitalisation of Limerick's rural towns and villages.

Policy CGR P2

Revitalisation of Towns and Villages

It is the policy of the Council to:

- a) Actively address issues of vacancy and dereliction in settlements across Limerick.
- b) Promote projects contributing to compact growth and the physical, social and economic revitalisation of the towns and villages throughout County Limerick.

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is a key initiative under the Action Plan for Rural Development *Realising our Rural Potential* and *Project Ireland 2040*. The scheme is designed to help rural areas achieve their full economic and social potential and aims to support the rejuvenation of towns and villages across Ireland to make them more attractive places to live, work and visit. The scheme facilitates initiatives in areas such as heritage, tourism, arts and culture, the re-use of vacant premises, energy efficiency and business supports. The scheme focuses on rural towns and villages of less than 10,000 population, with policies supporting economic growth and development of such settlements.

Limerick City and County Council administer the fund issued by the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. Some examples of projects, which have been awarded funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, include:

- The creation of a pedestrian friendly Town Centre in Askeaton;
- Public realm improvements in Ballingarry;
- Refurbishment of the Parish Hall to create a community centre in Broadford;
- Creation of a village heritage trail and town park improvements in Dromcollogher;
- Development of a community wildlife area in Killeely;
- A walkway and public lighting at Murroe Town Park;
- Refurbishment of the Countess of Dunraven Fountain and seating in Adare;
- Resurfacing of footpaths and universal access in Grove Public Park in Bruff;
- Improved access to Priory Walk, seating in the Pocket Park and amenities in Kilmallock;
- Sensory garden, walking track and universal recreational area in Pallasgreen

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The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) is a key component of Project Ireland 2040, which is the Government's plan for balanced regional development across the country. A number of projects in Limerick have been awarded funding including the examples briefly outlined below:

- The Rural Limerick Housing Development Project is being undertaken through the Rural Regeneration Development Fund. The towns and villages of Abbeyfeale, Ardagh, Askeaton, Bruff and Rathkeale have received funding to address dereliction, provide housing and bring life back to these settlements. The aim of this project is to bring derelict properties in the core of the towns and villages across rural Limerick back into active re-use, with an emphasis on the provision of housing, based on the delivery of demonstrator housing projects for social and affordable dwellings sold on the open market. The project will also develop plans for re-use of identified derelict properties/ brownfield lands in the same towns and villages as community, social and economic infrastructure with properties being acquired by the Local Authority by agreement or compulsorily under the Derelict Site Act, 1990; The need for housing has not been sufficiently utilised as a potentially effective mechanism for the revitalisation of rural towns and villages. There is demand for housing in rural towns particularly for housing that is affordable. The resettlement of populations in the core of towns and villages is essential for vitality, vibrancy and sustainable development and is supported in this Draft Plan;

- RRDF funding has been awarded for the West Limerick Tourism Gateway. This proposal consists of the preparation of a comprehensive tourism plan for Newcastle West Town Centre. The project will centre around Fuller's Folly a historic building located on the bridge in the ownership of Limerick City and County Council. The funding for Fuller's Folly will allow further development and restoration of the building to act as a landmark tourist attraction in the town;
- Murroe Community Hub is a community driven project, which involves the construction of a two-storey multi-purpose building. The hub will include a hall for sports and community events, a scout den, meeting rooms, office, changing facilities and community café. The hub includes a "smart campus" which will provide fibre broadband, access for the community and hot desk facilities for local business people. An all-weather pitch and multi-access walkway have been constructed, while a skate park is also proposed. The Murroe Town Park Project aims to create public space for sport and recreation, while enhancing economic and social activity by drawing footfall into the village, creating employment opportunities and enhancing the attractiveness of the area as a high quality place to live;
- The Glenbrohane Local Hub project seeks to significantly enhance the range of services available to local residents and businesses. The vision is to create a social enterprise hub, which will provide employment opportunities, address rural isolation and create a tourist attraction. The project involves the conversion of an old public house into a community facility housing a café, shops for local crafts and produce, a Men's Shed, office and meeting rooms;

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- Ballyhoura has the potential to be a major centre of rural tourism in Limerick and provide revitalisation opportunities from spin off benefits in surrounding settlements. The International Mountain Biking Project forms part of a nationwide Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, which has provided funding to develop a number of international standard Mountain Biking Trails across the country. The project will provide recreational and tourism related economic opportunities to the local community, surrounding settlements and wider region.

Objective CGR O9**Town and Village Revitalisation**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Promote and support the renewal and revitalisation of rural town and village centres to enhance the vitality and viability of settlements as attractive residential and service centres.
- b) Support and work with State Bodies, private landowners, community and voluntary groups to successfully achieve the renewal and revitalisation of Limerick's towns and village centres, including projects to re-use vacant premises and underutilised sites, enhance the unique characteristics and assets of Main Streets and improve the public realm.

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