

**PLANNING REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH
SECTION 179 3(a) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
ACT 2000 (as amended)**

Re: **Permission for the following:**

Junction improvement works on the R445(Dublin Road)/R506(Cappamore Road), Limerick. The proposed works will include the construction of new footpaths, new cycle lanes, new junction slip lanes, new controlled pedestrian crossings, new public lighting scheme, new surface water drainage system, improved road markings, new traffic signal control, signage and carriageway resurfacing.

At: Cappamore Road (R506) & Dublin Road (R445) Junction, Garraunykee & Woodstown, Co. Limerick

Planning Reference No. 21/8009



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Pursuant to Section 179 3(a) of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) this report is submitted to the members of Limerick City & County Council. In accordance with Section 179(4) (b) of the above Act, it is proposed to proceed as indicated in Section 6 of this report.



Dr Pat Daly
Chief Executive
Limerick City & County Council

Date: 14. December 2021

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1.0 Foreword

This planning report has been prepared pursuant to Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended), and Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

2.0 Description of the nature and extent of the proposed development

The location of the proposed works are at the junction of Dublin Road (R445) and Cappamore road (R506) at the Cappamore Junction. The junction is an important node close to the M8. The Dublin Road provides an important link between City Centre and the wider region to the East. The proposed works are located within a 50km/h speed limit. There are likely to be some trees affected by the development as illustrated by the photographs contained in the road safety audit.

The purpose of the scheme is to address peak traffic congestion by constructing a new slip road and reconfiguration of existing traffic signals. It will improve road safety for all users in particular pedestrians and cyclists.

Under this Part 8, the Applicant, Transport & Mobility Directorate, Limerick City & County Council, proposes the following:

- Junction improvement works on the R445(Dublin Road)/R506(Cappamore Road), Limerick.

The proposed works will include the construction of ;

- New footpaths,
- New cycle lanes,
- New junction slip lanes,
- New controlled pedestrian crossings,
- New public lighting scheme,
- New surface water drainage system,
- Improved road markings, new traffic signal control, signage and carriageway resurfacing

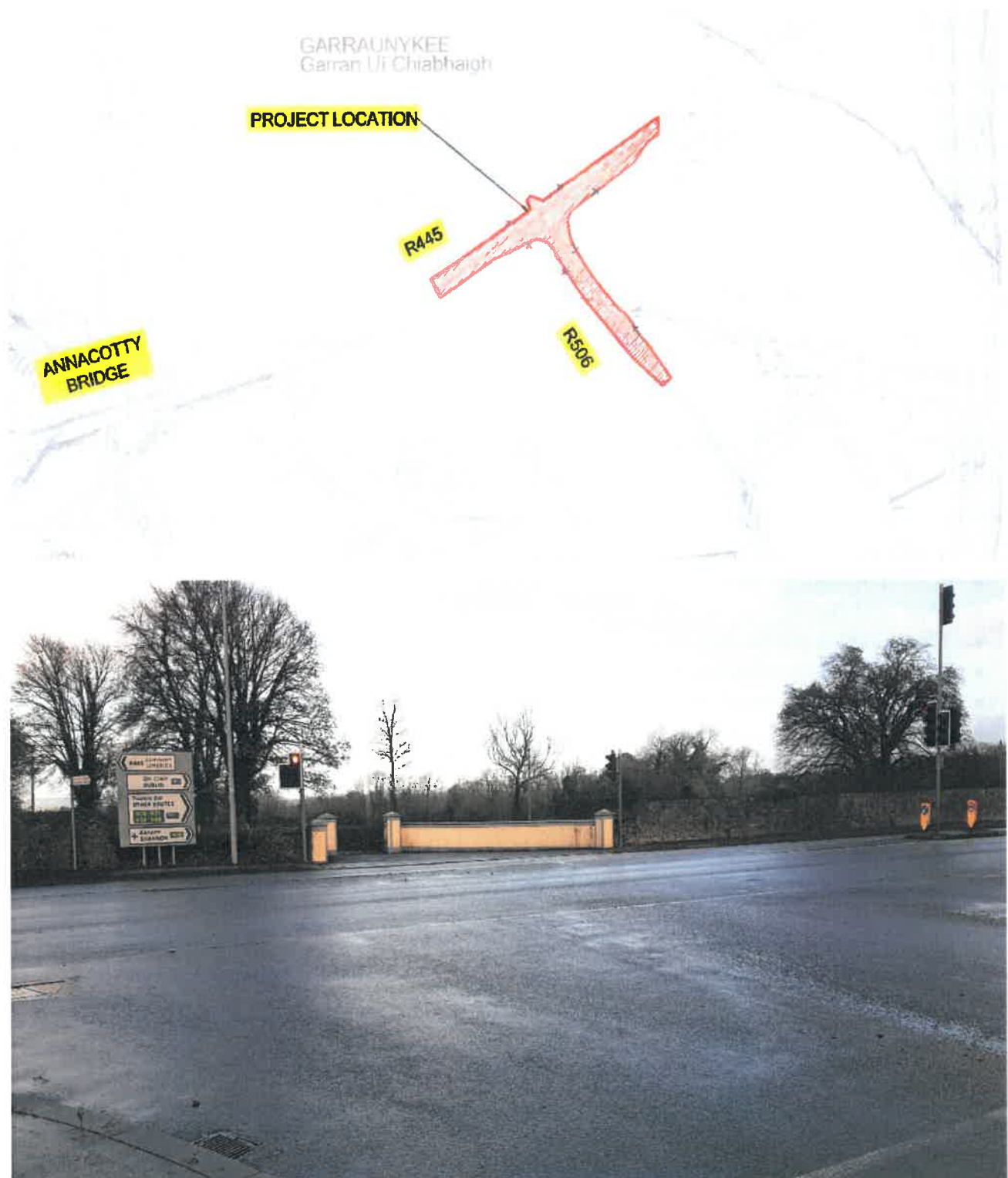
The plans and particulars went on public display from the 24th of September 2021 up to the 22nd of October. Submissions and observations had to be submitted by the 4th of November 2021.

The Part 8 includes the following documents:

- AA Screening Statement
- EIA Screening
- Part 8 Report and Planning Drawings
- Road Safety Audit Stage 1/2
- Report of submissions

Site Location

Figure 1 & 2 : Site Location



3.0 Likely implications, if any, with respect to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

3.1 Policy and Zoning

Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 as amended

The road junction is not located on lands with a specific zoning objective.

Castletroy Local Area Plan 2019-2025

The following are the relevant objectives from the Castletroy Local Area Plan.

Objective T5: Movement and Accessibility

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Encourage the development of safe and efficient movement and accessibility networks that will cater for the needs of all users and to encourage priority for walking and cycling, public transport provision and accident reduction;
- (b) Ensure that adequate facilities and access provisions are provided for those with disabilities in the community. The Council will strive to ensure that the provision of such facilities will be in line with current good practice in relation to such issues;
- (c) Improve the efficiency of junctions in the District to enhance the free flow of traffic through the District;
- (d) Only permit development where a safe and secure access can be provided;
- (e) Require that roads provided to serve private housing developments are designed to a high standard
- (f) Improve directional signposting in the District
- (g) Advertising signage adjacent to the M7 and the N24 and other major transport routes will be prohibited;
- (h) To promote and provide facilities to facilitate increase public transport, cycling and walking and deliver significant modal shift from private car usage to more sustainable transport modes;
- (i) Provision of clear and unambiguous carriageway markings and associated directional signage indicating directional priorities for traffic;

Upgrade to public transport networks shall include, but are not limited to the following:

Facilitate the improvement of junctions on Public Roads

3.2 Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

Both construction and operating phases of the proposed development to be considered

Construction Phase: Junction Improvement Works	Ex-situ effects: Are effects significant? No
Are effects significant? No	Run-off: Are effects significant? Yes
Are substantial works required: Yes	

<p>Are effects significant? No</p> <p>Operating phase effects: Are effects significant? No</p>	<p>Abstraction: Are effects significant? No</p> <p>Displacement: Are effects significant? No</p>
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Identification of Natura 2000 sites which may be impacted by the proposed development

1	Impacts on designated rivers, streams, lakes and fresh water dependant habitats and species eg. Bogs or otters -see abstraction/run off etc above.	<p><i>Is the development in the relevant catchment of or immediately up/downstream of a watercourse that has been designated as a Natura 2000 site?</i></p> <p>Name of site: Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code: 002165) and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (004070).</p>	Yes
2	Impacts on terrestrial habitats and species.-see area and disturbance/displacement effects above.	<p><i>Is the development within 1km of a SAC site with terrestrial based habitats or species?</i></p> <p>Name of site: Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code: 002165)</p>	Yes
3	Impacts on designated marine habitats and species.	<p><i>Is the development located within marine or intertidal areas or within 5 km of a SAC site whose qualifying habitats or species include the following habitats: Salmonid, Lamprey Mudflats, sandflats, saltmarsh, shingle, reefs, sea cliffs</i></p> <p>Name of site: Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code: 002165)</p>	Yes
4	Impacts on birds in SPAs	<p><i>Is the development within 1km of a Special Protection Area</i></p> <p>Name of site:</p>	No
5	Cumulative effects	<p>Would consideration of a number of significant projects nearby such as</p>	No

		forested areas, quarries, wind energy together with the proposed development significantly increase the impacts listed above:	
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An AA screening report was prepared by Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd and submitted with the application on behalf of Limerick City and County Council. Clarification was received on 14th December 2021 in relation to trees removal and the need for a bat survey from the ecologist who carried out the site assessment and wrote the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report. The report concludes that *'it did not appear that the trees which were to be removed as part of the works would provide a suitable bat habitat. Notwithstanding this, it may be prudent to carry out a bat survey at the proposed site at Cappamore prior to construction works starting.'*

The European Sites namely the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA are the only two Natura 2000 sites considered to be potentially impacted by the proposed development. The Mulkear River a tributary of the Shannon and is located 470m West of the site. The Screening Report has found that given the minor nature of the works with limited excavation required and having regard to the lack of a direct hydrological connection between the proposed works and any Natura 2000 sites that the proposed works would not result in likely significant effects to the Conservation Objectives of these European Sites.

Overall it is considered that the development as proposed should not result in a significant effect on the conservation status of any SAC or SPA and therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not necessary.

3.3 Environmental Impact Assessment Report Screening

An EIA screening report was prepared by Doherty Environmental Consultants Ltd and submitted with the application on behalf of Limerick City and County Council.

The report concludes that the development does not fall within any of the threshold requirements for a mandatory EIA as specified in Section 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. The screening determination also concluded that significant negative effects on the environment from the development have not been identified due to the scale, location and design of the proposed development.

Due to the small scale nature of the proposed project, an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) is not required.

3.4 Land Acquisition

The majority of the lands are owned by Limerick City and County Council. There is a small section of lands which will be acquired, consent has been given by the owner to the making of the Part 8 application.

4.0 Submissions with respect to the proposed development

A total of 7 No. written submissions/observations were received and are listed below:

No.	Name
1	Dee Ryan on behalf of Limerick Chamber
2	John Humphreys
3	Bruce Harper
4	Michael Barry
5	Cllr Seán Hartigan
6	Environment, Recreation and Climate Change, Limerick City and County Council
7	Central Roads, Limerick City and County Council

SUB (1) Dee Ryan on behalf of Limerick Chamber

Submission Summary:

1. The submission supports the introduction of traffic upgrades and road improvements at the junction and acknowledges that the proposals are necessary to assist in alleviating traffic congestion.
2. The submission welcomes sustainable transport infrastructure investment to facilitate and encourage more people to make journeys by active travel.
3. Concerns raised that the current proposals do not integrate and connect with existing cycle and walking infrastructure in the area and as such further works will be necessary.

Transportation & Mobility Directorate Comments:

1. Noted.
2. Noted.
3. The proposed works do integrate with the existing infrastructure in the area. The current scheme has been developed as a traffic queuing improvement scheme, to assist in relieving congestion at the junction. The scheme has been designed to link with subsequent active travel schemes in the area in the future which will be developed through the forthcoming Transport Strategy.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB (2) John Humphreys

Submission Summary:

1. Concerns raised that walking and cycling infrastructure is only being provided at the junction and does not extend to connect with Annacotty village, Annacotty roundabout, the Mackey roundabout and to the Annacotty Business Park.

2. Concerns raised that the walking and cycle lanes are not fully segregated from traffic to ensure safe access and encourage active travel.

Transportation & Mobility Directorate Comments:

1. The current scheme has been developed as a traffic queuing improvement scheme, to assist in relieving congestion at the junction. The scheme has been designed to link with subsequent active travel schemes in the area in the future which will be developed through the forthcoming Transport Strategy.
2. The walking and cycle path are at a raised level and are segregated from vehicular traffic.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB (3) Bruce Harper

Submission Summary:

1. Concerns raised that the proposed cycle infrastructure would not be used as it is not connected with other cycle infrastructure in the area.
2. Concerns raised that the proposals do not comply with DMURS advice. The consultation states that this is a 50km/h zone. If this is the case then why is DMURS not applicable? Has a walking and cycling audit been undertaken as per DMURS advice note 4 (2019)?
3. Concerns raised that the proposals do not comply with the National Cycle Manual- needs of cyclists – direct, coherent, safe, attractive, comfortable.
4. Safety concerns raised regarding the cycle track whereby cyclists would be in the blindspot of a turning HGV.
5. Concerns raised that the application does not include information on the carbon proofing process followed and therefore consultees cannot be confident that this transport investment is in fact carbon proofed.
6. Concerns raised that the application does not address the lack of safe segregated connection for cyclists to Annacotty village, the technology park and to the cycle track to Castleconnell.
7. Concerns raised that the proposal would not align with the aims of the Climate Action Plan to encourage a shift to active travel and reduce reliance on private vehicles.

Transportation & Mobility Directorate Comments:

1. This is a traffic queuing improvement scheme. It is intended that the proposed works would integrate with proposed cycling infrastructure in the area in the future. The wider cycle network in Limerick will be developed through the forthcoming Transport Strategy. The draft LSMATS document identifies the R445, as far as the Cappamore Junction as a Primary Radial Route.

2. The project designers have taken cognisance of the principles, approaches and standards contained within DMURS. DMURS sets out particular design guidance for the urban environment and this project does comply with the requirements of DMURS. As this is not a primary active travel scheme a walking and cycling audit has not been carried out, however a Road Safety Audit has been carried out as part of the design process.
3. As outlined earlier, this scheme is primarily focused on improving traffic queuing at the junction. However, the cycling elements included do comply with the requirements of the National Cycle Manual. It is intended that the proposed works would integrate with proposed cycling infrastructure in the area in the future. The wider cycle network in Limerick will be developed through the forthcoming Transport Strategy. The draft LSMATS document identifies the R445, as far as the Cappamore Junction as a Primary Radial Route.
4. The scheme proposes to segregate cyclists from the trafficked carriageway, ensuring that interactions between vehicular traffic and vulnerable road users is minimised. The connection of the R506 Cappamore Road onto the R445 incorporates a ramp to road level in advance for the junction. At detailed design stage the design team will consider extending the segregated section of cycle track at this location to provide increased protection to cyclists at the location.
5. The proposed improvements will result in significant improvements to vehicular delay times at the location, thereby reducing journey times and idle times at the junction. This reduction in vehicular idling will lead to reduced emissions at this location thereby positively influencing the carbon footprint of the scheme.
6. As outlined earlier, this is a traffic queuing improvement scheme. It is intended that the proposed works would integrate with proposed cycling infrastructure in the area in the future. The wider cycle network in Limerick will be developed through the forthcoming Transport Strategy. The draft LSMATS document identifies the R445, as far as the Cappamore Junction as a Primary Radial Route.
7. As previously outlined, the proposed improvements will result in significant improvements to vehicular delay times at the location, thereby reducing journey times and idle times at the junction. This reduction in vehicular idling will lead to reduced emissions at this location thereby positively influencing the carbon footprint of the scheme. As such, the project would positively contribute to the Climate Action Plan.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB (4) Michael Barry

Submission Summary:

1. Concerns raised that the proposals do not prioritise pedestrians and cyclists. Suggestions included that the junction should be redesigned to Dutch style.

Transportation & Mobility Directorate Comments:

1. The current scheme has been developed as a traffic queuing improvement scheme, to assist in relieving congestion at the junction. The scheme has been designed to link with subsequent active travel schemes in the area in the future which will be developed through the forthcoming Transport Strategy. The cycling elements included in this scheme do comply with the requirements of the National Cycle Manual.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB (5) Cllr Seán Hartigan

Observation Summary:

1. Concerns raised that the proposed cycle lanes would not improve journey time or safety for cyclists.
2. The cycle lanes need to be linked with the Mackey roundabout, Annacotty and Annacotty Business Park and there needs to be a cycle lane northbound on R445 connecting Annacotty to the Mackey roundabout.
3. The merging of the cycle lane onto the R445 at the end of an off-road segregated facility will present a road safety hazard.
4. The proposed cycle track going out the R506 requires cyclists to merge with mainline traffic close to the extents of the works and will present a road safety hazard.
5. The provision of two new junction slip lanes will facilitate increased volumes of cars/trucks and further development of Annacotty business park, this should not happen before people travelling to Annacotty business park have an option to safely travel by sustainable means using fully segregated foot and cycle paths.
6. Cyclists wishing to turn right from the R445 onto the R506 will have to negotiate 5 traffic lanes, the right turn arrow lights at this junction are not activated by a bike. On entering the R506 the cyclist will have to merge with the cars on their left using the slip lane to get onto the cycle path. This arrangement will present a significant road safety hazard and may lead to collisions with passing vehicles.
7. Queries raised regarding the funding of the proposed scheme and whether this is an Active Travel funded scheme.
8. The traffic lights currently provide a break in the flow of traffic onto the Cappamore road, allowing cars a chance to exit/enter the two Clyduff roads (5512&55122), will the now free flowing traffic make this more difficult?
9. If modal shift in line with government targets moves to more cycling and walking will the increased use of the pedestrian/cycle crossing cause stoppages/delays on the slip lanes making the project pointless?

Transportation & Mobility Directorate Comments:

1. Cyclists will have the choice to continue travelling along the road as per the current arrangements or they can take the safer option of the proposed segregated cycle track and push button facilities at the junction.
2. As outlined earlier, this is a traffic queuing improvement scheme. It is intended that the proposed works would integrate with proposed cycling infrastructure in the area in the future. The wider cycle network in Limerick will be developed through the forthcoming Transport Strategy. The draft LSMATS document identifies the R445, as far as the Cappamore Junction as a Primary Radial Route.
3. The scheme has been designed to ensure cyclists merge before entering the R445. A Road Safety Audit has been carried out as part of the design process to consider risks and mitigation measures where necessary.
4. A Road Safety Audit has been carried out and vehicles using the slip lane will have to give way before entering the R506, thereby giving cyclists priority to rejoin the segregated cycle track. At detailed design stage designers to consider installation of dropped kerb onto the R506 cycle track to accommodate cyclists making this manoeuvre. Appropriate road markings and signage will be included in the detailed design.
5. Future sustainable transport projects in this area will seek to address and improve connectivity to Annacotty Business Park. It should be noted that the proposed scheme will not lead to any increase in traffic volumes at this junction.
6. Vehicles using the slip lane will have to yield for all road users, including cyclists, before entering the R506. Appropriate road markings and signage will be included in the detailed design. This will ensure that vehicles using the slip lane will have appropriate visibility of vehicles and cyclists on the R506. A Road Safety Audit has been carried out as part of the design process.
7. The scheme is to be funded by the Department of Transport.
8. Access to and from the minor road should in fact be improved under new setup, as filtering will be allowed if safe when main light is red.
9. The modal shift will be very important and hopefully early advancement of the LSMATS R445 priority bus and cycle route will significantly aid active and public transport shifts. As previously outlined, this current scheme has been developed as a traffic queuing improvement scheme, to assist in relieving congestion at the junction.

Planning Authority comments:

Noted

SUB (6) Environment, Recreation and Climate Change, Limerick City and County Council**Observation Summary:**

1. A site specific Waste management Plan shall be submitted prior to the commencement of deveolopment.

Transportation & Mobility Directorate Comments

Noted

Planning Authority comments:

Noted.

SUB (7) Tony Carmody, Central Roads, Limerick City and County Council

Observation Summary:

1. The final design and layout of the Public Lighting shall be agreed with Limerick City and County Council's Public Lighting Team upon final configuration at detailed design stage.
2. The final configuration of the junction shall be agreed with Central Services/Metropolitan District at detailed design stage.
3. The layout and of the road markings and signage shall be agreed with Central Services/Metropolitan District upon final configuration at detailed design stage.
4. The recommendations of the Road Safety Audit shall be carried out in full. A Stage 3 Road Safety Audit shall be carried upon completion of the works.
5. The final design of the cycle track shall be agreed with Central Services/Metropolitan District upon final configuration at detailed design stage.
6. Details of the drainage layout shall be agreed with Central Services/Metropolitan District upon final configuration at detailed design stage.

Transportation & Mobility Directorate Comments

Noted

Planning Authority comments:

Noted

5.0 Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principal and shall be carried out in accordance with the actions for the Local Authority hereby attached. It is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with policies of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, as extended and Castletroy Local Area Plan 2019-2025 and is therefore acceptable and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

6.0 Action taken by Local Authority

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application on the 24th of September 2021, 23rd of November 2021 and 14th December 2021 except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions.

Reason - In order to clarify the development to which this permission applies.

2. The recommendations of the Road Safety Audit shall be carried out in full. A Stage 3 Road Safety Audit shall be carried upon completion of the works and submitted to the Planning Authority.

Reason – In the interests of safety for all road users

3. (a) Prior to the commencement of any development works a bat survey shall be carried out by a suitably qualified bat expert/ecologist of any trees affected by the proposed development and submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority. If any bat species are found to be roosting at the site, a derogation licence must be obtained from the Wildlife Licensing Unit of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht prior to commencement of any work on the site. Any trees to be removed shall be replaced accordingly.
(b) Any removal of trees or hedging shall take place outside of the bird nesting season (1st March – 31st August).

Reason - In the interest of proper planning and development of the area and protection of biodiversity.

4. The existing roadside drainage along the site frontage shall not be impaired. All surface water run-off within the site shall be collected and disposed of within the site to surface water drainage system. No such surface waters shall discharge onto adjoining properties or the public road

Reason - In the interest of public health and to prevent flooding in the interest of traffic safety and amenity.

5. Prior to initiating any works at this development, the site developer or appointed contractor shall submit to Planning and Environmental Services for agreement in writing a site specific waste management plan for the recovery/disposal of all wastes that will arise from the site clearance, demolition, refurbishment and/or construction related activities of this development. The waste management plan shall include:

- (a). A list of proposed authorised waste collection permit holders to be employed.
- (b). A list of the proposed waste facility permitted sites at which the wastes may be recovered or disposed of.
- (c). Estimates of the proposed tonnages of construction and demolition (C&D) wastes by type e.g. soil and stone, rubble, wood, metal and plastic.

Reason- In the interest of public health.

6. A Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, environmental protection measures, including hours of working, noise and traffic management measures and details of recovery/disposal of all wastes arising from any demolition proposed.

Reason: In the interests of public safety and residential amenity.

7. The wheels and underside of all construction traffic leaving the site shall be cleaned, as required, to prevent soiling of public roads. A wheel washing facility, including water jets or other approved cleansing method shall be provided close to the site exit. In the event that any

public roads become soiled by construction traffic from the site, these roads shall be cleaned immediately.

Reason: In the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, road safety and to protect the amenity of the area.

8. All service cables associated with the proposed development including electrical and street lighting cables shall be laid underground within the site.

Reason: In the interest of orderly development and the visual amenities of the area.

