

Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 - 2029



Forward Planning

January 2023



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

In accordance with the provisions of Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Rathkeale Local Area Plan came into effect on the 21st of February 2023, six weeks after the adoption of the Local Area Plan by the Elected Members of the Adare Rathkeale Municipal District on 10th of January 2023.

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1 INTRODUCTION, HIGHER-LEVEL SPATIAL PLANNING POLICY

The Local Area Plan (LAP) is a statutory document prepared by the Planning Authority, in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), thereafter referred to as “the Act”. The Rathkeale LAP 2012 - 2018 was extended until 2021 under Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The adoption of this LAP is a reserved function of Elected Members of Municipal District of Adare - Rathkeale. This LAP sets out a land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Rathkeale to 2029, whilst complying with the provisions of higher-level spatial plans. The LAP must be consistent with the objectives of the higher-level spatial plans, including the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) and the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

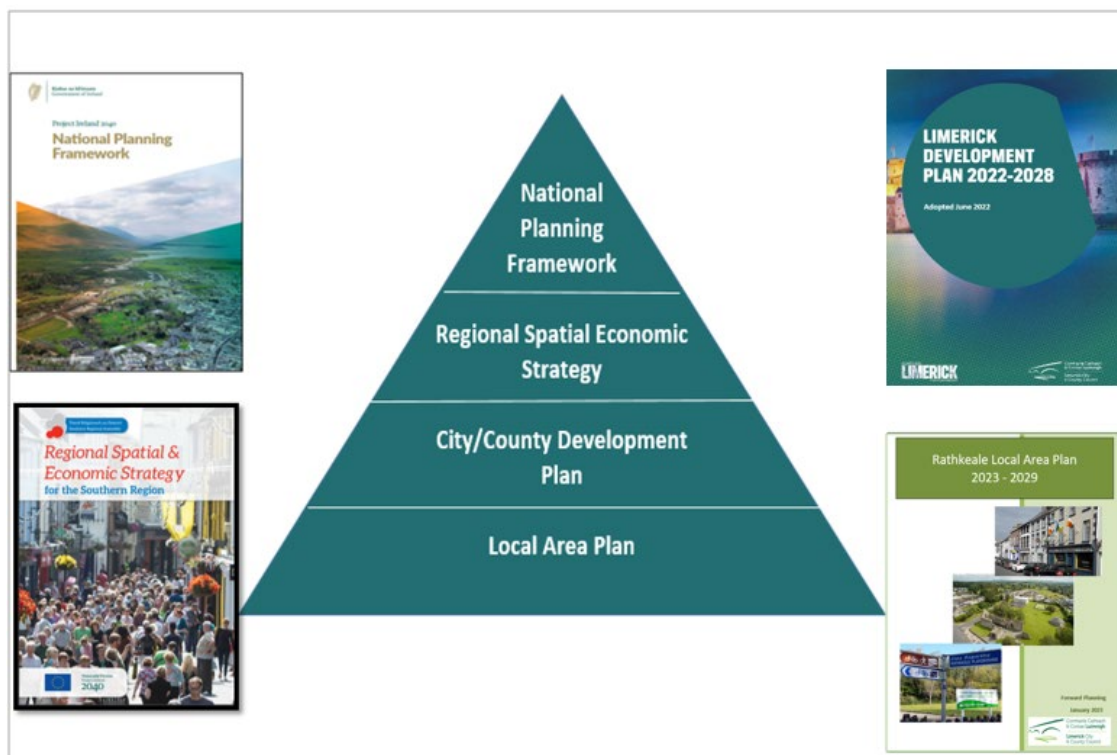


Figure 1 *Spatial Plan Hierarchy*

The LAP consists of a written statement and maps, indicating objectives for zoning of land, residential development, economic development, community infrastructure, built and natural heritage, open space and recreation, active travel and transport, environmental protection and climate change/adaptation and mitigation. This Plan also includes a Settlement Capacity Audit in identifying the quantum and location of the land zoned in the Plan.

Public consultation is an important aspect of any plan-making process in order to allow the local community to engage with the plan preparation process, and to acknowledge community aspirations and concerns. There were three public consultation periods held during the preparation of this Plan and written submissions received from the local community, State Agencies and Environmental Authorities were considered by the Council regarding the future development of the town during the plan preparation process.

The objectives and policies that are specific to Rathkeale or necessary to emphasise their importance are included in this LAP. However, when interpreting the objectives of the Plan for Rathkeale, it is essential that both the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and the LAP be read together. Where conflicting objectives arise between the Limerick Development Plan and the LAP the objectives of the Limerick Development Plan or a replacement shall take precedence.

Spatial Planning Objective 01:

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that provisions of the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029 for population and economic growth align with the policies and objectives of the higher-level spatial plans such as the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2026 on its adoption.

All development proposals comply with the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028, and any replacement thereof and any relevant Section 28 Guidance. All housing development shall demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.

2 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the statutory process for the making of a Local Area Plan as the step for the preparation of this Plan are outlined in Figure 2 below.

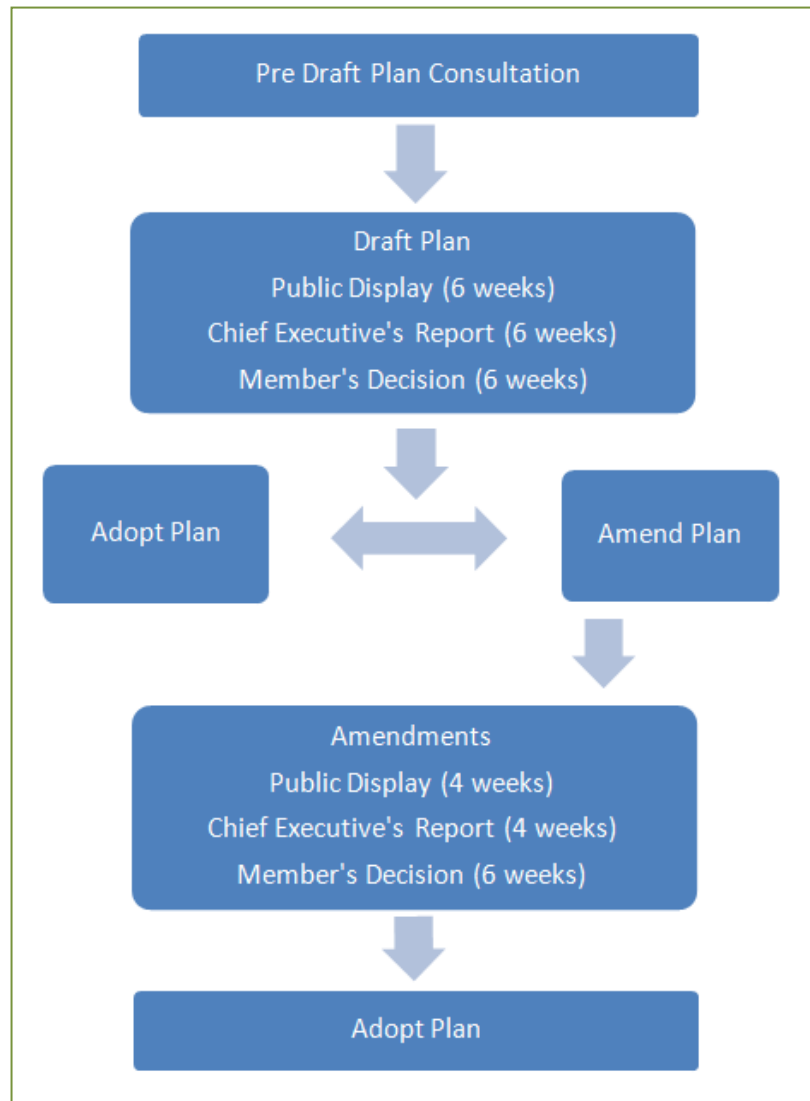


Figure 2: LAP Process

In accordance the relevant legislation, the LAP is subject to the following environmental considerations.

2.1 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening accompanies this LAP in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). This assessment is a formal, systematic evaluation of the likely

significant environmental effects of implementing a plan, policy or programme. The conclusion of the SEA screening of the LAP preparation process is that a full SEA and the preparation of an Environmental Report was not required.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required in accordance with Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of the plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in view of the site's conservation objectives. Following screening for AA, it was determined that the Rathkeale LAP is unlikely to have any impact on an area designated as a Natura 2000 site, therefore a Natura Impact Report was not required.

2.2 FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

As per Section 4.2 of *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* and Circular PL2/2014 a Flood Risk Assessment has informed the land use zoning objectives of the LAP. The flood risk assessment integrates with the SEA process as the LAP, progressed through the various stages of plan preparation to final adoption of the Plan.

3 RATHKEALE IN CONTEXT

Rathkeale is located 31km south-west of Limerick City, 12km north-east of Newcastle West and 11km south of Askeaton. The town is by-passed by the N21 National Primary Road Limerick to Tralee road, located immediately to the north of the town. The Limerick Greenway – former railway line has been re-purposed for active mobility and tourism purposes, as a walking and cycling amenity, is located to the north of the town, partly within the LAP boundary. Rathkeale has a large agricultural hinterland extending to Adare, Newcastle West and Askeaton. The River Deel flows through the town entering the Shannon Estuary at Askeaton.

Given the level of service provision in Rathkeale, (public library, municipal district offices, health clinics, primary, secondary and early schooling/Youth Partnership programmes, professional services, retail, hotels, bulk retail, a business park, food processing, distribution, and automation/manufacturing), the Limerick Development Plan identifies Rathkeale as a Level 3 Settlement sustaining a wider range of functions for the town and the surrounding rural hinterland. For Rathkeale to fulfil this role, the town requires consolidation of land use, catch-up in investment in services, infrastructure, sustainable transport, amenities and local employment balanced with quality housing delivery.

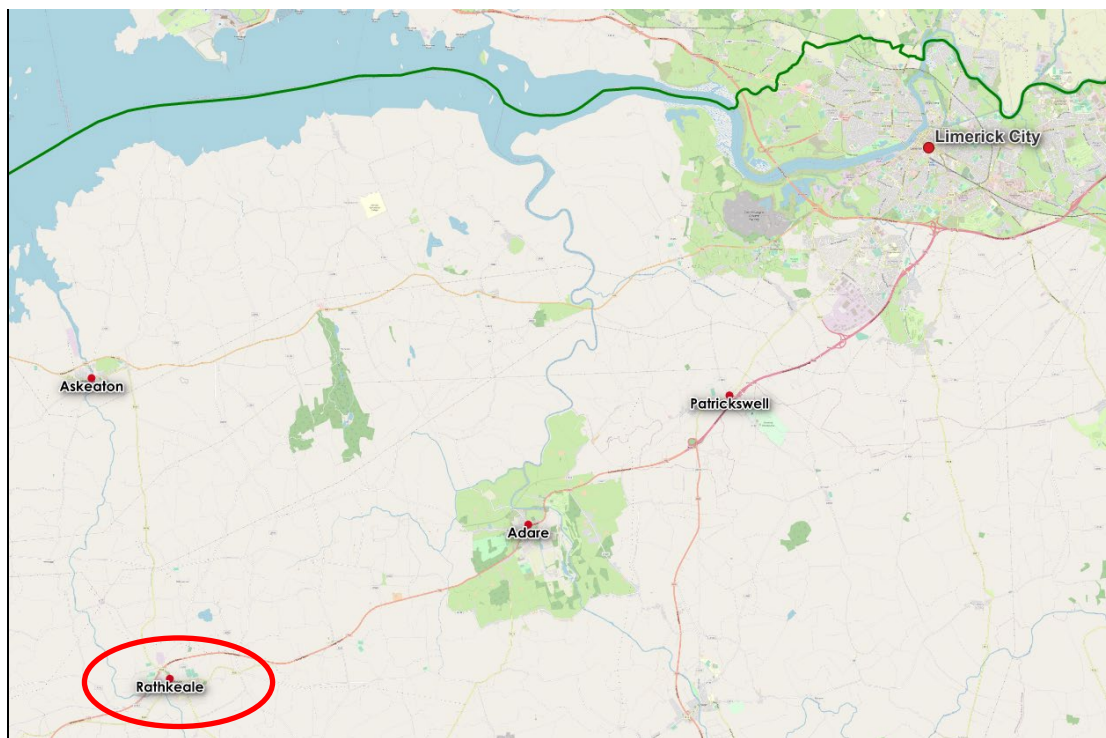
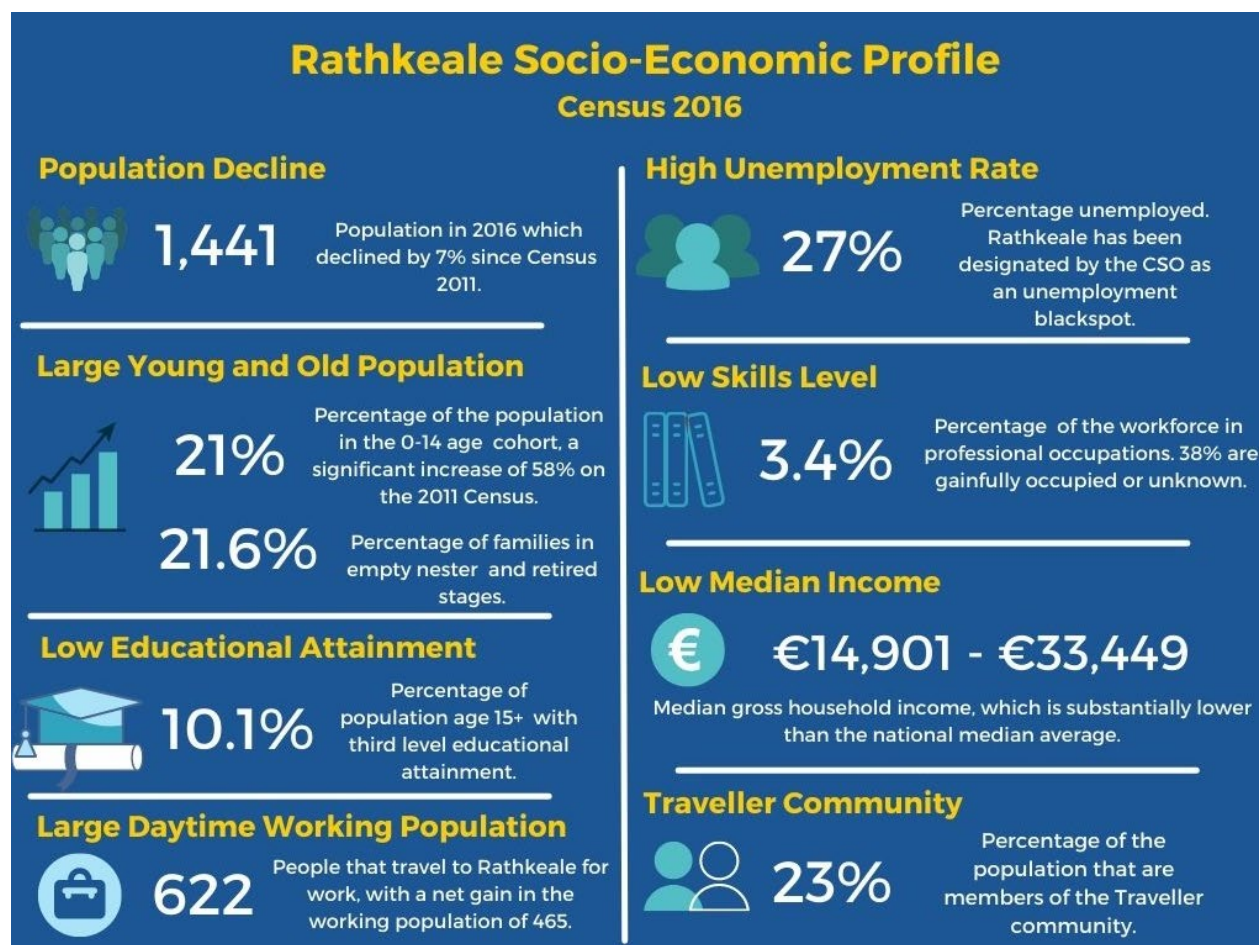


Figure 3: Locational Context of Rathkeale, Limerick

3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

The principal demographic trends for the Rathkeale as set out in CSO Census data are outlined below. This data is significant in terms of the demands for schools, childcare facilities, housing responding to demographic changes, health-care, employment opportunities, as well as availability of labour force, standards of education/training attained and disposable income.



The Census CSO data boundary for the town of Rathkeale is more expansive than that of the settlement boundary of the LAP. The CSO is the only robust, credible, systematic source of data available to analyse at a local level social economic trends, and mobility/transport patterns available to support the policies and objectives of the LAP for the sustainable development of the town. However, as a local level spatial plan the LAP must comply with the higher-level spatial plans, that is the NPF and the RSES. This includes the principle of the a compact settlement prioritising the development potential of the town centre, sequential development from the town centre maximising under-used/vacant brownfield infill sites and existing buildings. Considering the existing built footprint of the town and to align with national spatial policy the

settlement boundary for the LAP has been determined as per Map No.1 Land Use Zoning, Appendix 1.

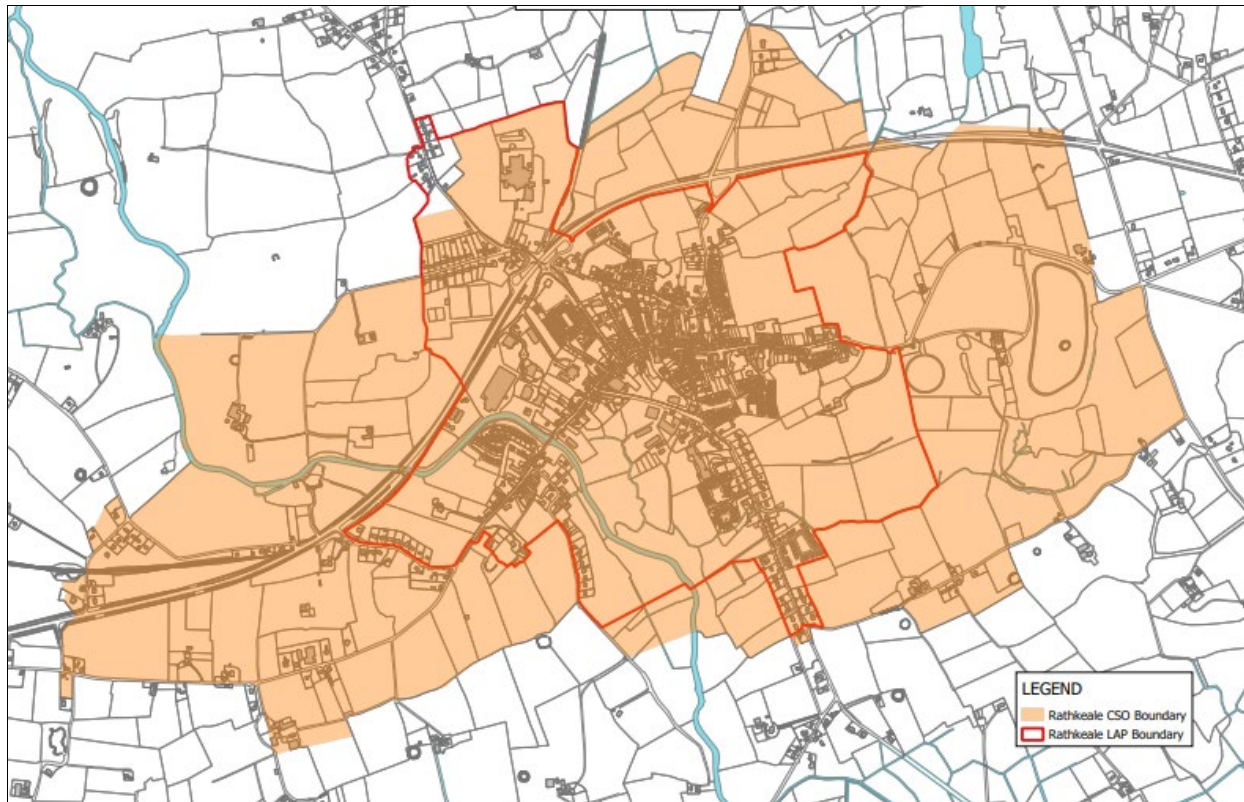


Figure 4: Comparative Boundaries of the Census CSO and the settlement boundary of Rathkeale in the LAP

3.2 EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR RATHKEALE

Rathkeale is centrally located in Limerick and benefits from high quality connectivity to Limerick City and adjoining towns in the southwest region. These assets have been important in attracting and sustaining industry and employment within the town. There is potential for further expansion of industry and employment in the town of Rathkeale. Tourism products, such as the Limerick Greenway and the heritage assets in the town offer further opportunities to develop the town centre.

Rathkeale has a number of challenges, including the movement of business in recent times from the town centre to the outskirts of the town, residential and commercial vacancy or under-use of land/buildings, dereliction, unfinished housing estates, adapting to climate. Other challenges reflect the demographic issues of relatively poor educational attainment levels, levels of employment skills, types of employment, unemployment rates, the migratory nature of a substantial proportion of the community, high levels of deprivation, and low disposable income.

Infrastructure deficiencies also present a challenge in Rathkeale, fluctuating water pressure and changing school enrolment demands throughout the year places pressure on existing services.

4 STRATEGIC VISION STATEMENT AND DELIVERY

The purpose of the strategic vision statement of this LAP is to guide the sustainable future growth of Rathkeale aligned with the provisions of higher-level planning policy set out in Section 1, and the unique challenges and opportunities of the town. Delivering on the vision statement and its objectives will improve quality of life for all citizens in a manner that is collectively conscious of reducing the negative impacts of climate change.

The Strategic Vision Statement is as follows:

'To fulfil the role of Rathkeale as a Level 3 settlement, sustaining population and economic growth through a mix of high quality residential development (choice and tenure), education and employment opportunities, including smart tech and tourism, sustainable mobility, a strengthened retail/commercial town centre, community infrastructure, active lifestyles and recreation choice, and sustaining Rathkeale's unique heritage assets. The future development of Rathkeale will provide for low carbon, sustainable and consolidated growth in a coherent spatial manner.'

4.1 CORE STRATEGY COMPLIANCE

The Core Strategy for Limerick is set out in Chapter 2 of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. Section 19 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that: *A Local Area Plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the Development Plan, its Core Strategy, and any Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy that apply to the area of the plan.*

4.2 POPULATION PROJECTIONS, CAPACITY AND RESIDENTIAL LAND AVAILABILITY FOR RATHKEALE

According to the Census, Rathkeale had a population of 1,441 persons in 2016, representing a decrease of 7% on the 2011 Census population. The town experienced population growth during 2002 – 2011 period. The Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan makes assumptions with respect to population projections and allocations throughout Limerick. These assumptions include the additional residential units and zoned land requirements for each settlement, in accordance with the NPF, the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF and the RSES. The Limerick Development Plan is also informed by the Regional Demographics and Structural Housing Demand at County Level, ESRI Research Series No.111, 2020. As determined by the Limerick Development Plan, the assumed Rathkeale population growth allocation is an additional 403 persons to 2028 (+28% on the 2016 Census figure). This equates to a projected requirement for an additional 147 residential units over the period up to 2028, based on an average household size of 2.6 persons.

Settlement Level	Census Pop. 2016	2016 – 2028 Pop. growth	Envisaged population total 2028	No. of new residences required to 2028	Quantum of land required (hectare - ha)	Total land zoned Serviced Sites @10 units per ha	Total Land zoned New Residential @22 per ha
3	1,441	403	1,844	147	8.3	2.2	7.06

Table 1: Population growth and residential unit and land quantum required in Rathkeale according to Core Strategy, Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028

Given the level and diversity of services and amenities available in Rathkeale as a Level 3 Settlement, its accessibility to the National Road network, availability of serviceable lands, it is anticipated that Rathkeale will attract inward investment for future population growth in accordance with the objectives of the NPF and RSES. On this basis, the assumed scale of growth for the Rathkeale is considered reasonable and will be progressed on lands including opportunity, infill and brownfield sites. The National Planning Framework requires that 30% of all new housing within Rathkeale occurs within the existing built-up footprint.

A Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) assessing the key infrastructure available to the individual sites identified as suitable for the provision of New Residential, Serviced Sites and Enterprise and Employment has been set out in Appendix 2 of this Plan. The SCA identifies the infrastructure necessary to support future development. An indicative timeframe for the delivery of critical infrastructure i.e. short, medium or long term is included.

Core Strategy Policy

CS P1: To ensure compliance with the population projections of the Core Strategy (or any revision thereof), the Planning Authority shall monitor the type of developments permitted in Rathkeale, including the number of residential units constructed on an annual basis.

4.3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES TO DELIVER THE CORE STRATEGY

This Local Area Plan is based on a number of general objectives designed to improve the quality of life of the community of Rathkeale, which the Council will endeavour to implement during the lifetime of the plan in partnership with other agencies. The development of Rathkeale over the lifetime of this plan focuses on sustainable growth of the built environment, employment generation, and the provision of community and social services together in a low carbon, compact, consolidated and connected pattern of development.

The following are the interlinked strategic objectives in relation to the delivery of the Strategy:

Strategic Objectives to deliver the Core Strategy

It shall be the objective of the Council to:

1. Seek the sustainable intensification and consolidation of the existing built environment in accordance with the objectives for compact growth in higher-level spatial plans through appropriate infill, brownfield development, supported by the necessary physical and community infrastructure.
2. Promote sustainable economic development, enterprise and employment opportunities and prioritise the town centre as the primary location for retail and services.
3. Promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, whilst protecting and improving existing road infrastructure.
4. Protect, conserve and enhance the built environment, through promoting awareness, utilising relevant heritage legislation and ensuring quality urban design principles are applied to all new developments, respecting historic and architectural heritage.
5. Protect, enhance and connect areas of natural heritage, green and blue infrastructure and open space for the benefits of quality of life and biodiversity, capitalising on climate change adaptation and flood risk measures.
6. Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied to all new developments.
7. Guide the future development of Rathkeale in accordance the Town Centre First policy approach seeking to bring people and appropriate business/services back into the heart of Rathkeale through place-making, good quality urban design, and sustainable mobility.
8. Ensure the future development of Rathkeale supports the just transition to a low carbon society and economy, implementing national policy to reduce gas emissions, improve environmental quality and contribute to national targets for climate change.

5 SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – A STRONG ECONOMY

Rathkeale has a proven track record in sustaining economic development and employment given its' success in the area of food processing and distribution, engineering and manufacturing, despite the closure of Anderson Ireland in 2013 with the loss of 169 jobs. The former Anderson Ireland building has been re-developed by Innovate Limerick to accommodate six enterprises including social enterprises and currently is at 90% occupancy. Rathkeale is also performing well in terms of bulk household goods and construction materials serving a wide hinterland.

Limerick City and County Council is committed to supporting the creation of employment in Rathkeale. This plan provides the appropriate framework for development through the provision of adequately zoned lands and policies, which support economic and appropriate retail development. The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 sets out the strategic context for economic development of Limerick. The Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021 sets out the multi-agency actions needed to support the economic development and community development of Limerick. Both of these documents should be read in tandem with this chapter.

PART A: ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYMENT

5.1 ENTERPRISE CONTEXT, PROFILE, STRATEGY AND AVAILABILITY OF LAND ZONED

Together with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region, the NPF places a strong emphasis on compact, smart, sustainable, appropriate and inclusive economic growth in settlements. The RSES recognises the sub-regional dependencies between Newcastle West (a Key Town), Listowel, Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale providing collaborative economic growth for joint projects, such as the development of the Limerick Greenway and initiatives of the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary. The economic profile of the Rathkeale reflects its strong agricultural hinterland and its strategic location on the National Road and Regional Road networks. The largest employers are ABP Foods at Holycross, Design Pro in the Rathkeale Enterprise Centre, Tadgh O'Connor Ltd and Coláiste na Trócaire at New Line.



Figure 5: Rathkeale Enterprise Centre

The population of Rathkeale aged 15 or over at work was 37% in the 2016 Census which is well below the State average. Rathkeale is identified as an unemployment blackspot by the CSO with an unemployment rate of 27% according to the same Census. According to the 2016 Census of Anonymised Records (POWSCAR) the daytime working population working in Rathkeale is 769 persons and of these 622 people (or 80.88%) commute into the town for work.

With the opportunities afforded by digitalisation and e-working, this Plan promotes Rathkeale as a suitable location to support remote working, supporting hubs, culture/creative and Smart tech enterprises. This LAP zones 60 hectares for Enterprise and Employment and supports opportunities for employment creation, business and technology development, in accordance with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Economic Development Strategic Policy

To promote, facilitate and enable economic development and employment generating activities in Rathkeale in a sustainable manner in accordance with higher-level spatial plans, including the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

ED O1: Promote a diverse range of employment opportunities by facilitating appropriate development, enhancement of the Rathkeale Enterprise Centre, and promote enterprise development on appropriately zoned Enterprise and Employment lands, subject to compliance with all relevant Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

ED O2: Encourage the redevelopment of vacant commercial units, brownfield, derelict, and infill sites for enterprise subject to the normal planning criteria, such as access/egress, associated transport movement, appropriate scale to the respective area, impact on amenity of adjoining occupants, servicing, connectivity (including pedestrian and cycling) with the town centre etc.

ED O3: Require that all Enterprise and Employment development incorporate active travel and sustainable travel measures into the design of proposals.

ED O4: Require the preparation of masterplans for the lands zoned Enterprise and Employment, at Wolfburgess East and Abbeylands. The masterplans shall include conceptual layout, access arrangements, infrastructure works and phasing details. Early engagement with all utility providers, including Irish Water is strongly advised.

ED 05: Any future development proposals for the lands zoned Enterprise and Employment will require a Traffic and Transport Assessment to assess the impact of the proposal on the road network. The costs of the mitigation measures shall be borne by the developer. In the case of development of lands at Abbeylands for Enterprise and Employment any proposals will have due regard to the protective status of Protected Structure RPS 1535 Abbeylands House and its curtilage.

5.2 SMALL-SCALE BUSINESS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS OR ASSOCIATED WITH A RESIDENCE/HOME-WORKING/E-WORKING

The Council acknowledges the increasing importance of home-working/e-working in the modern economy and its many benefits, including flexibility, work-life balance and the reduction of gas emissions as a consequence of reduced commuting to a central base. Proposals for the use of a home, whether own-door units or apartment schemes as workplaces will be controlled through the development management process based on the scale and nature of operations. Uses which might negatively impact on residential amenity, such as the repair of vehicles, activities involving welding/fabrication, dangerous chemicals, hazardous material will not be permitted in a residential areas. The level of customers/callers will also be taken into account. Any proposals for small-scale businesses in residential areas shall comply with the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Objective: It is an objective of the Council to:

SSB 01: Support home based economic activities secondary to the main residential use, and which can be accommodated without adverse impacts on the amenities of adjoining residential property, by reason of traffic, noise or other planning criteria.

PART B: RETAIL AND SUPPORTING THE TOWN CENTRE

5.3 RETAIL CONTEXT AND STRATEGY

The Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick designates Rathkeale as a Level 3 Retail Centre on par with Adare and Kilmallock. These centres are important locations for convenience goods and retail services to meet the day-to-day needs of their population. They have quality convenience outlets capable of supporting the weekly grocery-shopping trip.

The Council supports the ‘town centre approach’ as promoted by Government policy and higher-level spatial plans, when assessing planning applications in relation to retail development. Development proposed on the ground floor in the town centre will be restricted to commercial and related services with active frontages to address the street. Out-of-centre locations for retail

business and services are generally not permitted in efforts to consolidate the existing retail centre and encourage re-use of vacant units in the town centre. The LAP anticipates that additional retail development in the Rathkeale will be achieved through the redevelopment of vacant commercial units in the first instance. All retail development will be subject to compliance with the Retail Strategy 2022 – 2028.

Retail Strategic Policy

To support the sustainable long-term retail growth of Rathkeale as a Level 3 Town Centre, in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and the Retail Strategy for Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 – 2028.

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

R O1: Ensure proposals which would undermine the vitality and viability of Rathkeale town centre will not be permitted. The sequential approach to retail development set out in the “*Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2012*” will be applied when assessing planning applications for retail development.

R O2: Prohibit the proliferation of uses in the town centre which would detract from the amenities, or the vitality and viability of the area such as fast food outlets, amusement arcades, off-licences, bookmakers and other non-retail uses. Storage use is not permitted as the primary use of ground floor units.

R O3: Encourage the refurbishment of existing retail units and the maintenance of original shopfronts, or the reinstatement of traditional shopfronts, where poor replacements have been installed, and discourage the use of external roller shutters, internally illuminated signs or inappropriate projecting signs.

R O4: Encourage the use of upper floors of retail units for commercial or residential use, particularly ‘Living-Over-the Shop’ which contributes positively to regeneration of the town centre.

PART C: TOURISM AND SUPPORTING THE TOWN CENTRE

5.4 TOURISM CONTEXT, STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

Tourism is a proven economic driver, and can play a significant role in the overall development of Rathkeale, sustaining employment and providing opportunities for new business and services. The Limerick Greenway has already stimulated business growth in Rathkeale. Other tourism assets in the town include its rich built heritage (pre-historic, medieval, Gothic, Georgian and

Edwardian influences on many fine buildings and structures in the town), the blue-way opportunities of the River Deel, Castlematrix and the riverside walk linking to the Limerick Greenway. Rathkeale also benefits from the well-established hotel in the town which is in close proximity to the Limerick Greenway. Access to the N21 also strengthens Rathkeale's tourism potential. The Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019 – 2023 sees Rathkeale as a heritage hub in a cluster of towns themed for the purposes of tourism promotion as 'Limerick's Connected Heartlands – The Medieval Strongholds of Abbeyfeale, Newcastle West, Rathkeale and Adare'. Rathkeale has the additional advantage of the 44km Limerick Greenway extending to North Kerry with potential connection to Fenit/Tralee, and to Adare and Patrickswell as supported by the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. Rathkeale has the potential to offer a more robust tourism package on the Limerick Greenway, access onto the river, interesting historical and built heritage, and could capitalise on the delivery of the Ryder Cup in Adare in 2027 having regard to Rathkeale's proximity to Adare.

Tourism Strategic Policy

To support the long-term sustainable growth of appropriate tourism opportunities in Rathkeale.

Objective TO1- Tourism - It is the objective of the Council to:

- a. Support growth in the tourism sector in Rathkeale throughout the town by facilitating connections between complementary sites and attractions, and ensuring visitors can avail of Rathkeale's services attracting visitors from the Limerick Greenway into the town centre, and enabling them to do so with ease. New tourist projects in the town are encouraged to foster synergy with the services and retail business located in the town.
- b. Extend the Limerick Greenway to Adare, Limerick City and beyond subject to any environmental constraints.
- c. Support Rathkeale's role in the Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019 - 2023 and any subsequent replacement document.
- d. Require tourism projects to adhere to appropriate environmental and ecological assessment to mitigate any adverse environmental, biodiversity, ecological, archaeological, built heritage impacts.

6 HOUSING

This LAP aims to balance the provision of good quality housing that meets the needs of a diverse population, in a way that makes Rathkeale an attractive and inviting place to live in. Meeting the housing needs of Rathkeale is an important element of this plan. Adequate housing provision is essential for the creation of an environment to attract business and enterprise to Rathkeale and this plan provides the quantum of zoned lands to meet this demand. The quantum of zoned land for residential development complies with the population targets set out in the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, informed by National Planning Framework, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy as outlined in Chapter 1. The Council is also informed by the Department of Rural and Community's Town Centre First approach, seeking to attract a vibrant community including families back into the heart of the towns through place-making, good quality urban design and sustainable mobility.

6.1 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT – DENSITY, HOUSING TYPE AND MIX

Higher-level planning policy requires Local Authorities to apply a sequential approach to zoning land for residential development with a primary focus on the consolidation of settlements through zoning of lands, within or contiguous to the town centre and within existing built-up area of Rathkeale. This LAP places a strong emphasis on providing high quality residential developments with mixed type and tenure, through intensification and consolidation of the existing built envelope of Rathkeale, which presents housing development opportunities, through redevelopment of brownfield, infill and vacant sites.

A preliminary assessment of the housing waiting list for the town indicated that 40% of requests for Council accommodation are for single bedroom units. Household size has decreased from 2.66 persons to 2.59 persons between the Census periods of 2011 – 2016. These are important considerations for future housing provision in the town.

Residential vacancy is a critical issue in the town and difficult to accurately determine given the annual migratory nature of a large proportion of the Traveller community. In the 2016 Census, 35 dwellings or 6.2% of the housing stock were deemed 'temporarily absent' and 251 dwellings were deemed 'other vacant dwelling' accounting for 49% of the housing stock. Combining both figures 55.2% of residential properties were vacant in the town. Comparative analysis with the 2011 Census indicates 310 residences were 'unoccupied' on Census night. The 2011 Census did not differentiate between 'temporarily absent' and 'other vacant dwellings'. Nevertheless, the 2011 Census residential vacancy concurs with the concerning trend of high residential vacancy, as does GeoDirectory analysis of An Post postal deliveries, and a vacancy survey of the town completed by the Council in October 2021, which found a vacancy rate of 9.48% for residential use.

To cater for the projected population growth this Plan zones 7.06 hectares as new residential development. A mix of dwelling types, sizes, and tenure, designed on the principles of universal design, will be required to meet the housing needs of Rathkeale. Housing must reflect changing demographic trends with consequent housing demands, including increasing demand for 1 bedroom and 2 bedrooms, and down-scaling to smaller units by an increasing older population. A statement to identify how this has been considered shall be submitted as a requirement of a planning application to demonstrate that consideration has been given by the developer to meeting this requirement in all residential applications. The Council will be guided by the Government policy outlined in *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DECHG, 2009), the *Urban Development and Building Heights: Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DHPLG, 2018) and any subsequent replacement Section 28 guidelines.

6.2 SERVICED SITES

In Rathkeale, allowance is made for the development of low density serviced sites as an alternative to the unserviced one-off rural house in the open countryside. These individual residential plots will have access to services such as utility connections, footpaths, lighting and are within walking distance of the town centre. The density shall generally be 10 housing units per hectare. Whilst individual house design on serviced sites is encouraged, the overall design of the scheme must be consistent in terms of boundary treatments and landscaping. This Plan zones 2.21 hectares for serviced sites.

6.3 SPECIALISED HOUSING, INCLUDING OLDER PERSONS HOUSING, ASSISTED INDEPENDENT LIVING AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

The need for older persons' dwellings, supported housing, nursing homes and residential care homes in Rathkeale is anticipated to grow into the future, by reason of a generally ageing population and the need to cater for those wishing to downsize and reside in proximity to services and amenities. Similarly, people with disabilities should be supported to live an independent life in a home of their choosing in their community. These facilities should be integrated wherever possible into the established or planned residential areas, based on the principles of universal design and an age friendly public realm with seating, lighting, landscaping etc. Such facilities should be located within walking distance of shopping and other services, public transport and open space.

Rathkeale contains a large, well-established Traveller community. Many Traveller families have a nomadic lifestyle. In the past, there has been a history of unauthorised parking of mobile homes and caravans on the public road and private lands in Rathkeale creating issues regarding public health and safety, traffic, parking, utility connections, waste disposal, fire hazard etc. To address this issue, the Council has designated a Special Development Area in the Roche's Road

and Fair Hill area to facilitate a limited number of temporary private sites for mobile homes/caravans for extended family of the Traveller community. Proposals shall not have a negative impact on existing residential amenity, within this area. There is a presumption against any proposal demolishing existing residences or buildings on the streetscape of north Main Street, given its vernacular late 18th/early 19th century built heritage, and location in an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). Parking of motorised vehicles/trailers/caravans within the curtilage of dwellings shall be limited to the areas to the side of each house and shall be specifically prohibited from areas lawns/private amenity space. Drawings submitted with planning applications should indicate a physical demarcation of these lawns/private open space areas in the form of low wall/kerb of sufficient height to prevent such vehicles/trailers/caravans occupying the lawn/private open space in the interest of private open space amenity. All proposals shall comply with relevant Technical Guidance documents under the Building Regulations, and Guide to Fire Safety in Traveller Accommodation, 2013, National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management. A statement shall be submitted with planning applications demonstrating compliance with these Technical Guidance documents.

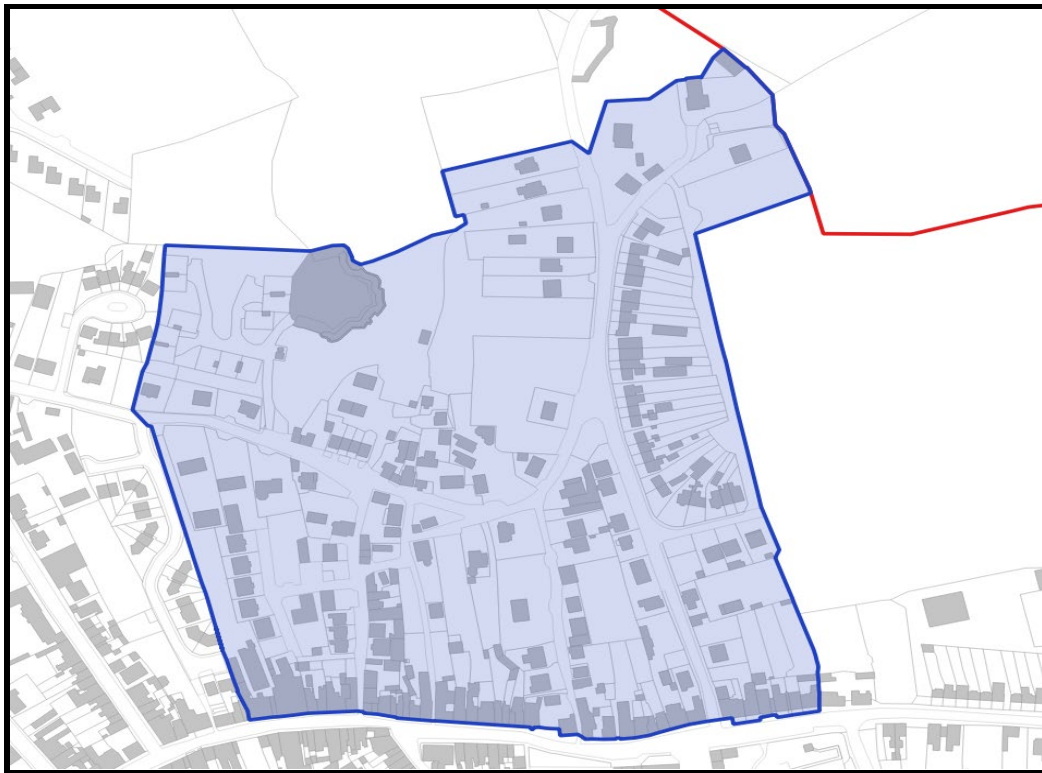


Figure 6: Special Development Area for Temporary Private Sites for Motorised Vehicles, Mobile Homes and Caravans

Limerick City and County Council has adopted a Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 in accordance with the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. The Limerick Development

Plan 2022 – 2028 supports the provision of housing to address the needs of this community and to implement the Traveller Accommodation Programme and any subsequent replacement programme.

6.4 SOCIAL HOUSING

Social housing refers to accommodation provided by a Local Authority or an Approved Housing Body (voluntary housing associations). Housing for All - A New Housing Plan for Ireland' is the Government's housing plan to 2030. This national housing plan contains actions to deliver a range of housing options for individuals, couples and families including social housing. All relevant lands zoned for residential development or a mix of uses, including residential will be subject to the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) in relation to social and affordable housing. The Council advises pre-planning discussions with developers, prior to the formal planning process to negotiate details of Part V, the requirements of the Limerick Housing Strategy, the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and the demands, the needs and preferences for housing in Rathkeale as determined by the most-up-to-date Housing Needs Demand Assessment.

6.5 HOUSING STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

Housing Strategic Policy

To deliver new residential development in accordance with the Settlement and Housing Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, supporting a choice of quality housing, mixed tenure and unit size/type universally designed for ease of adaption to the lifecycle and mixed mobility needs.

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

- H 01:** (a) Ensure the sequential development of serviced residential lands identified to cater for the envisaged population growth.
(b) Ensure that at least 30% of all new housing development is delivered within existing built-up areas on infill, brownfield and backland sites.
(c) Consolidate existing development and increase existing residential density, through a range of measures, including reductions in vacancy, re-use of existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration and appropriate increased building heights.
- H 02:** a) Require a minimum density of 22 dwelling units per hectare on residentially zoned lands;
b) Require a minimum net density of 10 dwelling units per hectare on lands zoned Serviced Sites.

c) Encourage increased densities that contribute to the vitality of the town by reinforcing street patterns or assisting in re-development of backlands or brownfield sites, subject to satisfying other planning criteria including access, permeability, connection to town centre and services, traffic safety, public realm, high quality sensitive design etc.

H O3: Require the creation of sustainable communities and high quality universally designed residential area, with a mix of unit types, sizes, tenures, heights, amenities and facilities to create and maintain a sense of place and local distinctiveness.

H O4: Require the use of Design Briefs, Masterplans, Sustainability Statements, Social Infrastructure Assessments and any other supporting documents deemed necessary to ensure the coherent planning of residential development. Early engagement with all utilities providers, including Irish Water is strongly advised.

H O5: (a) Promote the provision of social and affordable housing in accordance with Part V of the Act, the Limerick Housing Strategy, the Housing Needs Demand Assessment, and government housing policy 'Housing for All' (2021) and any subsequent replacement thereof.

(b) Facilitate the provision of independent and/or assisted living for older people, by supporting the provision of purpose built accommodation including Nursing Homes in accordance with the "National Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland", or the adaption of existing premises, particularly vacant units.

(c) Facilitate the provision of independent and/or assisted living for people and people with disabilities, by supporting the provision of purpose built accommodation in accordance with relevant standards or the adaption of existing premises, particularly vacant units.

The maximum distance from nursing homes/care homes/independent assisted living units shall be no more than 300m safe walking distance to community facilities, convenience retail facilities and amenities.

H O6: Ensure new residential developments comply with the open space standards set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. Open space shall be provided proportional to the scale of the number of residential units proposed, with consideration of access to existing open space and the principles of permeability, accessibility, linkages, safety and place making.

H O7

- a) Facilitate appropriate accommodation for the Traveller community in accordance with the provisions of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 and any replacement thereof.
- b) Facilitate the development of a Special Development Area with a limited number of temporary private sites for mobile homes/caravans in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Accommodating Transient Traveller Families'.
- c) Ensure that proposals for Temporary Private Sites for Mobile Home/Caravans for extended families of the Traveller community in the Roches Road, Fair Hill are designed coherently in accordance with the following:

- A maximum of 5 mobile homes/caravans/motorised vehicles on any one site.
- Planning permission be permitted for a maximum of 10 years on any one site.
- Layout and construction shall comply with the most current standards and guidelines,

including separation spaces between these structures, provision of services according to the relevant public providers (Irish Water, ESB Networks, Gas Networks etc.), provision of play area, off-street car parking, fire safety and public health requirements, landscaping and screening. A statement shall be submitted with planning applications demonstrating compliance with these Technical Guidance documents.

- All site works and construction of all services to be completed and certified in accordance with the planning permission prior to any mobile home/caravan being placed on the site.

H O8: Require residential developments in close proximity to heavily trafficked roads to be designed and constructed to minimise noise disturbance, follow a good acoustic design process and clearly demonstrate that significant adverse noise impacts will be avoided, in accordance with relevant standards.

H O9: Ensure proposed developments have cognisance to climate change mitigation as part of the design process, including use of sustainable building materials, micro-renewables, SuDS or other design elements to reduce the carbon footprint of the proposed development.

H O10: All layouts will be required to prioritise walking and cycling, shall be fully permeable for pedestrians and cyclists to access a range of local services and enable the efficient provision of public transport services, where relevant, helping to tackle climate change

7 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLACEMAKING

Limerick City and County Council is committed to the principles of place-making, universal design, and high quality public realm. These are critical aspects of good urban design of space and buildings to create viable, attractive urban areas to reside, work, invest in, and to do business sustaining a good quality of life for citizens. The Limerick Development Plan contains an objective to prepare a public realm plan for Rathkeale.

Rathkeale has a number of assets in the town supporting better urbanism. These include Rathkeale's strong sense of place, its' fine 18th and 19th Century streetscape, the Square, the accessibility of services and amenities within the 10 minute walk from the town centre, the Matrix Walk and the Limerick Greenway and the range of businesses/services available in the town.

7.1 URBAN DESIGN, PLACE-MAKING, UNIVERSAL DESIGN, PUBLIC REALM

Place-making refers to the collaborative approach to design public spaces, the collective assemblage of buildings, be that the road/street space, spaces between buildings, the square, public access to the riverside, walkways etc. Place-making initiatives respond to the built- heritage, natural environment, social and cultural characteristics of the town/place seeking new design solutions on principles for sustainability, longevity, universal accessibility, security and, perhaps most importantly, sustained use by the community instilling a sense of identity and community pride. Essentially, there is a collective effort by communities to reimagine and reinvent public spaces in their town.

Universal design refers to the design of buildings and spaces on the principle of accessibility of all abilities regardless of age, physique or mobility, and the urban environment is understandable, legible and easily to move around in and safe for the individual.

Public realm considers the design and materials used in all areas that the public has access to, including public buildings, public spaces, streets, parks, open spaces, and civic spaces such as the Square.

The concepts above are interrelated and when successful applied can create responsive, functional, inclusive, living urban environments instilling a sense of community pride - a place that people want to visit, use, and interact socially informally, or more formally at civic events in safe, aesthetic open spaces.

National guidance promoting the principles above should be incorporated into the design stage of development include;

- Sustainable Residential Development In Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHG (2009);

- Urban Design Manual - A Best Practice Guide (2009);
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018);
- Urban Development and Building Heights, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018);
- The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTS and DECLG (2019);
- Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach.
- Town Centre First, Department of Rural and Community Development and Department of Housing, Local Government, and Heritage, 2022.

In particular, reference should be made to the 12 criteria of the Urban Design Manual in future design proposals and the relevant provisions, including the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

7.2 THE 10-MINUTE TOWN CONCEPT AND TOWN CENTRE FIRST APPROACH

This Plan aligns with higher-level spatial plans seeking future development in settlements on the principle of the ‘10 Minute’ Town concept, whereby a sustainable compact settlement, such as Rathkeale, provides a range of community facilities, services, recreational and cultural amenities and employment opportunities that are accessible in short walking and cycle timeframes from homes, or accessible by public transport services connecting people to larger-scaled settlements such as Limerick City or Newcastle West. Re-use of buildings, infill, re-purposing of under-used lands have the potential to deliver the concept in Rathkeale, as areas identified in this Plan are in the town centre or within 10-minute walking of the town centres and services.

The most recent government policy publication, Town Centre First seeks to attract vibrant communities in urban settlements, including smaller towns such as Rathkeale to encourage families back into living in the heart of the towns through place-making, good quality urban design and sustainable mobility.

This Plan promotes the concept of a thriving town centre, with a strong commercial and social function and seeks to consolidate the town rather than encourage sprawl. This can be achieved through sensitive restoration of buildings, including small local shops or creative workspaces that conserve traditional shopfronts, repurposing historic buildings to respond to modern demands, such as changing demography, work practices, and investing in a high quality pedestrian/cyclist friendly public realm and attractive public spaces where people can gather socially. This Plan includes 10.6 hectares of land zoned as Town Centre.

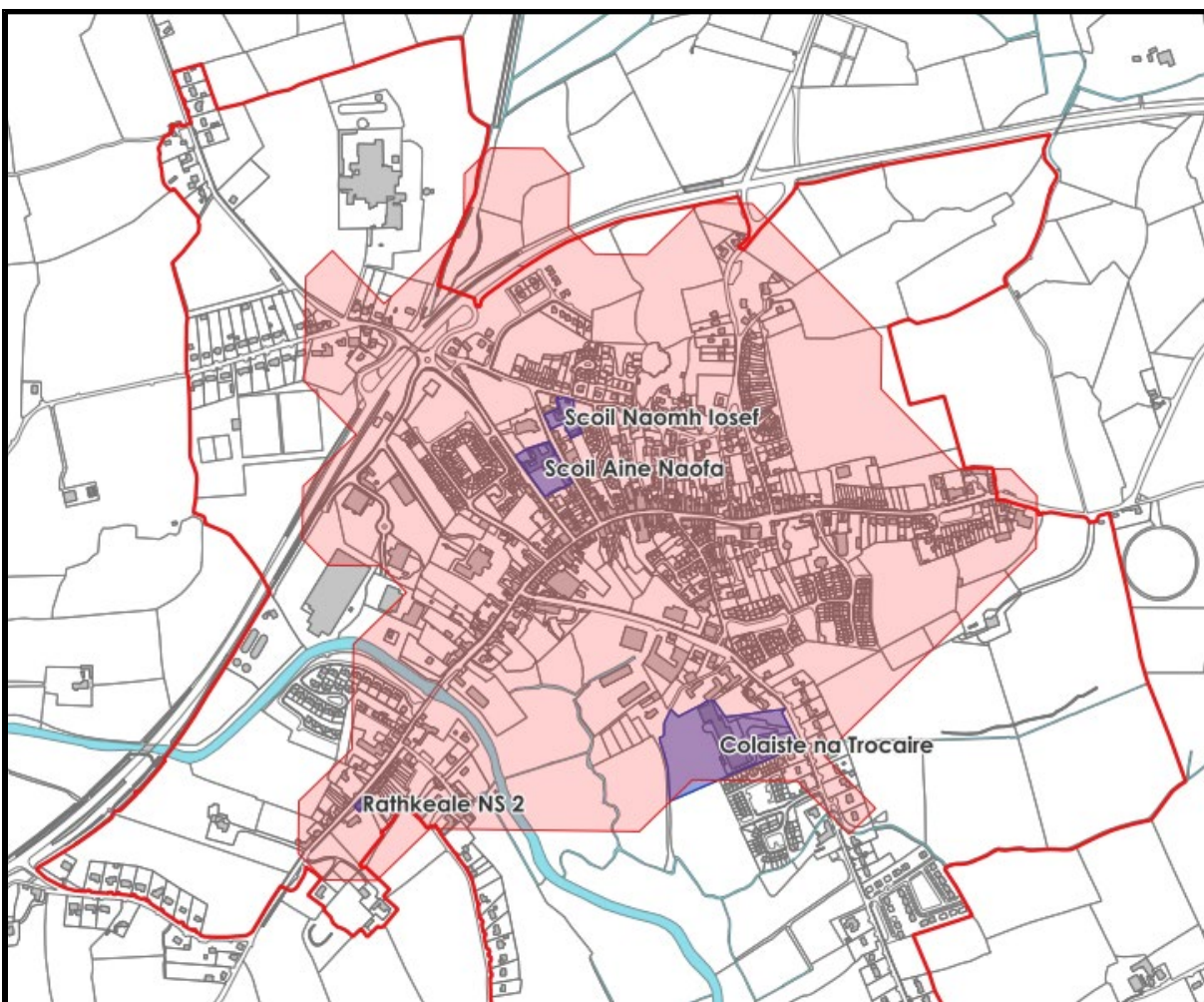


Figure 8: Map of 10 Minute Town Concept Analysis of Rathkeale

7.3 TOWN CENTRE HEALTH CHECK

Limerick City and County Council carried out a Health Check in Rathkeale in October 2021, the Health Check is a useful tool, which establish a baseline, to help monitor and drive the development of the town centre. The Health Check establishes the use of each building and also takes account of vacancy and dereliction. The land use map presents a mixed town core with a clearly delineated town centre where commercial uses give way to residential dominance. The urban form is very distinctive along the Main Street. The results of the Health Check demonstrates a variety of uses in Rathkeale including Enterprise and Employment such as ABP Meats and Design Pro, financial and business institutions, both convenience and comparison retail units.

Limerick City and County Council have been proactively working to address vacancy and dereliction across Limerick and have been working with landowners throughout Rathkeale to address these issues. As outlined above the residential vacancy in Rathkeale was recorded as

9.48% in the Health Check Survey carried out in October 2021, commercial vacancy was significantly higher at 27%. Limerick City and County Council recently acquired the Ballywilliam Estate on the Ballingarry Road, which is an unfinished estate of 33 dwelling houses, in various stages of construction and the Council are currently assessing options to address the issues on site. The active land use management tools available to the Council are underpinned by Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended), the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, Residential Zoned land Tax and key Government policies such as Town Centre First, Our Rural Future, and Housing for All. The Dereliction, Vacancy and Re-Use Team of the Council engages property owners to advise on remedial measures and give guidance on schemes and supports available to bringing vacant and derelict homes back into productive use.

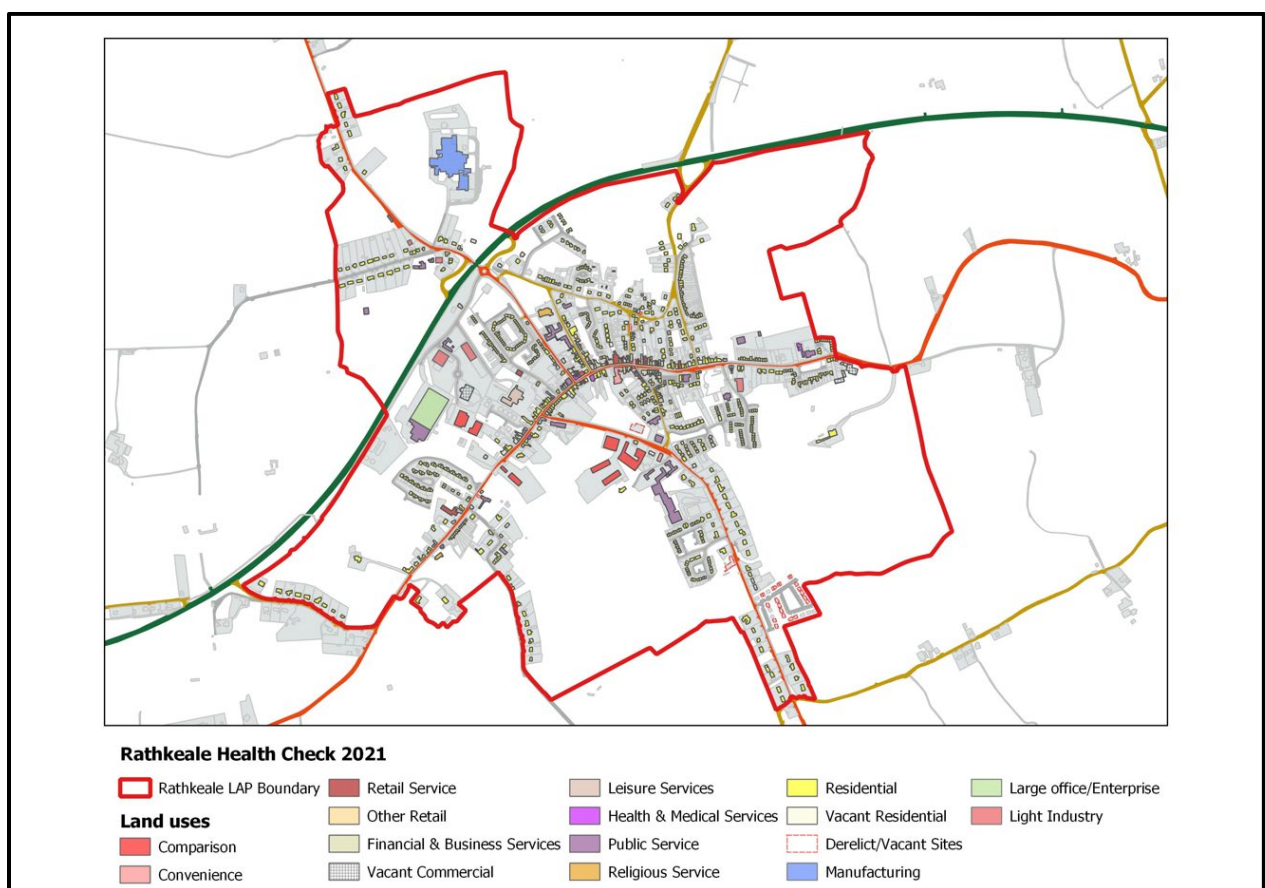


Figure 9: Town Centre Health Check for Rathkeale – October 2021

7.4 OPPORTUNITY AREAS

This Plan identifies five opportunity areas that have the potential for opportunities to sustain community vitality, a positive public realm experience, or have potential for adaptive re-use. The Council seeks to capitalise on the existing assets in these areas, be that natural biodiversity and amenity, location or the historic built heritage, including the vernacular streetscape.

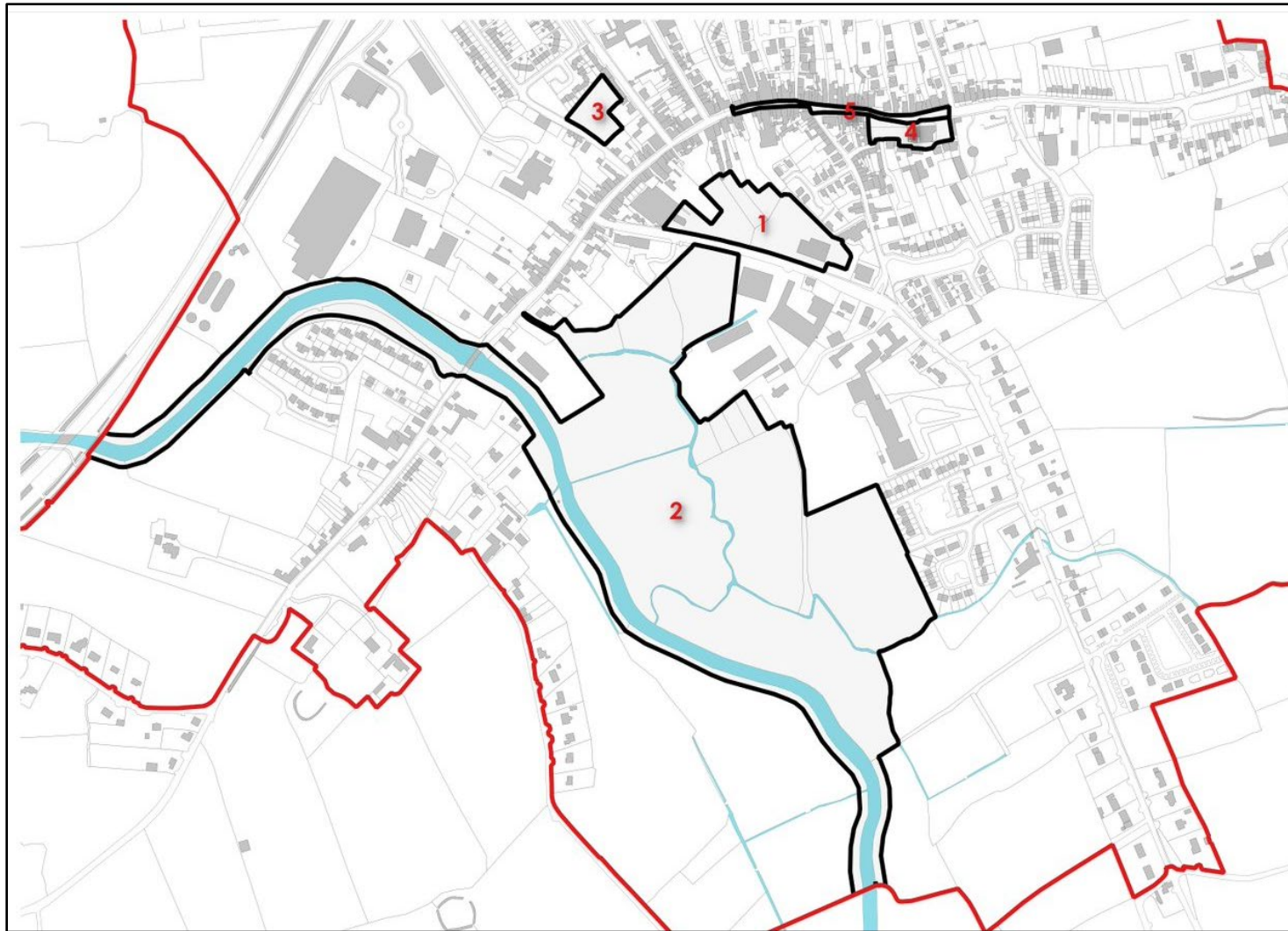

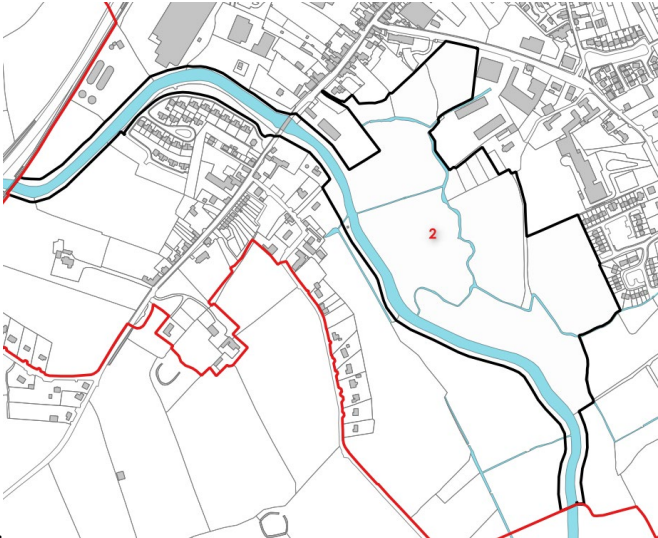



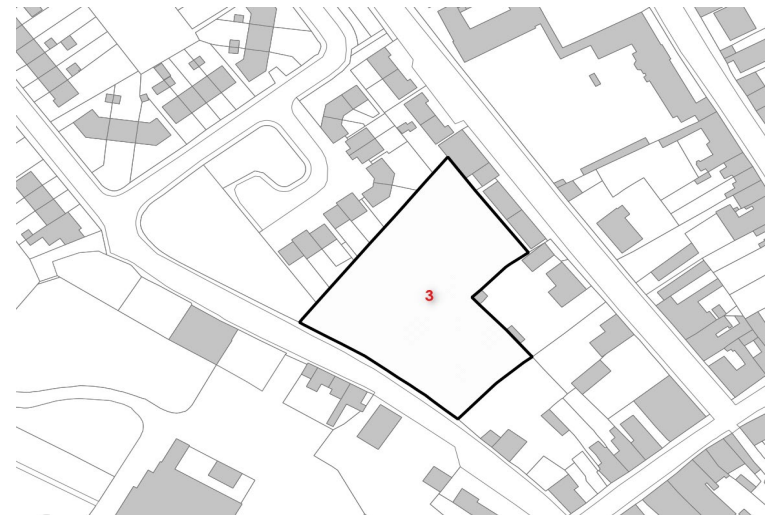
Figure 10: Opportunity Areas in Rathkeale

Opportunity Area	Comment
Area 1 – Former Mart, New Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoned Town Centre, whereby the objectives is to protect and enhance the character of the town centre providing retail, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the town centre. • Retail development shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 - 2028. • Future development will require co-operation of a number of landowners to prepare a cohesive masterplan for the entire site to be agreed with the Council. • Careful consideration will be expected of design including high quality public realm, connectivity between Main Street and New Line with provision for safe walking and cycling infrastructure. This site is a critical element in improving sustainable movement between the town centre and New Line including connectivity to Coláiste na Trócaire. • The design of the proposed development shall complement the Architectural Conservation Area on Main Street. • The site shall be subject to a site - specific flood risk assessment as part of any planning application. • Proposed development shall have regard to separation distances from Irish Water infrastructure, including the waste-water pumping station in the vicinity of the car park off Main Street. Early engagement with Irish Water is advised in the formulation of the proposed masterplan for the site. • Delivery of a new road linking Main Street and New Line is a critical piece of infrastructure to support the overall development of these lands and shall be accordance with the indicative line on the Amenity and Sustainable Transport Map. • A secondary access point may be considered to access the lower part of the Former Mart Site, subject to a masterplan for high quality development, which will not compromise the overall development of the Former Mart Site. 

Opportunity Area	Comments
Area 2 - Matrix Riverside Walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently a high value amenity, recreational, and ecological resource, a biodiversity corridor and an invaluable link between Lower Main Street, the Deel/Christopher Lynch Bridge and the Limerick Greenway. • Further development potential, includes blue green infrastructure, extension of walkway along the Deel to New Line/Ballingarry Road and Colaiste na Trocaire. • Suitable provision shall be made for a cycleway. • Proposals shall be designed in accordance with the principles of universal access for all. • All proposals shall enhance the biodiversity value of the area through suitable landscape and management measures. • Proposals shall maintain riverbank vegetation along watercourses and ensure protection of a 10m riparian buffer zone free from development. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-end;">   </div>

**Area 3 – Old
Road/Backlands of
New Road**

- Zoned New Residential with an objective to promote new residential development adjacent to the town centre.
- Cohesive masterplan for the entire site shall be prepared and agreed with the Local Authority.
- A mix of housing types and tenures required in accordance with the provisions of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.
- New building line to create a strong street frontage shall be created by the design with off-street parking to the rear.
- Sensitive innovative architectural design and high quality low maintenance materials may be appropriate, subject to referencing/respecting the ACA.



Area 4 – Market Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic built fabric that defines the Square has been depleted with inappropriate modern material losing some of Square’s original architectural integrity. The civic role is somewhat maintained by the fine eighteenth century former Court House functioning as a community centre. • An improved managed public space with an appropriate hard and soft landscaping, clear delineating of the parking, pedestrian space, seating and cycle parking could animate Upper Main Street, encouraging more pedestrian footfall in this area and restore the Square as a destination in the town centre with more productive uses. Pedestrian and cyclist movement and safety shall be a priority and with careful design there may be flexibility to accommodate public transport. The space has potential for stronger civic function, including community events and a local market. <div data-bbox="386 602 1199 1101" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="1241 623 1890 1101" data-label="Image"> </div>
Area 5 – North Main Street Streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers to the street frontage approximately 300m extending from Bank of Ireland on Main Street to the junction at Main Street/Roche's Row. This area is chosen considering the following; the range of business activity; the level of vacancy, the rich built heritage, the pedestrian links/laneways on north Main Street (Chapel Lane, Pound’s Lane and Peppard’s Lane), daily footfall, and the location connecting with the Square (Opportunity Area 4 above).

- Building re-use, design respecting the historical built heritage with improvements to the Square and Bank Place with development potential to 'lift' public realm in the town centre. Opportunities exists for improvements to the public realm, subject to a public realm plan and future funding.
- High quality traditional shop fronts in terms of proportions and construction materials/treatments expected of new development and re-instatement of historical built fabric and features desirable. In general, developers will be expected to retain in situ existing shopfronts and facades components, features or details that contribute to the building's historic or architectural significance. Signage should not dominate the building, be simple in design, proportional to the façade. It is imperative that the commerical heart to the town be supported by a range of uses in this area.



Area 6 – Former Bank of Ireland

- Located on Main Street with rear access to Thomas Street, the former Bank of Ireland building is of apparent architectural quality and occupies a prominent position on Main Street. It is listed on the Record of Protected Structures, reference number RPS 1568 and *on the NIAH list as a building of Regional importance. It consists of a five-bay three-storey building, built c. 1870, with a pitched slate roof, cut limestone chimneystack, cast-iron*

rainwater goods, carved limestone corbelled cornice to south (front) elevation and cut limestone walls with dressed flush limestone quoins.

- There is a unique opportunity to conserve and re-purpose this building and continue to provide a valuable service to the community. The site also offers an opportunity for redevelopment of the backlands with improved permeability.
- Various options to leverage funding for the re-purposing, refurbishment and conversion of the existing building and sensitive development of the back lands shall be explored. Potential uses could include an enterprise centre and remote working hub, boardroom facilities that would offer local people and visitors a vibrant workspace in the heart of the town. The development of residential units on the site would also create residential capacity within the town centre.



Table 2: Opportunity Areas for Public Realm and Place-making

7.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLACE MAKING - STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

Place-making Strategic Policy

To ensure that new development in the town centre and in particular the opportunity areas comprises the highest of qualitative and design standards, complimenting the existing historical built fabric, or natural heritage, sustaining Rathkeale as a town in which to live, work, invest in and do business.

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

RD 1: (a) Promote high quality place-making and public realm in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, including the Development Management Standards, any replacement thereof and any relevant Section 28 Guidance. All development shall demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.

(b) Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied in the town centre, and the opportunity areas identified in this Plan. The success of the public realm is high quality, easily maintained street furniture, soft landscaping. Drainage solutions should be designed on the principles of SuDS.

(c) Ensure development proposals have given proper consideration to the urban design criteria of site context, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking and detailed design.

(d) Promote and facilitate the re-use of under-utilised or vacant lands/buildings in Rathkeale through the active land management mechanisms under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended), the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (for vacant sites), Residential Zoned Land Tax and also guided by key Government policies such as Town Centre First, Our Rural Future, and Housing for All and any replacements thereof. The Council will engage with property owners to advise on remedial measures and give guidance on schemes and supports available to bringing vacant and derelict homes back into productive use.

8 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE, RECREATION AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

Possible community infrastructure referring to social, health, educational and recreational facilities are crucial to sustaining population growth, attracting inward investment, and ensuring Rathkeale is an attractive location to live and work. This Plan zones 8.08 hectares for education and community facilities, and 43.06 hectares for open space and recreation.

8.1 CONTEXT

National policy supports ongoing collaboration with regional stakeholders to ensure that social infrastructure such as education, health and community facilities are provided, and opportunities for social as well as physical regeneration are realised. The Local Authority is committed to the provision, upgrade and expansion of social infrastructure. The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) as administered by the Council has a role in developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent, integrated approach to local and community development in Limerick, through the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021 (LECP) and any subsequent update.

Higher-level spatial plans promote the 10 Minute Town Concept seeking to have all community facilities and services accessible within a 10 minute walk or cycle from homes or are accessible by public transport services connecting people to larger scaled settlements. The Council will implement this concept in Rathkeale considering distance of future development proposals to improve social infrastructure from the town centre, the location in relation to other complementary services, potential users, and access to public transport.



Figure 11: Rathkeale Carnegie Library

8.2 EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

The provision of good quality childcare and educational facilities is important to support the development of sustainable communities and facilitate economic development in Rathkeale. There are 2 childcare facilities located in Rathkeale (Beehive and St. Anne's Childcare), providing full-day care facilities, sessional services, preschool, crèche, and after school facilities. With respect to education, there are three primary schools and one secondary school in Rathkeale. There is also a Youth Space service in the town. Early school leaver training opportunities are provided in the town by Limerick Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) at Rathkeale

Riverside Training Workshop. Given the migratory nature of a substantial population in the town, childcare and educational services are under pressure from October to March annually to cater for increased demand. The Council consults with schools, the LCETB and the Department of Education and Skills to identify and develop sites for schools as necessary. In this regard, given the projected population growth to 2028, the plan includes the zoning of land for education in accordance with the requirements of the Department.

8.3 HEALTH

There is a HSE clinic with a primary healthcare team operating in Wolfesburgess East. The role of the Planning Authority with regard to healthcare is to ensure that (a) there is an adequate policy framework in place inclusive of the reservation of lands, should additional services be required and (b) healthcare facilities would be permitted subject to good planning practice.

8.4 LEISURE FACILITIES

Rathkeale has a range of community/leisure facilities, including a public library at New Line, sports clubs for gaelic games, soccer and boxing, a community playground at St. Mary's Park, close to the Palatine Museum and the Limerick Greenway. The Matrix Way River Walk provides a 0.5km connection between Deel Bridge and the Limerick Greenway – a substantial off-road walkway/cycleway to Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale. This walkway and part of the Limerick Greenway are part of the 3.1km designated Slí na Sláinte circuit to the west of the town centre.



Figure 12: Rathkeale Community Playground

8.5 AGE FRIENDLY LIMERICK

Limerick City and County Council adopted the *“Age Friendly Limerick 2015-2020”* strategy in 2015. The strategy commits to improving key areas of infrastructure, services, information and an overall social response to older person’s issues. The strategy aims to achieve measurable outcomes for older people that demonstrate improvement in their quality of life. The Council will also be informed by the National Positive Aging Strategy and any replacement document.

8.6 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

Community Infrastructure, Recreation and Open Space Strategic Policy

To support the provision of a broad range of high quality social/community, educational, healthcare and recreational facilities and infrastructure in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

CI O1: Ensure that planning applications for social infrastructure and recreational infrastructure demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.

CI O2: (a) Ensure provision of sufficient zoned lands to allow for expansion of existing and provision of new education, sports clubs, cultural facilities, healthcare facilities and community infrastructure in appropriate locations. The Council promotes multi-purpose spaces, and co-use of recreational facilities.

(b) Ensure that there are sufficient educational places to meet the needs generated by proposed developments, by requiring the completion of a Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment in line the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

(c) Ensure that childcare, primary and secondary education facilities are provided in tandem with new residential areas, at accessible locations which maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport.

(d) Facilitate the development of third-level outreach, vocational and lifelong learning facilities and digital capacity for distance learning.

CI O3: (a) Facilitate the development of walkways in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to overlook proposed walkways.

(b) Continue to develop Limerick Greenway walking and cycling route.

(c) Examine the feasibility of blue-way opportunities/potential along the River Deel in Rathkeale, subject to appropriate ecological assessment.

CI O4: (a) Protect existing open space by not permitting development which encroaches on open space, and protect semi-natural open space from inappropriate development and facilitate/support the provision of allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.

(b) Ensure new residential development provides high quality public open space and play-lots proportional to the number of residential units, having cognisance to

accessibility, safety, permeability, place-making and the requirements set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

(c) Support enhancement of the Rathkeale Community Playground and the park associated with the Augustinian Abbey without compromising the historical and archaeological integrity of National Monuments.

CI O5: (a) Support and facilitate development and expansion of health service infrastructure by the Health Services Executive, statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers at appropriate locations.

(b) Support the Healthy Limerick initiatives and the Age Friendly Limerick Strategy 2015 – 2020 and any subsequent replacement initiative/strategy to deliver recreation, environmental improvements, active travel and health infrastructure, as well as addressing the need for the development of independent living, sheltered housing, and respite accommodation for changing demographic needs.

9 KEY INFRASTRUCTURE

The sustainable social and economic growth of Rathkeale is dependent on the satisfactory provision of key infrastructure associated with the provision of services for new residential and commercial developments. Key infrastructural provision will support the economic development of Rathkeale and will to be undertaken in a plan-led manner.

9.1 CONTEXT

Rathkeale's infrastructure must keep pace with modern demands. In this regard, the provision of high quality infrastructure, energy networks and environmental services are fundamental to ensuring the long-term sustainable development of Rathkeale. The location of future development through the zoning of land and the objectives of the Plan, and the Council's assessment of planning applications, is informed by the capacity and availability of infrastructure.

9.2 WATER - SUPPLY, WASTE-WATER AND SURFACE WATER

Irish Water is responsible for the provision and operation of public water and wastewater services across the country. Irish Water and Limerick City and County Council work together to identify the water services required to support planned development in line with national and regional planning policies for inclusion in the Irish Water Capital Investment Plans.

The Kilcolman Reservoir supplies potable water to Rathkeale. There is an extensive aging pipe network within the town. There are seasonal difficulties associated with providing sustainable supply (pressure and flow) at times in the town. Satisfying demand can also be difficult during periods of extended hot dry weather. Irish Water recently announced the availability of funding through the Source Protection Programme for the augmentation of supply for the Rathkeale Water Resource, it is envisaged that this upgrade will enhance the Rathkeale Water Resource Zone.

In terms of waste-water, there are currently no issues regarding the capacity of the Rathkeale Waste Water Treatment Plan to accommodate the envisaged population increase to 2028.

Adequate storm water drainage and retention facilities are necessary to accommodate surface water runoff from existing and proposed developments. Rivers, streams and ditches containing watercourses are important green infrastructure corridors and habitats providing multi-functional eco-system services such as land drainage, recreational amenity, and clean/cool air and wildlife corridors. In the past, surface water management has tended to focus on intervention with the use of methods such as piping, culverting and installation of underground attenuation tanks. Using natural solutions to manage surface water can be cost effective and yield results that improve environmental quality. The Council will be informed by the Government guidance Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Run-off in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance, Department of Housing, Local

Government and Heritage, 2022. The use of natural drainage systems at surface level through utilisation of existing drains, natural slopes and existing ponds and natural wetland areas should be considered in the first instance. Approaches to manage surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution), biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity are collectively referred to as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). SuDS can contribute to surface water retention and a reduction in the potential for flooding by acting as natural drainage.

9.3 UTILITIES

Rathkeale is served by ESB Networks and Gas Networks. The higher-level spatial plans indicate there is significant potential to use renewable energy to achieve climate change emission reduction targets through electricity and gas networks. With costs actively driven down by innovation in solar, onshore and offshore wind in particular, the renewable industry is increasingly cost competitive. Low carbon technologies present an economic opportunity and green technology development is emerging as a major field of innovation and growth. The Council recognises the importance of developing renewable energy resources in the interest of delivering NZEB (Near Zero Energy Buildings) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework as outlined in Chapter 12 Climate Change of this Plan. Regard will also be had to the contents of the Limerick Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024, and its replacement strategy, particularly where reference is made to utilities and infrastructure.

9.4 SMART TECH

According to Census 2016 data, 39.5% of households have broadband internet services in Rathkeale. Two public Wi-Fi hotspots have been delivered by the Council in Rathkeale as part of the WiFi4EU initiative, at Rathkeale Community Centre and Giltenane's Pharmacy, offering speeds of up to 100Mbps. In addition, under the National Broadband Plan's Broadband Connection Point initiative, the Council has worked with partners National Broadband Ireland, the Department of Rural and Community Development and Vodafone, to install a 150Mbps radio broadband service at the Rathkeale Riverside Training Workshop, which is available for public use both inside and outside the premises. This variety of connectivity options will give a significant economic and social advantage to Rathkeale, as a place to set up online businesses, facilitate working from home and develop smart homes and smart buildings.

9.5 POLLUTION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Limerick City and County Council seeks to comply with European, national and regional policy in relation to control of pollution from air, noise and light and waste management to maintain and improve environmental infrastructure.

With respect to noise given the thresholds set out under the Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC), the Limerick Noise Action Plan 2018 – 2023 relates to road traffic noise from major roads only and does not relate to other noise sources such as industrial noise, neighbourhood noise etc. The Action Plan includes potential noise mitigation measures and policy measures to prevent exposure to excessive road noise and to protect quiet areas.

The Circular Economy and Ireland's Waste Management policy is part of the waste hierarchy established by the EU's Waste Framework Directive, which sets out to prioritise waste prevention, followed by re-use, recycling, recovery and finally disposal into landfill. The Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021 is a framework for the prevention and management of waste in a safe and sustainable manner. Refer to Section 7.7 Waste Management in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

9.6 KEY INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

Key Infrastructure Strategic Policy

Ensure adequate infrastructure capacity is in place to accommodate future development.

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

KI 01: Ensure all development proposals shall comply with the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 2022 - 2028, any replacement thereof and any relevant Section 28 Guidance. All key infrastructure shall demonstrate climate resilience measures to climate-proof critical infrastructure.

KI 02: Ensure compliance for infrastructure led-growth in accordance with the DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

KI 03: a) Support the implementation of the Irish Water Investment Plans.
b) Ensure adequate wastewater infrastructure is available to cater for existing and proposed development, in collaboration with Irish Water, avoiding any deterioration in the quality of receiving waters and ensuring discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

KI 04: a) Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater, including reducing the discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters in accordance with the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2012-2027 (DHPLG) and associated Programme of Measures.
b) Require all planning applications to include surface water design calculations to establish the suitability of drainage between the site and the outfall point;

c) Require all new developments to include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to control surface water outfall and protect water quality, in line with the requirements set out under Development Management standards in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

- KI O6:**
- a) Support the providers of national gas and electricity grid infrastructure by safeguarding existing infrastructure from encroachment by development that might compromise the efficiency of the networks.
 - b) Facilitate cooperation between utility and service providers to ensure their networks are resilient to the impacts of climate change, both in terms of design and ongoing maintenance.
 - c) Facilitate improvement of telecommunications, broadband, electricity (including renewables) and gas networks infrastructure on an open access basis subject to safety requirements, proper planning and sustainable development.
 - d) Seek the undergrounding of all utility cables.
 - e) Facilitate delivery of E-Charge Points for electric vehicles at suitable locations and in new developments in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

- KI O7:**
- a) Promote the use of renewable energy technologies and sources in existing and proposed developments, subject to consideration of environmental, conservation, residential and visual amenity.
 - b) Support the development of Smart Homes and Smart Buildings and facilitate the foundation for Smart Limerick in accordance with the Limerick Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020 and any subsequent replacement strategy.

10 SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

National planning policy and national transport policy emphasises the need for the efficient movement of people and goods, through integrated multi-modal, accessible and affordable transport networks. These high quality networks support competitiveness, economic progress, balanced regional development, social cohesion and equal access to many opportunities, for business and citizens.

Government policy promotes active travel as a mode of citizen movement, particularly for commuting as a means to reduce the reliance on the private car in favour of cycling, walking, and integration with other travel modes such as car-pooling and public transport. Consequent benefits, include healthier lifestyles, improved air quality, and a low carbon society to address climate change.

Compact settlements are conducive to the sustaining the critical mass of population or employees to justify infrastructural investment in transport networks. Central to this is the application of the 10 Minute Town Concept whereby all community services, employment opportunities and residences are within a 10 minute walking distance of residential areas, thereby supported by sustainable transport. A fundamental role of a local area plan is to guide the location of land uses through the integration of land use planning with transportation. This approach supports significant improvements in the quality of life, transport network efficiency, including smart vehicles and electrification of the national fleet and private vehicles (Electric Vehicle Policy Pathway, 2021, Dept. of Transport), and active travel as the preferable choice of the daily commute to work or education.

10.1 INTEGRATION OF LAND USE, TRANSPORT AND SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

Rathkeale is readily accessible by the national and regional road network - N21 Limerick to Tralee, R523 Listowel/to Ratheale, R534 with access to the N69 Limerick – Foynes, and R518 Askeaton - Kilmallock. The Local Authority is committed to the protection of the capacity of the national and regional road network and shall have regard to all relevant Government guidance including DoECLG “Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines” (DoECLG, 2012) in the carrying out of its functions. Due regard shall be taken in the carrying out of its statutory functions, to ensure development does not prejudice the future development or impair the capacity of the planned core network under TEN-T , which includes the Foynes to Limerick Road (including Adare Bypass) project.

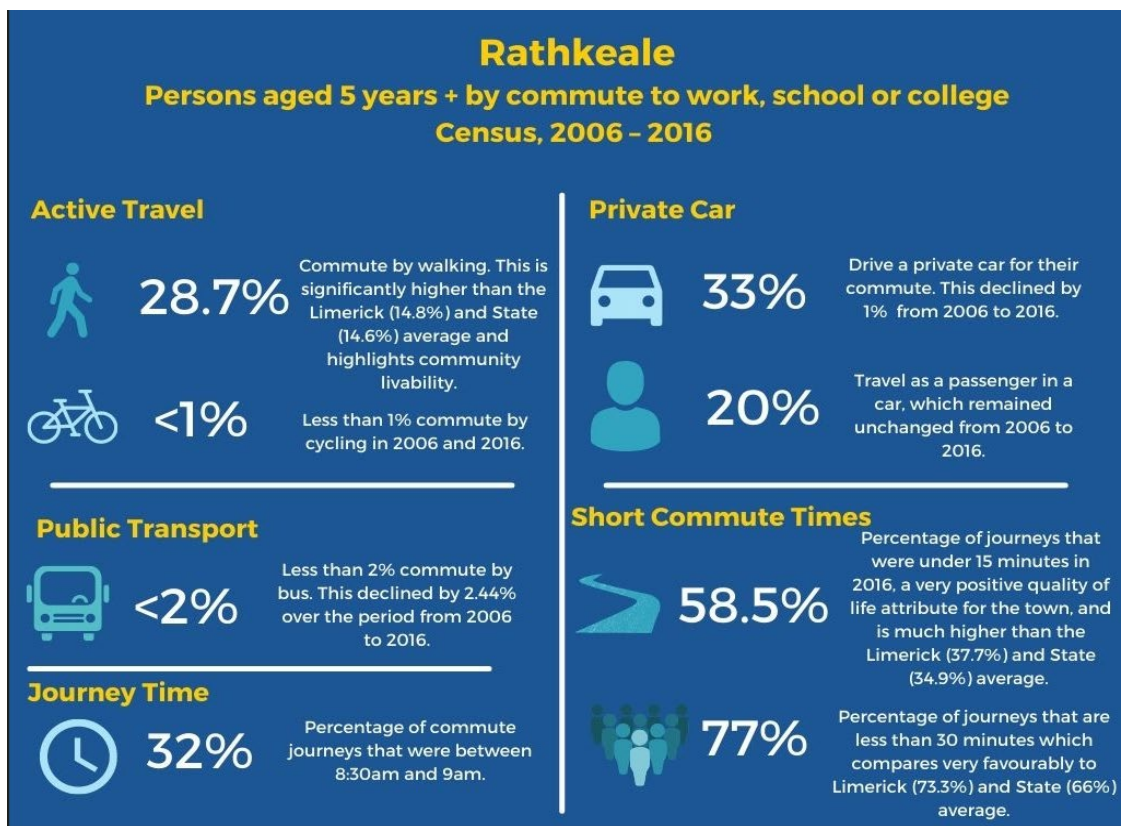
Public transport in Rathkeale consists of four return services on weekdays by Bus Eireann to Limerick City at two bus stops at Lower Main Street/Lynch Bridge. A Transport for Ireland (TFI) Local Link services Rathkeale providing a local public transport link for the hinterland of the town.

In line with national transport and planning policy, the Council welcomes any improvements to the transport networks as such initiatives to improve accessibility for Rathkeale's citizens.

Rathkeale benefits from the development of the off-road 40km walkway/cycleway known as the Limerick Greenway – a former railway line re-purposed for active mobility, tourism and recreation. Part of the Limerick Greenway is located within the LAP boundary and provides further opportunities for active mobility by walking and cycling with its connections to Newcastle West and future plans to advance connectivity to Adare and Limerick City by the Limerick Greenway.

10.2 MODAL SHIFT AND TARGETS

In order to achieve more sustainable travel patterns, a significant focus on reducing car dependency and increasing permeability is required as promoted by higher-level spatial plans. These behavioural changes will contribute to healthier lifestyles, lower greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and increase footfall through the town. Vehicles often dominate the streets and vehicle movement can be detrimental to vibrancy and livability of the town, depleting public realm and creating safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists. Redesigning our streets to prioritise walking, cycling and other non-motorised wheel-based modes is just one crucial aspect of enabling and creating a modal shift from the private car for short journeys around the town.



According to the 2016 Census of Anonymised Records (POWSCAR) the daytime working population working in Rathkeale is 769 persons and of these 622 people (or 80.88%) commute into the town. These primarily commute into town by car.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 sets the following targets for the modal shift for Level 3 Settlements, including Rathkeale.

Settlement	Walk	Cycle	Public Transport
Settlement Levels 3-6/Rural Areas (All Work/Education Trips)	15%	5%	12%

Table 3: Mode Shift Targets for commute to work, school or college, by 2028

The Council will work closely with other relevant agencies and stakeholders, including the NTA to support modal shift targets as above.

10.3 SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

Sustainable Mobility and Transport Strategic Policy

To promote and facilitate a sustainable development of a modern sustainable mobility and transport network in Rathkeale in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

TR 01: (a) Encourage, promote and facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport in all developments.
 (b) Support and facilitate implementation of an integrated, multi-modal and accessible public transport network in Rathkeale and its hinterland, including any investment in the public transport by service providers in Rathkeale.
 (c) All new roads shall incorporate segregated cycle tracks and walkways designed in accordance with the National Cycle Manual.

TR 02: Improve and seek investment for safe and direct pedestrian and cycleway link throughout the town, including connecting to the Limerick Greenway and a pedestrian and cycle connection across the River Deel to improve connectivity to the town centre and existing services including schools and other community facilities.

TR 03:

(a) Protect the capacity of the national road and regional road network from inappropriate development, having regard to all relevant Government guidance including “Spatial

Planning and National Roads Guidelines” (DoECLG, 2012) and ensure development does not compromise the performance of the network or future improvements to network. Any future development proposals for the lands zoned Enterprise and Employment will require a Traffic and Transport Assessment to assess the impact of the proposal on the road network. The costs of the mitigation measures shall be borne by the developer.

- (b) Prohibit advertising signage adjacent to the national road and regional road networks
- (c) Ensure all developments protect and safeguard the capacity and efficiency of the drainage regimes of the national road, regional and local network.
- (d) Seek opportunities to improve mobility and connectivity in Rathkeale, including the former Mart Site to provide improved connectivity between Main Street and New Line. Any proposed development shall provide for safe vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist movement. High quality public realm will be expected of this town centre redevelopment.
- (e) Support the progression of the Foynes to Limerick Road (including Adare Bypass) Project to provide connectivity between Foynes Port and the motorway network.

TR 04: Facilitate and implement school streets and school zones, including slow zones around schools, and promote/facilitate active travel options for school children to reduce the health and safety risks associated with traffic congestion, pollution and inactive lifestyles. This includes the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Programme in partnership with the NTA and Green-Schools as a response to support schools to encourage walking and cycling as the commute to schools.

TR 05: Collaborate with transport providers to improve connectivity with the wider public transport fleet by facilitating necessary infrastructure in the town as required by the appropriate transport agency.

TR 06: Ensure that any development of lands at Monk’s Hill for residential purposes is subject to a detailed acoustic assessment and that the dwellings are designed to incorporate appropriate noise and environmental mitigation, as deemed necessary.

11 ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND BLUE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

PART A ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Rathkeale's architectural and archaeological heritage is a key and distinctive asset - a unique resource representing an irreplaceable expression of the town's civic and administrative importance. There is evidence of Neolithic society in Rathkeale, a monastic settlement, a Desmond fortress castle and Rathkeale's function as an important market town in its agricultural hinterland. Reuse of existing historical buildings has potential to address vacancy, dereliction, enhance public realm and place-making. Government policy seeks to ensure that heritage-led regeneration is a key component of Town Centres First policy. This plan seeks to protect, preserve and enhance the architectural and archaeological heritage for the benefit of future generation as well as safeguarding the continued and sustainable use of this historic built fabric.

11.1 CONTEXT

Rathkeale is notably rich in historic and archaeological remains, both above and below ground, many are protected under planning and/or National Monuments legislation. In this regard, the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Sites and Monuments Record under the provisions of Section 12(1) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 are the primary designation mechanisms for protecting the assets of our built heritage. This Plan is informed by national policy including Draft Heritage Ireland 2030, the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for the Built and Archaeological Heritage, 2019, the Built Vernacular Strategy, 2021 and the pending National Policy on Architecture.

11.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

There are 18 archaeological structures protected as listed in the Sites and Monuments Record located in Rathkeale. These include a castle/tower house, burial grounds and barrow, a ringfort, standing stone, church, abbey, enclosures, memorial stones, and the historic town (Abbeylands, English Tenements, Enniscoush and Rathkeale). Evidence that survives in and around these sites is extremely valuable. Every step to preserve it or at a minimum to recover it, must be taken. The Local Authority will consult with the Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and other Statutory Consultees when considering applications for planning permission for development on, or in the vicinity of archaeological sites and/or monuments. Refer to Map 5 in Appendix 1 of this LAP.

Under the provisions of the National Monuments Act Section 12, 1994 Amendment, a person proposing any works (including exempted development) 'at or in relation to such a monument' must give two months' notice to the National Monuments Service. As sites continue to be discovered, some of those found subsequent to the publication (1997) have been included in the Historic Environment Viewer, which is available on the website. There are certain sites in State ownership or guardianship, or have been served with temporary preservation orders. Under the 2004 Amendment to the National Monuments Act any of these sites or sites deemed National Monuments in the care or guardianship of the Local Authority will require Ministerial Consent for works in their vicinity.



Figure 14: Religious House, Abbeylands
LI029-031006 Sites and Monuments Record

11.3 ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

11.3.1 Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and the National Inventory of Architectural heritage.

Limerick City and County Council is obliged to compile and maintain a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) under the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Under the Act, Local Authorities objectives for the protection of structures, or parts of structures, of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest are a mandatory inclusion in a development plan. There are 50 structures listed on the Record of Protected Structures in Rathkeale. Refer to Appendix 3. The complete list for Limerick City and County is available as Volume 3 of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. A Protected Structure, unless otherwise stated, includes the interior of the structure, the land lying within the curtilage of the structure, and other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors. The protection also extends to boundary treatments. The RPS is a dynamic record, subject to revision and addition. This diversity of structures includes railway buildings, religious buildings, public administrative/civic buildings, the buildings and terraces of the traditional vernacular streetscape and shopfronts, stonewalls, a bridge and medieval structures. Owners and/or occupiers of a protected structure must ensure that the structure or any element of it is not endangered. Endangering a structure can mean either directly or indirectly damaging any element of the structure or neglecting the structure to the extent that it is damaged. When considering works including minor works to a Protected Structure you are advised to contact the Conservation Officer to ascertain obligations in terms of the proposed development to avoid damage to the integrity of the historical built fabric of the structure. Some minor works while

exempt from planning permission in general circumstances do not apply to Protected Structures.

Useful resources when undertaking works on Protected Structures and within their curtilage can be found in the planning leaflets series available on-line on opr.ie, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Advice Series on buildingsofireland.ie, and the advice and guidance on traditional building skills on www.heritagecouncil.ie



Figure 15: The Former Courthouse,
Protected Structure (RPS 1552)

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) survey of Rathkeale is available online at www.buildingsofireland.ie. Many NIAH structures are also Protected Structures. As with Protected Structures if considering works, including minor works on a NIAH listed building you are advised to contact the Conservation Office for technical advice. There are 35 structures located in Rathkeale listed on the NIAH.



Figure 16: NIAH 21831005 and RPS 1583
Holy Trinity Church

11.3.2 Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or townscape of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures. The designation is a driver for sustainable and sensitive development, the aim of which is not “*preservation*” but managed development that enhances the character and heritage of the area.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 designates an ACA in Rathkeale town centre. Refer to Volume 3, ACA 22 in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and Map 4 in Appendix 1 of this plan. There are sixteen NIAH structures deemed to be regionally important in terms of artistic and architectural merit and thirty-five Protected Structures in the ACA. The architectural character of this area includes a notable presence of ornate decorative details on facades evident on the modest houses on Thomas Street with ornate door cases, to the more elaborate embellishment of carvings around openings (Bank of Ireland), on traditional shopfronts and former administrative buildings.



Figure 17: Part of ACA on Main Street, Rathkeale

The aesthetic attention given to the front façades of many of these buildings enlivens the streetscape suggesting a sense of grandeur in the past in this market town and its past industry, which involved the linen trade in the eighteenth century. Notable structures include the former Court House, bank buildings, the many Protected Structures/ NIAH structures and the former cinema built in an early 20th century Art Deco style designed. Any proposed contemporary design in the ACA should complement the historic character of the ACA, and should be informed by the historic setting in terms of scale and design. High quality architectural design will add to the built heritage and complement the receiving historic environment.

11.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE STRATEGIC POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

Archaeological and Architectural Heritage Strategic Policy

To protect, conserve and manage the archaeological, architectural and built heritage of Rathkeale, and promote sensitive, appropriate and sustainable development and re-use of older historic built fabric in accordance with Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

HE O1 (a) Seek the preservation of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest. This includes all the sites listed on the Sites and Monuments Record as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.

(b) Protect and preserve all sites and features of historical interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Sites and Monuments Record, this includes all sites that may be discovered during the course of excavation or construction.

(c) Protect and preserve all underwater, riverine archaeological sites.

(d) Ensure that any proposed development shall not have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument or which is seriously injurious to its cultural or educational value.

(c) The area of a monument and the associated buffer area shall not be included as part of the open space requirement demanded of a specific development, but should be additional to the required open spaces; and

(d) If appropriate, where such a monument lies within a development, a conservation and/or management plan for that monument shall be submitted as part of the landscape plan for the proposal.

(e) Promote awareness of the appropriate adaption of archaeological heritage to climate change as per Government policy 'Built and Archaeological Heritage – Climate Change Sectoral Adaption Plan', 2019 Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Draft Heritage 2030, and Limerick Climate Adaption Strategy 2019 – 2024 and higher level spatial plans.

Architectural Heritage:

HE O2: (a) Positively consider proposals to improve, alter, extend or change the use of Protected Structures and attendant grounds so as to render them viable for modern use, subject to demonstration by a suitably qualified Conservation Architect or other relevant expert that the structure, character, appearance and setting will not be adversely affected and, suitable design, materials and construction methods will be utilised in accordance with best conservation practice and relevant heritage legislation.

(b) Promote awareness of the appropriate adaption of built heritage to climate change as per Government Draft Heritage Ireland 2030, the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for the Built and Archaeological Heritage, 2019, the Built Vernacular Strategy, 2021, the pending National Policy on Architecture, the Limerick Climate Adaption Strategy 2019 – 2024 and higher-level spatial plans.

HE O3: Support the re-introduction of traditional features on Protected Structures where there is evidence that such features (e.g. window styles, finishes etc.) previously existed.

HE O4: Strongly resist the demolition of Protected Structures, in whole or in part, the removal or modification of features of architectural importance, and design element that would adversely affect the character or setting of a Protected Structure, unless exceptional circumstances can be clearly demonstrated by a suitably qualified professional.

HE 05: Ensure the design of any development in the Architectural Conservation Area, including any changes of use of an existing building, should preserve and/ or enhance the character and appearance of the Architectural Conservation Area as a whole.

PART B NATURAL HERITAGE, BIODIVERSITY AND BLUE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Natural Heritage has a role to play in nurturing a rich, diverse biodiversity, good water and environmental quality, healthy living and well-being, recreational opportunities, with potential tourism opportunities in Rathkeale, and fosters a positive image of Rathkeale. The River Deel provides potential for blue-way development to improve access to the river. Aligned to Government policy and higher-level spatial plans this LAP seeks to protect, preserve and enhance the natural heritage for the benefit of future generation as well as safeguarding the continued and sustainable use of this asset.

11.5 CONTEXT

Rathkeale is located on the banks of the River Deel as it flows to the Shannon Estuary located circa 13km to the north of the town. Recent developments have included the provision of a riverside walk from the Lynch Bridge to the Limerick Greenway providing a valuable recreational, mobility, and blue green biodiversity corridor. Similarly, the linking of the walkway with the Limerick Greenway provides a connected biodiversity green corridor sustaining an improved natural environment in the town providing biodiversity and species establishment/movement along the corridors.



Figure 18: Matrix Walkway

11.6 NATURAL HERITAGE AND EUROPEAN DESIGNATED SITES

Natura 2000 is a European network of important ecological sites designated under the EU Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive. There are no Natura sites within the town. In the wider hinterland of Rathkeale, the Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) site is approximately 13 km to the north west of the town. The Askeaton Fen Complex (SAC site 002279) is 3.5km to the north of the town, while the Curraghchase woodlands (00174) lie 6.5km to the north-east of Rathkeale. This LAP has been drawn up to ensure that land uses, proposed developments and effects arising from permissions based upon this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the

integrity of Natura sites, having regard to their conservation objectives. Refer to Environmental Reports accompanying this Plan.

11.7 BLUE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY

Blue-green infrastructure refers to the use of blue elements such as rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, and green elements, such as trees, forests, fields and parks, in urban and land-use planning.

This infrastructure uses natural processes such as filtration or absorption to address water and air quality. It has many functions, including sustaining natural habits in settlements, surface water treatment, rain water harvesting, flooding, climate change – (adaption, mitigation, and resilience), recreation/amenity, health in terms of access to nature and active life, place-making and contributes to place identity in the town. In some instances green and blue infrastructure can exist side by side in a complementary relationship such as the River Deel, its' banks and mature trees. This Plan promotes networks of green blue infrastructure as aligned with higher-level plans including the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

The following is a brief inventory of Blue Green Infrastructure in Rathkeale.

Feature	Local name	Condition	Asset Value
River Deel and the Matrix Walk	As indicated	Good	Access at Deel Bridge/Lynch Bridge in town centre. A riverside walk links to the Limerick Greenway and facilitates a looped walk (Slí an Sláinte) in the town. Mature trees on pathway – biodiversity corridor, connectivity, active lifestyles.
Limerick Greenway	Limerick Greenway former Great Southern Trail	Extends to the Kerry border. In good condition. It is subject to regular maintenance.	Tarmac, surfaced, off-road walkway and cycleway connecting with Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale, having regional level amenity with further potential of connectivity to Limerick City - biodiversity corridor, connectivity,

			active lifestyle and tourism potential.
Playground	Rathkeale Community Playground	In excellent condition due to its recent construction. Further opportunities for enhancement, biodiversity and well-being.	Constructed since the last plan was adopted – social interaction, active lifestyle.
Potential future extension to Limerick Greenway	Ballingarrane extension	Not yet constructed.	This extension would connect to the old Limerick to Foynes line to the north of Rathkeale - biodiversity corridor, connectivity, active lifestyle and tourism potential.
Park associated with Abbey	Abbeylands	Well maintained open space with seating and some landscaping in archaeological sensitive area	Potential opportunities for diversifying biodiversity, public realm, active lifestyle, capitalising on existing community facility (Rathkeale Youthreach).
Open Space and Recreation Zoning	The objective is to protect, provide for and improve open space, active and passive recreational amenities.	Some of this is in ecologically sensitive areas such as flood plains.	It is recommended only those areas which are not ecologically sensitive are those that would be developed for amenity use - Rathkeale - biodiversity corridor, connectivity, active lifestyle.
Drains, channels temporary water courses	None	Partially blocked by emergent vegetation	Part of the open space designation which is part of the Deel floodplain in the plan area - local ecological value.

Table 4: Inventory of Blue Green Infrastructure

Open spaces and residential developments can be enriched by retaining and enhancing existing natural features, as well as introducing new habitats. The retention and enhancement of existing natural features, such as hedgerows, ditches and streams offers potential to introduce SuDS measures, and to retain wildlife corridors through new developments. The addition of surface attenuation ponds, green roofs and living walls has the potential to transform an environment into one that offers significant opportunities for wildlife. The Local Authority aims to ensure access to all areas of public space is maximised, and major spaces are linked via amenable pedestrian routes

A wide diversity of species, habitats, ecosystems and landscapes make up the biodiversity of Rathkeale. New development, construction materials and transport over the past few decades have contributed to the loss and fragmentation of biodiversity in areas that have undergone significant development. However, Rathkeale has areas of rich natural habitat, and areas with opportunities to improve biodiversity. Connected green spaces provide the greatest benefit to biodiversity in an urban context. In this regard, there is an opportunity to recognise the key conservation value role the Deel River plays in the town's biodiversity. Existing trees and hedgerows are important features supporting biodiversity and should be carefully considered in any planning application. Applications may be requested to provide or retain hedgerows where possible, landscaped areas, retention or planting of trees and preservation of natural features etc. Suitable planting new edge or buffer treatments will be encouraged as part of new developments. Management of invasive species prior to and during construction may also be requested of proposed developments in the interest of proper management of the risk of further depletion of biodiversity on site and when removed or treated on or off site, including its removal from the location.

11.8 NATURAL HERITAGE, BIODIVERSITY AND GREEN BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

Natural Heritage Strategic Policy

To safeguard the biodiversity, natural heritage and blue green assets of Rathkeale, in accordance with the policies of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

HE O6: Protect, conserve and enhance natural heritage sites, Natura 2000 designated conservation sites and non-designated habitats, species and areas of national and local importance, including aquatic habitats and species, and promote the sustainable management of ecological networks in co-operation and consultation with the relevant statutory authorities. *No projects which will be reasonably likely to give rise to significant adverse direct or indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura*

2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives arising from reduction in species diversity, shall be permitted on the basis of this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).

HE O7: (a) Require new infrastructure and development to demonstrate at design stage sufficient measures to address conservation of biodiversity, including permeability for wildlife and movement of species. Any barrier to movement of wildlife and aquatic life should be avoided.

(b) Protect existing open space from inappropriate development and encroachment.

(c) Maintain riverbank vegetation along watercourses and ensure protection of a 10m riparian buffer zone on greenfield sites and maintain free from development. Proposals shall have cognisance to the contents of the Inland Fisheries Ireland document "Planning for Watercourses in Urban Environments".

(e) Require the planting of native trees, hedgerows and vegetation and the creation of new habitats in all new developments and public realm projects.

HE O8: (a) Facilitate the work of agencies redressing the issue of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species.

(b) Have cognisance to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 – 2025 and any subsequent plans when assessing landscaping proposals. Proposals that actively includes pollinator friendly measures will be encouraged.

(c) Require the provision of alternative roosting or settlement facilities for species, such as bird or bat boxes, swift boxes, artificial holts, or other artificially created habitats in proposed developments, where considered appropriate.

(d) Require all developments where there are species of conservation concern, to submit an ecological assessment of the effects of the development on the site and nearby designated sites, outlining appropriate mitigation measures, and establishing, in particular, the presence or absence of the following species: Otter, badger, bats, lamprey and protected plant species such as the Triangular Club Rush, Opposite Leaved Pond Weed.

HE O9: Protect environmental quality in Rathkeale through the implementation of European, National and Regional policy and legislation relating to air quality, greenhouse gases, climate change, light pollution, noise pollution and waste management.

HE O10: Promote the concept of blue green infrastructure and linked green/open spaces as a means to mitigate and adapt to climate change, reduce flood risk, improve

habitat/biodiversity links/corridors, improve watercourse quality to sustain high quality robust ecosystems.

12 CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Climate change is one of the biggest issues facing Ireland today effecting environmental quality, health, business, and transport. Developments can exacerbate the problems of climate change including flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off, altering watercourses and removing floodplain storage. Means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants, and mitigation measures to reduce the frequency of the extreme weather events such as rainfall, dry spells, strong winds, heavy snowfalls are necessary to ensure future society, business, and infrastructure are resilient to climate change.

12.1 CONTEXT

The Climate Action Plan (2021), National Mitigation Plan (2017) and National Adaptation Framework (2018) represent a renewed Government ambition that climate action requires a multi-sectoral effort nationally, regionally and locally. The Council has adopted a Climate Change and Adaption Strategy 2019-2024 to outline actions within the Council's remit to address climate change issues such a flooding and the reduction of greenhouse gases. This LAP seeks to deliver and build on the objectives of the Climate Change and Adaption Strategy as they relate to Rathkeale.

12.2 CLIMATE ACTION AND PLANNING

Climate Action comprises two elements – (1) Adaptation and; (2) Mitigation. Adaptation is the efforts to manage the risks and impacts associated with existing or anticipated impacts of climate change, while mitigation is the efforts to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, and reduces the severity of future climate change impacts.

Through the policies and objectives set out in the NPF and RSES, Climate Adaptation and Mitigation measures are embedded in the plan-making process. The Local Area Plan has been prepared with the purpose of integrating and implementing these policies and provisions where relevant. The approach to density, compact settlement, land use, design and movement is consistent with broader measures to address climate change in the areas of sustainable travel, green infrastructure, flood risk adaption and renewable energy sources, amongst others. Blue Green infrastructure can be used as a tool to alleviate some of the negative impacts of climate change and in some ways contribute to the prevention or slowing down this change. Mitigation



measures include planting of trees, hedgerows and woodlands to clean air and assist with carbon sequestration, and the construction of surface water retention features such as ponds, lakes, or swales. The LAP can help mitigate further impact on the environment through ensuring that future development takes cognisance of the natural elements of sites and incorporates them within the design of buildings and neighbourhoods, connecting them into the wider blue green infrastructure network. Where there are no natural site features present, the potential for a landscaping plan to re-establish blue green features/infrastructure should be prepared.

The design, construction and operation of new buildings has a significant role to play in reducing energy demand and increasing energy efficiency into the future. The integration of energy efficiencies into the life cycle of all new residential and non-residential buildings, from the neighbourhood, street and individual building scale, can result in significant savings at the local level. Similarly, the concept of smart technology, construction techniques, the Circular Economy, new energy and transport solutions have critical roles in transitioning to a low carbon society to adapt and mitigate the impact of climate change.

12.3 FLOOD RISK AND PLANNING

To comply with the EU Floods Directive and to align with national guidance ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines’, 2009, this LAP has taken flood risk into consideration when determining land use zoning and objectives. The Plan is also informed by the OPW – the government organisation leading flood risk management and responsible for flood relief investment nationally.

The Council ensures that proper flood risk identification, assessment and avoidance are integrated with the planning system to safeguard the future sustainable development of Rathkeale. Refer to the Strategic Environmental Screening, Appropriate Assessment and Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment report that accompanies this LAP. The land use zoning of this LAP has been determined by applying the principles of the 2009 Guideline that: (a) flood risk is avoided where possible; (b) where avoidance is not possible, less vulnerable uses have been substituted for more vulnerable ones, and; (c) risk is mitigated and managed where avoidance and substitution are not possible.

12.4 CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOODING STRATEGIC POLICY AND OBJECTIVE

Climate Change and Flooding Strategic Policy

To address climate action and flood risk in Rathkeale in accordance with the provision of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Objectives: It is the objective of the Council to:

CC O1: Ensure all development proposals shall have regard to the Limerick Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2019), any revised or forthcoming adaptation, mitigation or climate action strategies in the formulation of any plans and when assessing planning application for future developments.

CC O2: Promote the use of smart climate change, energy and carbon off-setting solutions in new developments. In the cases of large industrial, commercial or newly constructed public buildings, the incorporation of renewable technologies, such as solar energy in the design will be encouraged, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria. The Council encourages the NZEB standard of building or equivalent for all new development and the use of blue green infrastructure as a mechanism for surface water management and improving public realm.

CC O3: (a) Manage flood risk in accordance with the requirements of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities”, DECLG and OPW (2009) and any revisions thereof and consider the potential impacts of climate change in the application of these guidelines.

(b) Require applications in areas at risk of flooding to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment. All flood risk assessments should have regard to ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management’ (DEHLG and OPW, Nov.2009) as revised by Circular PL 2/2014, national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the River Shannon Catchment Flood Risk and Management Plan.

(c) Minimise flood risk arising from pluvial (surface water) flooding in Rathkeale by promoting the use of natural flood risk management measures including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), minimising extent of hard surface/paving, and smart solutions such as innovative green infrastructure.

(d) Demonstrate that future development will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow paths, where compensatory storage / storm water retention measures shall be provided on site.

(e) Ensure that future development in lands identified as being at flood risk, is generally limited to minor developments. On lands identified as liable to flooding, (Flood Zones A and B) all residential development or other highly vulnerable uses should be limited to minor development as per Circular PL 2/2014 or restricted to water compatible type development.

CC O4: (a) Support and co-operate with the OPW in delivering the Rathkeale Flood Relief Scheme and ensure that future development proposals shall not impede the progression of this Flood Relief Scheme.

(b) Support delivery of projects to reduce surface water and groundwater flood risk.

(c) Preserve riparian strips of 10m on the banks of the River Deel and other watercourses as deemed appropriate free of development ensuring adequate width to permit access for river maintenance.

13 LAND USE ZONING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of land use zoning is to generally indicate the planning control objectives for lands within the settlement boundary of Rathkeale. The overarching policies and objectives of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 2022 - 2028 and any replacement thereof apply, as does the policies and objectives of this Local Area Plan. All development requiring planning permission must adhere to the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 2022 - 2028, or any replacement thereof. All proposed developments will be screened on a case-by-case basis for Environmental Impact Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment.

13.1 LAND USE ZONING

There are 10 land use categories in this Plan differentiated by colour. Refer to Map 1 Land Use Zoning. The purpose of each land use is outlined in Table 6 below. Appendix 1 contains the zoning matrix, which should be read together with Map 1. The matrix lists the land uses most commonly encountered, and acts as a general guideline. The list is not exhaustive.

Land Use Zoning	Objective and Purpose
Town Centre	<p>Objective: To protect, consolidate and facilitate the development of Rathkeale’s commercial, retail, educational, leisure, residential, social and community uses and facilities.</p> <p>Purpose: To consolidate Rathkeale’s Town Centre through densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure, residential uses and urban streets, while delivering a high-quality urban environment, which will enhance the quality of life of residents, visitors and workers alike. The zone will strengthen retail provision in accordance with the Retail Strategy for the County Limerick, emphasise urban conservation, ensure priority for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, while minimising the impact of private car-based traffic and enhancing the existing urban fabric.</p>
Existing Residential	<p>Objective: <i>To provide for residential development, protect and improve existing residential amenity.</i></p> <p>Purpose: This zoning reflects established housing areas. Existing residential amenity will be protected while allowing appropriate infill development. The quality of the area will be enhanced with associated open space, community uses and where an acceptable standard of amenity can be maintained, a limited range of other uses that support the overall residential function of the area, such as schools, crèches, doctor’s surgeries, playing fields etc.</p>
New Residential	<p>Objective: To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of social and physical infrastructure.</p> <p>Purpose: This zone is intended primarily for new high quality housing development, including the provision of high quality, professionally managed and purpose built third-level student accommodation. The quality and mix of residential areas and the servicing of lands will be a priority to support balanced communities. New housing and infill developments should include a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, to cater for all members of society. Design should be complimentary to the surroundings and should not adversely impact on the amenity of adjoining residents. These areas require high levels of accessibility, including pedestrian, cyclists and public transport (where feasible).</p>

	This zone may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to facilitate the development of new residential communities such as open space, schools, childcare facilities, doctor's surgeries and playing fields etc.
Residential Serviced Sites	<p>Objective: To offer an alternative to the rural one off house, providing an opportunity for people to design a house to their individual needs and supported by existing services.</p> <p>Purpose: Provides an element of housing choice within the settlement boundary, and facilitate an element of housing choice on serviced lands within Rathkeale, supporting the principle of compact growth and sustainable development.</p>
Education and Community	<p>Objective: To protect and provide for education, training, adult learning, community, healthcare, childcare, civic, religious and social infrastructure.</p> <p>Purpose: Protect existing community facilities and allow for expansion if required to sustain a thriving community.</p>
Enterprise and Employment	<p>Objective: To provide for and improve general enterprise, employment, business and commercial activities.</p> <p>Purpose: Provides for enterprise, employment and general business activities and acknowledge existing/permitted retail uses. This land use zone may accommodate light industry, low input and emission manufacturing, logistics and warehousing and office developments. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location, having regard to surrounding uses and scale. A proliferation of retail uses will not be permitted. Proposals may generate a considerable amount of traffic by both employees and service vehicles and traffic assessments may be required. Sites should be highly accessible, well designed and permeable with good pedestrian, cyclist links to the town centre and public transport. The implementation of mobility management plans will be required to provide important means of managing accessibility to these sites.</p>
Open Space and Recreation	<p>Objective: To protect, provide for and improve open space, active and passive recreational amenities.</p> <p>Purpose: Provides for active and passive recreational resources including parks, sports and leisure facilities and amenities including Limerick Greenway and blueways. The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a substantial loss of open space. Linked green spaces/corridors are encouraged.</p>
Utilities	<p>Objective: To provide for the infrastructural needs of transport and other utility providers.</p> <p>Purpose: Preserves land for the provision of services such as electricity and gas networks, telecommunications, the treatment of water and wastewater etc. Such proposals shall demonstrate resilience to climate change.</p>

Agriculture	<p>Objective: To protect and improve rural amenity and provide for the development of agricultural uses.</p> <p>Purpose: Protect rural amenity and agricultural lands from urban sprawl and ribbon development and provide a clear demarcation to the adjoining built up areas. Uses which are directly associated with agriculture or rural related business activities which have a demonstrated need for a rural based location, and which would not interfere with rural amenity are open for consideration. Compliance is required with the criteria for Small Scale Home Based Businesses In Rural Areas as set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 2022 - 2028 or any replacement thereof. One off dwellings will only be considered on agriculturally zoned land outside of Flood Zones A and B for the permanent habitation subject to the terms and conditions of the rural housing policy as set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 2022 - 2028.</p>
Special Development Area for temporary private sites for mobile homes/caravans	<p>Objective: To facilitate a limited number of temporary private sites for mobile homes/caravans for extended family members within the curtilage of existing dwellings.</p> <p>Purpose: To accommodate the nomadic Traveller families on their return during winter to extended family living in the town. Refer to Section 6.3 of this Plan.</p>

Extent of Consideration	
Generally Permitted indicated as /	A generally permitted use is one the Council accepts in principle in the relevant zone, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria, including applicable policies, objectives, development management standards and Section 28 Guidance.
Open for Consideration indicated as O	A use open for consideration by the Council and the Council may permit where it is satisfied that the suggested form of development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, will not conflict with existing uses or the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Generally Not Permitted = X	A use incompatible with the zoning policies or objectives for the area, would conflict with the permitted/ existing uses and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
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Table 5: General Objectives and Purpose of Land Use Zones and Extent of Consideration

Non-Conforming Uses are uses, which do not conform to the zoning objective for the area in which they are located. Where legally established, extensions or improvements to these uses shall be considered on their merits, on a case-by-case basis where they do not adversely affect the amenities of properties in the vicinity, and are not prejudicial to proper planning and sustainable development.

13.2 LAND USE ZONING MATRIX

Land Use Zone	Town Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Utilities	Agriculture
Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O
Advertising & Advertising Structures	/	X	X	X	O ¹	/ ¹	/ ¹	O	X
Aerodrome/ Airfield	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O
Agricultural Buildings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/
Agricultural Supplies/ Machinery Sales	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Allotments	X	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	O
Amusement Arcade/ Casino	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bank/ Credit Union	/	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
Bed & Breakfast/ Guesthouse	/	/	/	/	X	X	X	X	/ ²
Betting Office	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	/ ²
Bring Banks/ Bring Centres	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	/	X
Builders Providers/ Yard	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Burial Grounds	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	/
Campsite/ Caravan Park - Holiday Use	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Car Park	/	X	X	X	/ ¹	/ ¹	/ ¹	/	X
Childcare Facilities	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X
Civic Recycling/ Waste Facility	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	/	X
Community/ Cultural/ Tourism Facility	/	/	/	/	/	X	/	X	X
Conference Centre	/	X	X	X	O ¹	O	X	X	X
Dancehall/ Nightclub	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

¹ Ancillary to the primary use only

Land Use Zone	Town Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Utilities	Agriculture
Education/ Training Facility	/	/	/	/	/	/	X	X	X
Enterprise Centre	/	X	X	X	O ¹	/	X	X	X
Extractive Industry/ Quarry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
Fast Food Outlet/ Take-Away	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Food Drink Processing/ Manufacturing	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	/ ¹
Fuel Depot/ Storage	O	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Funeral Home	/	O	O	O	X	/	X	X	X
Garden Centre	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	O
General Public Administration	/	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Hair & Beauty Salons	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Halting Site	O ²	O	O	O	X	X	X	O	X
Health Centre	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X
Health Practitioner	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X
High Technology Manufacturing	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Hospital	/	X	X	X	/	O	X	X	X
Hotel	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Industry - Heavy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Industry - Light	O	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Leisure/ Recreation Facility	/	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X
Logistics	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Nursing Home/ Residential Care or Institution/ Retirement Village	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X	X
Offices	/	X ³	X ₃	X ₃	X	/	X	X	X

² Only applies to the Special Development Area for Temporary Private Sties for Motorised Vehicles, Mobile Homes and Caravan, Section 6.3 Specialised Housing in this Plan. Note permitted elsewhere in town centre.

³ Where the use is ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a main residence

Land Use Zone	Town Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Utilities	Agriculture
Park & Ride Facilities	/	O	O	O	/ ¹	O	X	/	X
Petrol Station ⁴	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Place of Worship	/	O	O	O	/	O	X	X	X
Plant Storage/ Hire	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Professional Services	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Public House	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Renewable Energy Installation	O ¹	O ¹	O ¹	O ¹	O ¹	/	X	/	O
Research & Dev./ Science & Technology	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	/ ⁵
Residential	/	/	/	/	X	X	X	X	/ ⁶
Restaurant/ Café	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Retail	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Retail - Warehouse	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Scrap Yard	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Sports Facility	O	/	/	/	/	O	/	X	X
Telecommunications Structures	/	X	X	X	/	/	O	/	/
Vehicle Sales Outlet	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Vehicle Servicing/ Maintenance/ Repairs	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Veterinary Clinic	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X ⁷
Warehousing	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Waste Disposal & Recover Facility	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	/	X
Wholesale - Cash & Carry	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X

⁴ Petrol station shops shall not exceed 100m2 (net) as per the Retail Planning Guidelines

⁵ Rural related research and development only

⁶ Subject to compliance with the Rural Housing Policy

⁷ Only where the need to locate in a rural environment has been demonstrated because of the nature of the clinic required

***Comparison** - Goods including Comparison Goods: - clothing and footwear; - furniture, furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods); - medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment; - educational and recreation equipment and accessories; - books, newspapers and magazines; - goods for personal care; - goods not elsewhere classified; - bulky goods;

***Convenience** - Goods including -food;- alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages;- tobacco;- non-durable household goods;

***Leisure/ Recreation Facility** - Cinema, Theatre, Concert Halls, Bingo Halls, Bowling Alley, Commercial Play etc.;

***Professional Services** - Including for example accountants, architects, solicitors etc.

APPENDIX 1 – MAPS

Map 1: Land Use Zoning Map

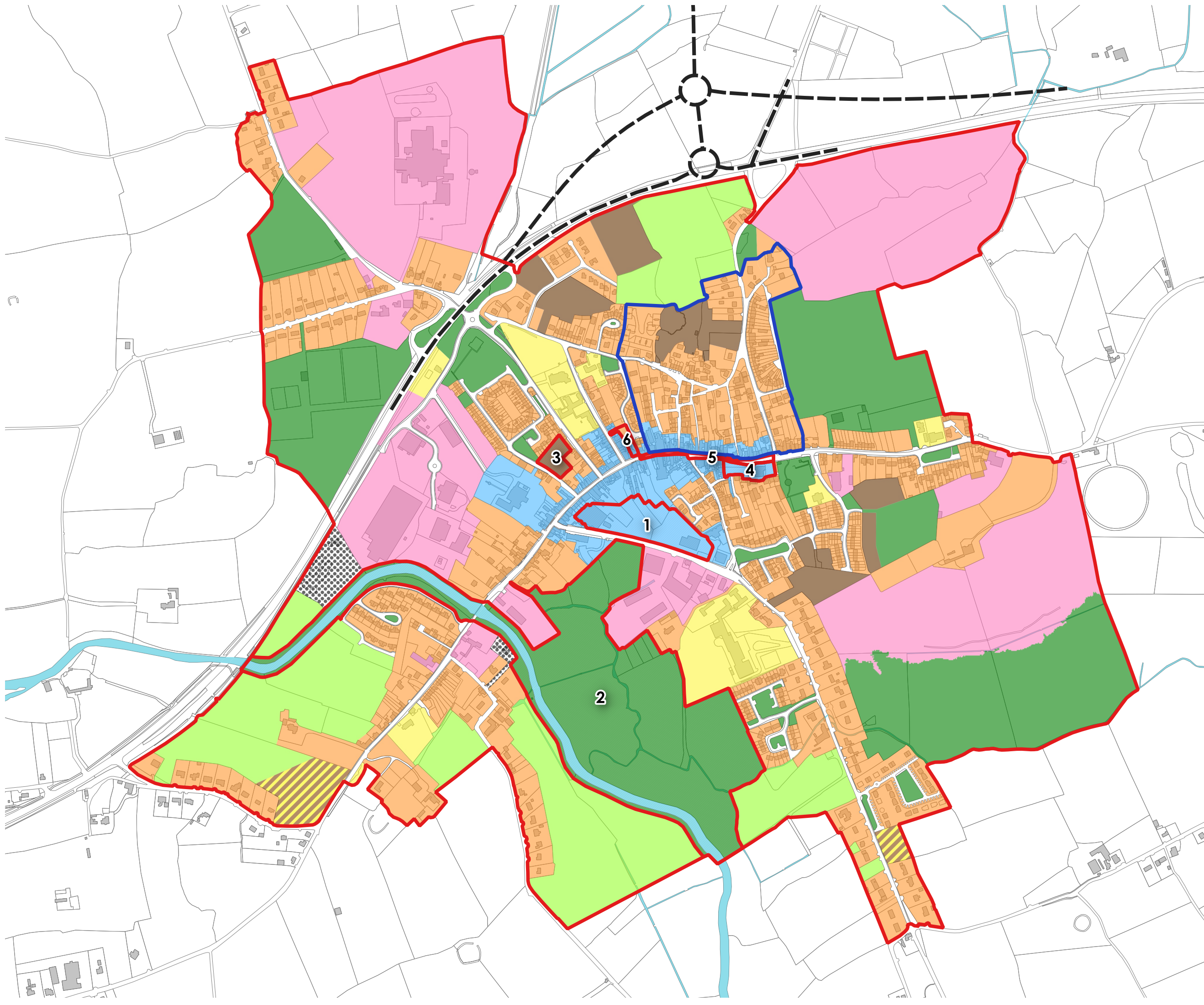
Map 2: Flood Map

Map 3: Amenity and Sustainable Transport Map

Map 4: Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Area Map

Map 5: Sites and Monuments Record Map

Map 6: Settlement Capacity Audit Map



**Rathkeale
Local Area Plan
2023-2029**

Zoning Map

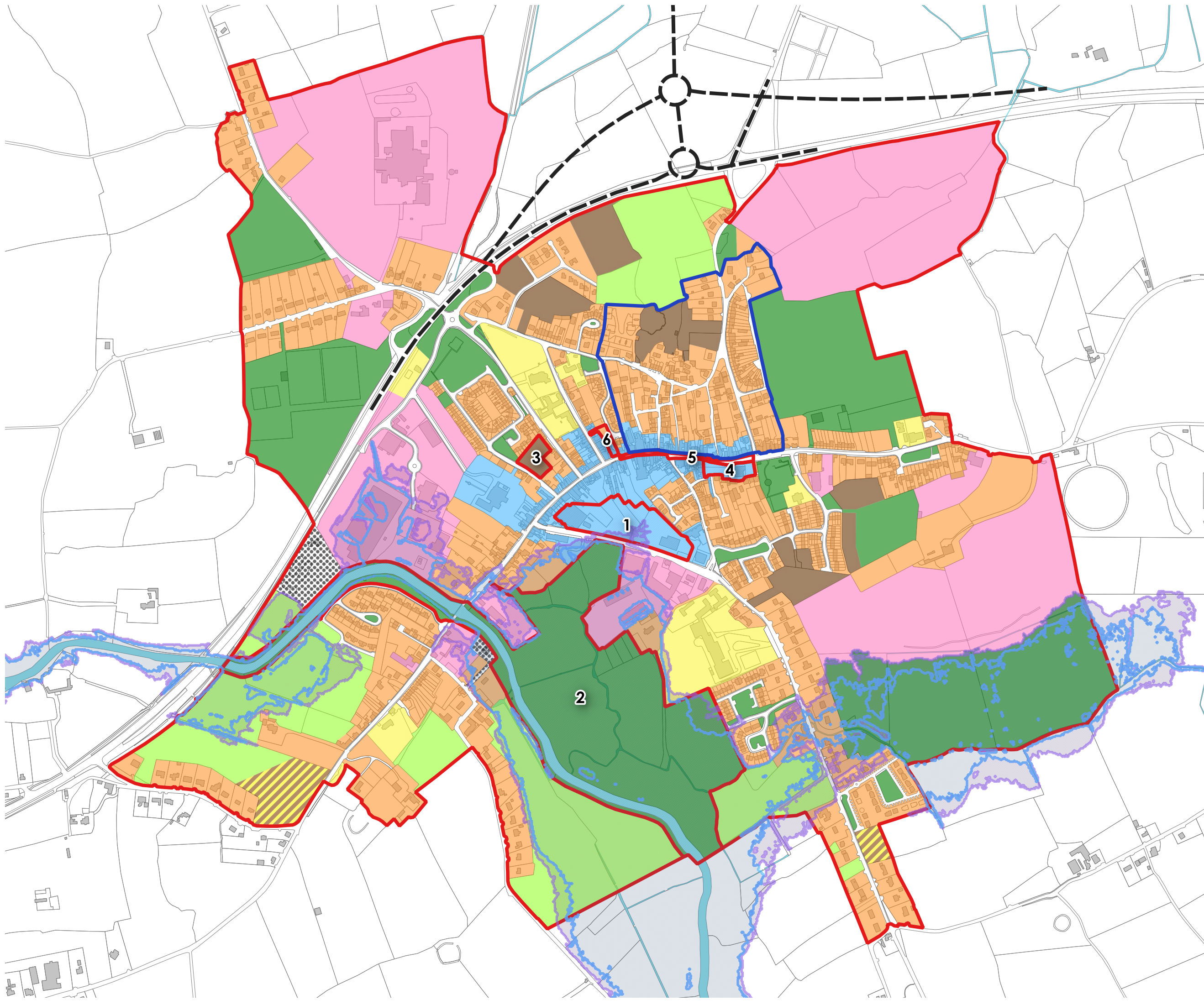
Legend

- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Residential
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Town Centre
- Utilities
- Rathkeale LAP Boundary
- Special Area of Development Control
- Indicative Foynes to Limerick Road (Including Adare Bypass) Project
- Indicative Opportunity Areas

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**Rathkeale
Local Area Plan
2023-2029**

Flood Map

Legend

- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Residential
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Town Centre
- Utilities
- Rathkeale LAP Boundary
- Special Area of Development Control
- Indicative Opportunity Areas No.1-6
- Indicative Foynes to Limerick Road (Including Adare Bypass) Project
- Flood Zone A
- Flood Zone B

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**Rathkeale
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2023-2029**

**Amenity and
Sustainable Transport
Map**

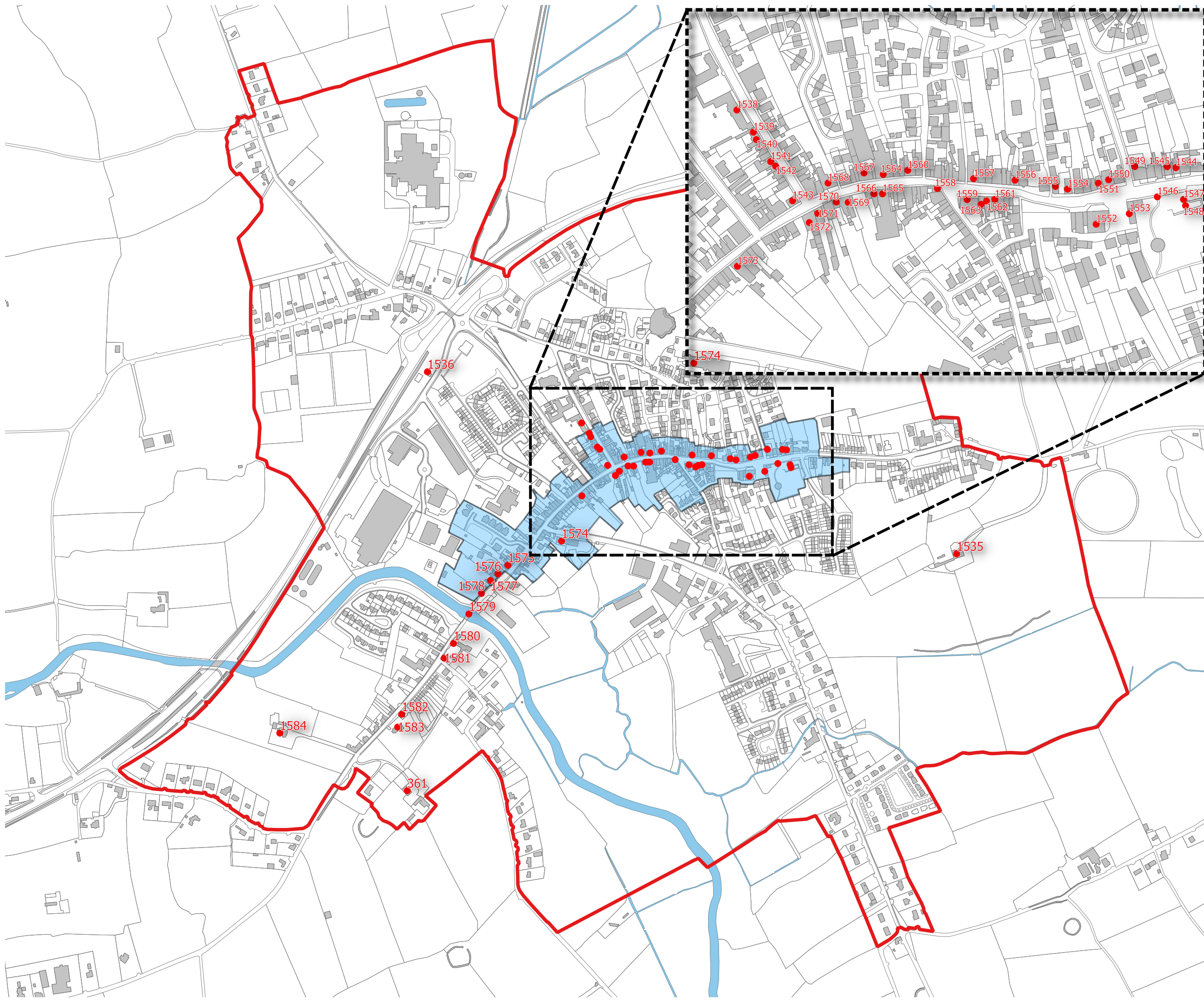
LEGEND

- Open Space and Recreation
- Existing Cycleways/ Walkways
- Proposed Cycleways/ Walkways
- Existing Limerick Greenway
- Indicative line of Future Limerick Greenway Extension
- Playground
- Rathkeale LAP Boundary
- Indicative Foynes to Limerick Road (Including Adare Bypass) Project
- Enhanced Connectivity

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**Rathkeale
Local Area Plan
2023-2029**

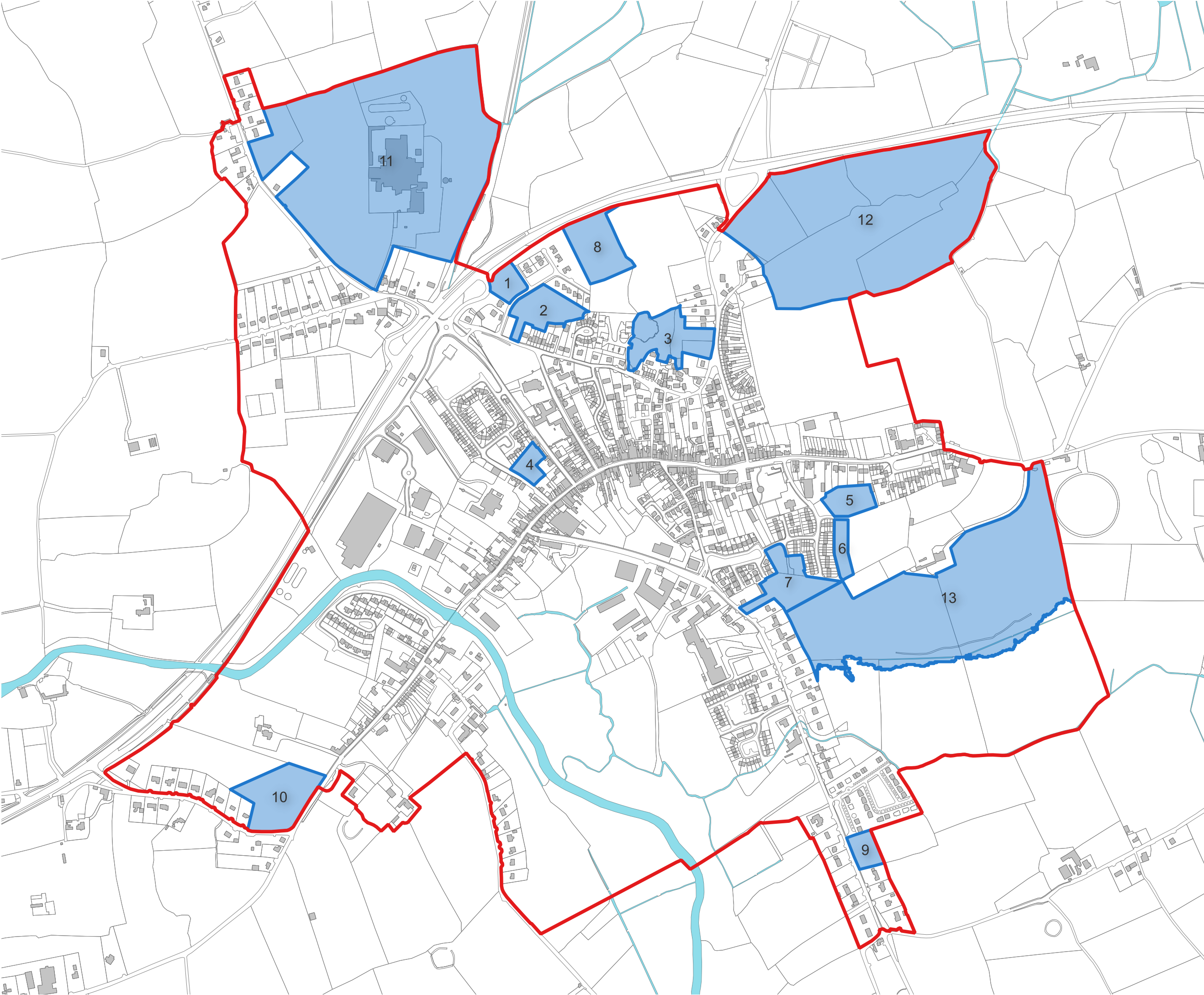
**Protected Structures
Map**

- LEGEND**
- Protected Structures
 - Architectural Conservation Area
 - LAP Boundary

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**Rathkeale
Local Area Plan
2023-2029**

**Settlement Capacity
Assessment
Map**

Legend

-  Settlement Capacity Sites
-  Rathkeale LAP Boundary

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APPENDIX 2 – SETTLEMENT CAPACITY AUDIT - TIERED APPROACH TO ZONING

In accordance with the National Planning Framework (NPF), the tiered approach to zoning has been applied to zoning lands as below. Tier 1 refers to lands that are adequately serviced and can connect to existing services (road, path, public lighting, water supply and surface water drainage). Tier 2 lands refer to lands that have constraints in terms of connecting to one or more services but have the potential to become fully serviced over the lifetime of the Plan. The table below is for information purposes only and developers are advised to avail of pre-planning consultation with the service providers regarding development of these lands prior to submitting a planning application.

The following table sets out the sites identified for new residential development, serviced sites and enterprise and employment with respect to availability of key infrastructure to ensure that these lands are developable over the lifetime of the plan. Key infrastructure includes public transport within 10 minutes walking distance of these sites. The New Residential, Serviced Sites and Enterprise and Employment zoned lands are within 10 minutes walking distance of the town centre - its services, the public bus service and community infrastructure, satisfying the principles of the Ten Minute Town Concept, Government policy of Town Centre First and compact settlements promoted by higher level spatial plans. Where existing infrastructure is located in close proximity to a site and can potentially extended to service the site, these services have been indicated as available. Infrastructure directly or potentially available is indicated with a √, while infrastructure not available or not required has been indicated as X. Refer to Map 6 in Appendix 1 for the location of the sites below.

Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road	
1	Monks Hill	0.4	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	Infill site approximately 300m from town centre. Issues with surface water will be required to be adequately addressed by Developer. Temporary solutions not acceptable. Surface water disposal will be an integral consideration for the future development of these lands. Full details of surface water disposal shall be addressed for the overall lands and will be required to form part of any planning application on the lands. Pre-planning discussion with the Planning Authority is strongly advised. There are limitations in relation to sewerage network availability in the area. Potential developers are advised to consult with Irish Water at an early stage in the development management process regarding wastewater connectivity.
2	Monks Hill	1.039	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	Infill site approximately 300m from town centre. Issues with surface water will be required to be adequately addressed by Developer. Temporary solutions not acceptable. Surface water disposal will be an integral consideration for the future development of these lands. Full details of surface water disposal shall be addressed for the overall lands and will be required to form part of any planning application on the lands. Pre-planning discussion with the Planning Authority is strongly advised. _There are limitations in relation to sewerage network availability in the area. Potential developers are advised to consult with Irish Water at an early stage in the development management process regarding wastewater connectivity.
3	Fair Hill	1.57	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Infill Site approximately 200m from town centre.
4	Old Road backlands /New Road	0.36	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Identified as an opportunity area by this Plan. Refer to Section 7.3 Opportunity Areas – Area 3. Infill site within 50m of the town centre.

Site No	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road	
5	Abbeylands	0.601	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Infill site within 300m of the town centre. Access to adjacent land zoned Open Space and Recreation to be addressed by design. Irish Water assets must be protected by any proposed development.
6	Abbeylands	0.82	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Infill site within 300m of the town centre. Access to adjacent land zoned Open Space and Recreation to be addressed by layout. Irish Water assets must be protected by any proposed development.
7	Abbeylands	1.27	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Infill site within 300m of the town centre. Walking/cycling permeability to existing residential areas to be addressed by layout. Irish Water assets must be protected by any proposed development.
8	Monks Hill	1.35	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	Site approximately 400m from town centre. Surface water issues will be required to be adequately addressed by the developer. Temporary solutions are not acceptable. Surface water disposal will be an integral consideration for the future development of these lands. Full details of surface water disposal shall be addressed for the overall lands and will be required to form part of any planning application on the lands. Pre-planning discussion with the Planning Authority is strongly advised. There are limitations in relation to sewerage network availability in the area. Potential developers are advised to consult with Irish Water at an early stage in the development management process regarding wastewater connectivity.
9	Ballywilliam	0.427	Serviced Sites	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Infill site located approximately 700m of the town centre. Public lighting available on opposite roadside suggesting serviceable for lighting.
10	Castlematrix	1.785	Serviced Sites	1	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	Infill site within 800m of the town centre. Footpath proposed under Active Travel on southern roadside, existing path on Church Street R523.

Enterprise and Employment													
Site No.	Location	Area - Hectares	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment	Estimated Cost of delivery of services
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road		
11	Kyletaun	17.76	Enterprise and Employment	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Located within 600m of the town centre.	€2m
12	Wolfburgess East	14.73	Enterprise and Employment	1	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	Located approximately 500m from the town centre. Direct access is not permitted on to N21. Access subject to traffic and transport assessment and road safety audit. Applicants will also have to provide walking/cycling infrastructure to connect with the town centre. A Masterplan shall be prepared of the overall lands. To service these lands for water services network extensions are required. Pre-planning discussion is strongly advised with Irish Water regarding same prior to seeking permission to develop.	€2m



13	Abbeylands	14.06	Enterprise and Employment	1	X	X	X	√	√	√	√	Located 600m from the town centre. Access subject to traffic and transport assessment and road safety audit. Applicants will also have to provide walking/cycling infrastructure to connect with the town centre. A Masterplan shall be prepared of the overall lands. To service these lands for water services network extensions are required through private lands. Pre-planning discussion is strongly advised with Irish Water regarding same prior to seeking permission to develop.	€2m
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APPENDIX 3 – RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES




The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 (or any replacement thereof), sets out the Record of Protected Structures. A protected structure is deemed, under the provisions of Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), to consist of the following:




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



The following table sets out the Record of Protected Structures for the Rathkeale:





RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1535	Not applicable	Abbey House	Abbeylands, Rathkeale	County House	
Detached two-storey over basement former country house, built c. 1830, with projecting bay. Cut limestone entrance gateway, erected c. 1850, comprising cut limestone piers supporting elliptical arch with cornice above.					
1536	21831013	Palatine Museum	Rathkeale townland	Industrial – Railway feature	
Detached three-bay two-storey former railway station, built in 1867, now in use as a heritage centre. Having multiple-bay single-storey block to southeast elevation, pitched slate roofs with cut limestone chimneystacks.					





RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1539	21831017	McCarthy's [A]	Thomas Street	Dwelling	
Attached three-bay two-storey house, built c. 1820, one of a pair. Pitched slate roof with rendered walls and chimneystack. Square-headed window openings with render shouldered surrounds, and one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows, those to ground floor with decorative cast-iron sill guards.					
1540	21831016	McCarthys [B]	Thomas Street	Dwelling	
Semi-detached four-bay two-storey house, built c. 1820, one of a pair. Pitched slate roof with rendered walls and chimneystack. Door opening with rendered engaged columns and timber panelled door with cobweb fanlight.					
1541	21831015	Keogh's	Thomas Street	Dwelling	
Attached two-storey house, built c. 1820. Pitched slate roof with rendered walls with render quoins. Round-headed door opening with render shouldered surrounds, timber sliding sash windows, those to ground floor with decorative cast-iron sill guards.					
1542	Not applicable	Kett's	Thomas Street	Dwelling	
Attached two-storey house, built c. 1820. Pitched slate roof with rendered and dashed walls, Render quoins and shouldered surrounds, timber sliding sash windows.					





RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1543	21831009	Lynch's	Main Street/ Thomas Street	Dwelling	
Semi-detached four-bay two-storey house, built c. 1920, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystack. Rendered walls with render platband dividing storeys. Timber sliding sash windows.					
1544	21831038	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling	
Attached two-storey house, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof having rendered walls, cast-iron rainwater goods, stone sills, round-headed door opening with cobweb fanlight over timber panelled door.					
1545	Attached to 21831038	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling	
Built c. 1800. Notable features pitched slate roof, rendered walls and chimneystacks, cast-iron rainwater goods, stone sills, round-headed door opening with cobweb fanlight over timber-panelled door.					






RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	RPS ref	NIAH
1546	21831039	Abbey (in Ruins)	Main Street	Medieval Site – Entrance to Abbey	
Entrance to Abbey with stonewall and archway The cast-iron gate adds further interest and decorative appeal. It may have been part of the Abbey House demesne.					
1547	Curtilage 21831039	of Abbey (in Ruins)	Main Street	Medieval Site – Tower	
Medieval Tower to ruined church in graveyard					
1548	Curtilage 21831039	of Abbey (in Ruins)	Main Street	Medieval Site – Abbey	
Rathkeale Priory is a rectangular church with a vaulted room at the north. It has a simple four-light traceried east window. There was a south transept but only the arch of remains. It is an Augustinian Priory founded in the early 13th century by Gilbert Harvey and dedicated to St Mary.					





RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	RPS ref	NIAH
1549	21831029	AIB	Main Street	Former bank	
Detached five-bay two-storey over half-basement bank, built c. 1880, with two-bay two-storey returns to south (rear). Hipped slate roof with terracotta ridge crestings, saw-tooth pattern brick-eaves course and cast-iron rainwater goods.					
1550	Not applicable	Purcells	Lower Main Street	Dwelling	
Built c. 1820, Notable features traditional shop fronts on ground floor, slate roof, square-headed openings, concrete sills, sliding sash windows.					




RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	RPS ref	NIAH
1551	21831037	Conway's	Lower Main Street	Dwelling	
Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1830. Rendered walls, channelled to ground floor, with render quoins. Timber sash windows, those to first floor with shouldered render surrounds, those to ground floor with cast-iron sill guards.					
1552	21831036	Courthouse	The Square	Civic building	
Formerly detached four-bay two-storey former courthouse and bridewell, built c. 1830					
1553	Not applicable	Stables	The Square	Dwelling	
Two-storey townhouse, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof. Building was originally rendered and plastered and stonework was not originally intended to be revealed. Round-headed openings at ground floor and timber sliding sash windows.					
1554	Not applicable	Hegarty's	Lower Main Street	Dwelling	
Built c. 1800, pitched slate roof, rendered walls and chimneystack, stone sills, sash windows, those to ground floor with cast-iron sill guards round-headed door opening with fanlight over timber panelled door.					




RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1555	21831035	Round House	Chapel Lane/Main Street	Former Commercial Premises	
Corner-sited attached two-bay two-storey house and pub, built c. 1920, with chamfered south-west corner and pub front to ground floor					
1556	21831033	Noonan	Upper Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
Terraced three-storey building, built c. 1830, timber shop front on ground floor, rendered walls, natural slate roof, cast iron rainwater goods, sash windows.					
1557	Not applicable	‘The Wash Board’	Peppard’s Lane/ Main Street	Commercial Premises	
End of terrace two-storey commercial building, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof. Building was originally rendered and plastered and stonework was not originally intended to be revealed. Round-headed openings at ground floor with replacement PVC windows.					
1558	Not applicable	End of terrace building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
End of terraced two-storey building, built c. 1820, shop front on ground floor, rendered walls, natural slate roof, timber sash windows replaced with PVC alternatives.					





RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1560	21831026	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
Built 1830, three storey terraced commercial premises. Notable features include cast iron rainwater goods, rendered walls with rendered quoins and decorated window surrounds.					
1562	21831030	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1840, formerly in use as shop and having shopfront to ground floor north (front) elevation.					
1563	21831031	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1840, formerly in use as shop and having shopfront to ground floor north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with red brick chimneystack.					
1564	21831026	Terraced Building	Main Street	Commercial Premises	
Attached pair of four-bay two-storey houses, built c. 1820, now also in use as shops having shopfronts to ground floor south (front) elevation. Pitched slate roofs with rendered chimneystacks and overhanging eaves. Rendered walls. Square-headed openings with replacement uPVC windows.					



RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1565	Not applicable	Terraced Building	Main Street	Commercial Premises	
Attached three-storey commercial building, built c. 1820, Shopfront to ground floor, north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with rendered chimneystacks and rendered walls and quoins. Timber sliding sash windows replaced with PVC, render surrounds, those to the first floor fluted and with segmental arches above.					
1566	21831025	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling/Commercial Premises	
Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1820, now disused, formerly in use as shop. Shopfront to ground floor, north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with rendered chimneystacks. Rendered walls, timber sliding sash windows, render surrounds, those to second floor fluted, those to first floor fluted and with segmental arches above.					
1567	Not applicable	Terraced building	Main Street	Commercial Premises	
Attached two-storey commercial building, built c. 1820, Pitched slate roofs with rendered chimneystacks and overhanging eaves. Rendered walls. Square-headed openings with replacement uPVC windows and decorated window surrounds.					
1568	21831024	Terraced building	Main Street	Commercial Premises	
Attached five-bay three-storey bank, built c. 1870,. Pitched slate roof with cut limestone chimneystacks and cast-iron rainwater goods. Carved limestone corbelled cornice to south (front) elevation. Cut limestone walls with dressed flush limestone quoins.					
1569	Not applicable	Terraced building	Main Street	Dwelling	
Attached two-storey commercial building, built c. 1820, Render coping to south gable and rendered chimneystack. Rendered walls and timber sliding sash windows. Square-headed door opening with rendered engaged columns.					

RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1570	21831023	Terraced building	Main Street	Dwelling	
Attached four-bay two-storey house, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks. Rendered walls. Square-headed openings with render surrounds and six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows.					
1571	Not applicable	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
Attached two-storey house, built c. 1840, formerly in use as shop and having shopfront to ground floor north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof and rendered walls Shopfront comprising timber pilasters flanking openings, patterned architrave, frieze and cornice.					
1572	21831022	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban Structure – Commercial	
Attached four-bay two-storey former house and former hotel, built c. 1800, now in use as shop and commercial offices, with recent shopfront to ground floor north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with render copings to gables.					
1573	21831012	Former cinema	Main Street	Urban Structure – Commercial	
Attached three-bay two-storey Art Deco style former cinema, built c. 1940, now disused, comprising barrel-roofed block with concrete frontpiece, having projecting bay to ground floor. Barrel-roofed corrugated-iron roof with cast-iron rainwater goods.					

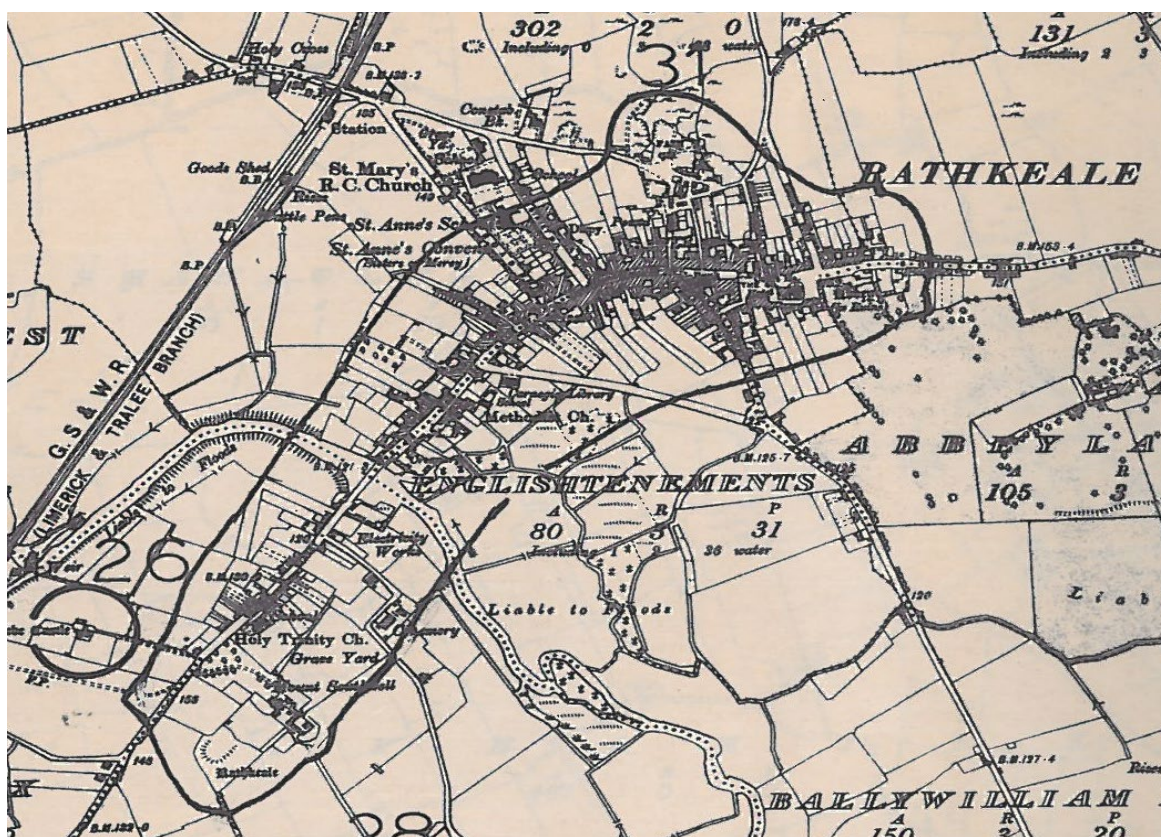
RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1574	Not applicable	Carnegie Library	New Line Ballingarry Road	Civic Structure – Library	
Previously detached six-bay two-storey Carnegie library, built c. 1900, having two gable-fronted porches to north (front) elevation. Roughcast rendered walls, pitched slate roof and timber bargeboards to gables. Timber battened doors, overlights and concrete sills.					
1575	Not applicable	Detached Building	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
Terrace two-storey townhouse, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks. Building was originally rendered and plastered and stonework was not originally intended to be revealed. Existing windows removed and enlarged.					
1576	Not applicable	Detached Building	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
End of terrace five-bay two-storey townhouse, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks. Building was originally rendered and plastered and stonework was not originally intended to be revealed. Decorative fanlight window over door.					

RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1577	Not applicable	Bridge House	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
End of terrace five-bay three-storey townhouse, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks and walls. Doorcase with decorative fanlight window. Timber sash windows replaced with PVC alternatives and centre windows enlarged from previous.					
1578	Not applicable	Wall	Main Street	Boundary Wall	
This boundary wall with arches displays a high level of stonework and it may have been part of the Abbey House demesne.					
1579	21831007	Deel or Lynch Bridge	Main Street	Bridge	
Five-arch humpback road bridge, originally built c. 1747, carrying a road over the River Deel. Bridge incorporates earlier fabric. Rubble stone walls with arches having cut stone with rendered plinths.					

RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1577	Not applicable	Bridge House	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
Detached three-bay two-storey former gas works building, built c. 1820, now disused. Hipped slate roof with rendered chimneystack and wall. Four-bay two-storey former gas works building to south-east, with pitched corrugated-iron roof and red brick walls					
1581	Not applicable	An Seabhac Pub	Church Street	Urban Structure – Commercial	
Detached two-storey public house, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks. Rendered walls, square-headed openings with timber sash windows.					
1582	Not applicable	No 2 National School	Enniscough	Urban Structure – Institutional	
Built c1840. Two-storey, square-plan building, slate roof with overhanging eaves, rendered roughcast finish with stone sills					
1583	21831005	Holy Trinity Church	Enniscough	Church of Ireland	
Freestanding Board of First Fruits Church of Ireland church, built in 1831, comprising four-bay nave with single-bay single-storey vestry to south elevation, and square-plan three-stage entrance tower to west. Pitched slate roof to nave with carved limestone copings to gables and cast-iron rainwater goods.					

RPS ref	NIAH	Building name/	Location/Townland	Description	Photograph
1584	Record of Sites and Monuments	Glebe Castle	Castlematrix	Medieval site	
Castle built of coursed limestone with long and short quoins. The walls and gables are stepped and the east and west walls have chimneys while the north and south walls have drainage chutes.					
361	21831002	Mount Southwell	Enniscoush	Country House	
Detached two-storey country house, built c. 1800, with projecting bay. This country house was the residence of Francis Brown in 1837 and was still in his possession in the early 1850s but leased to Edward John Collins.					

APPENDIX 4 RECORD OF MONUMENTS AND PLACES



RMP No.	Classification	Townland
LI029-031001	Historic Town	Abbeylands, English Tenements, Enniscough, Rathkeale
LI029-031002	Bridge	English Tenements, Enniscough, Rathkeale (not located)
LI029-031003	Castle	English Tenements, Enniscough, Rathkeale
LI029-031004	Church	Enniscough
LI029-031005	Graveyard	Enniscough
LI029-031006	Religious House	Abbeylands
LI029-031007	Enclosure	Enniscough
LI029-031008	Memorial stone	Enniscough
LI029-031009	Memorial stone	Enniscough
LI029-0310010	Memorial stone	Enniscough
LI029-0310011	Graveyard	Abbeylands
LI029-0310012	House 16 th /17 th Century	Abbeylands, English Tenements, Rathkeale (not located)
LI029-0310013	Market Cross	Abbeylands, English Tenements, Enniscough, Rathkeale (not located)

Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029

Environmental Reports

January 2023



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

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1.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) - Introduction

This Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening accompanies the Rathkeale Local Area Plan (LAP) 2023 – 2029, in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). The SEA screening assessment is a formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan, policy or programme and any amendments to same. The Rathkeale LAP, once adopted by the Elected Members of the Adare – Rathkeale Municipal District will replace the existing Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018 (as extended). The Council is statutorily required to review the existing Rathkeale LAP at this time to ensure the policies and objectives align with current regional planning policy and higher level plans, in particular the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region and the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Rathkeale is located 31km south west of Limerick City, and south of the N21 National Road. It is a Level 3 settlement as identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. Refer to Figure 1 below.

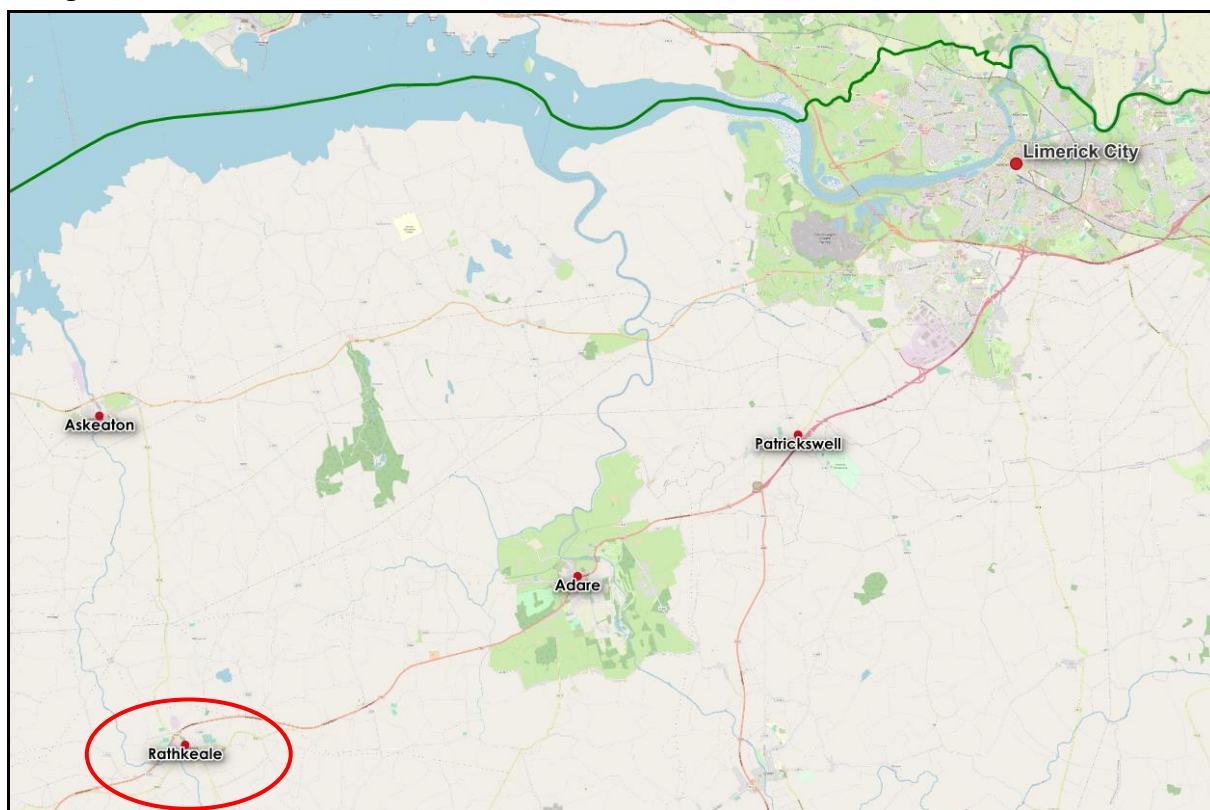


Figure 1: Location of Rathkeale in Limerick

2.0 SEA Screening

The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004-2011 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004, SI 201 of 2011) requires a case by- case screening of individual plans and programmes based on the criteria in Schedule 2A to the Planning and

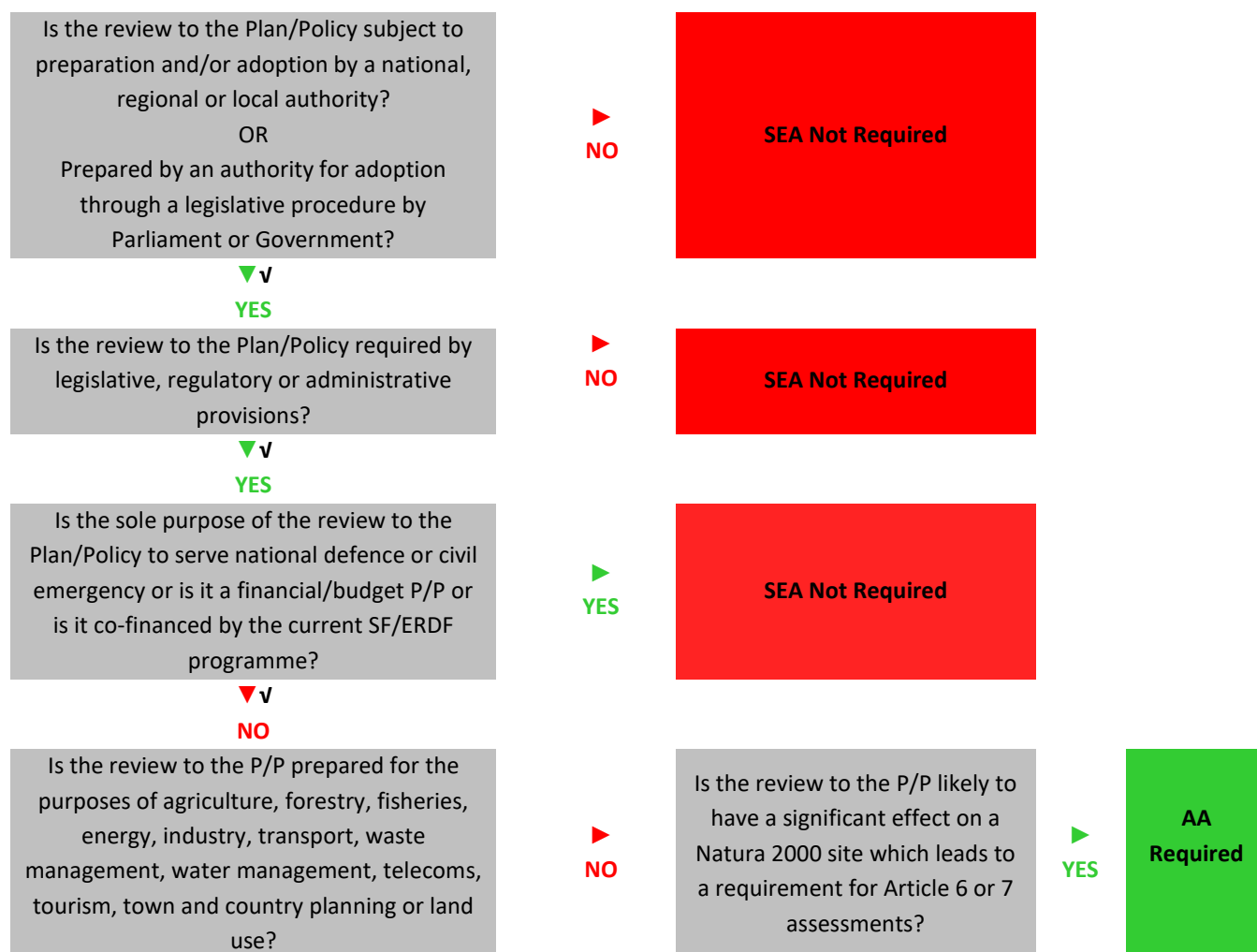
Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). These criteria must be taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise.

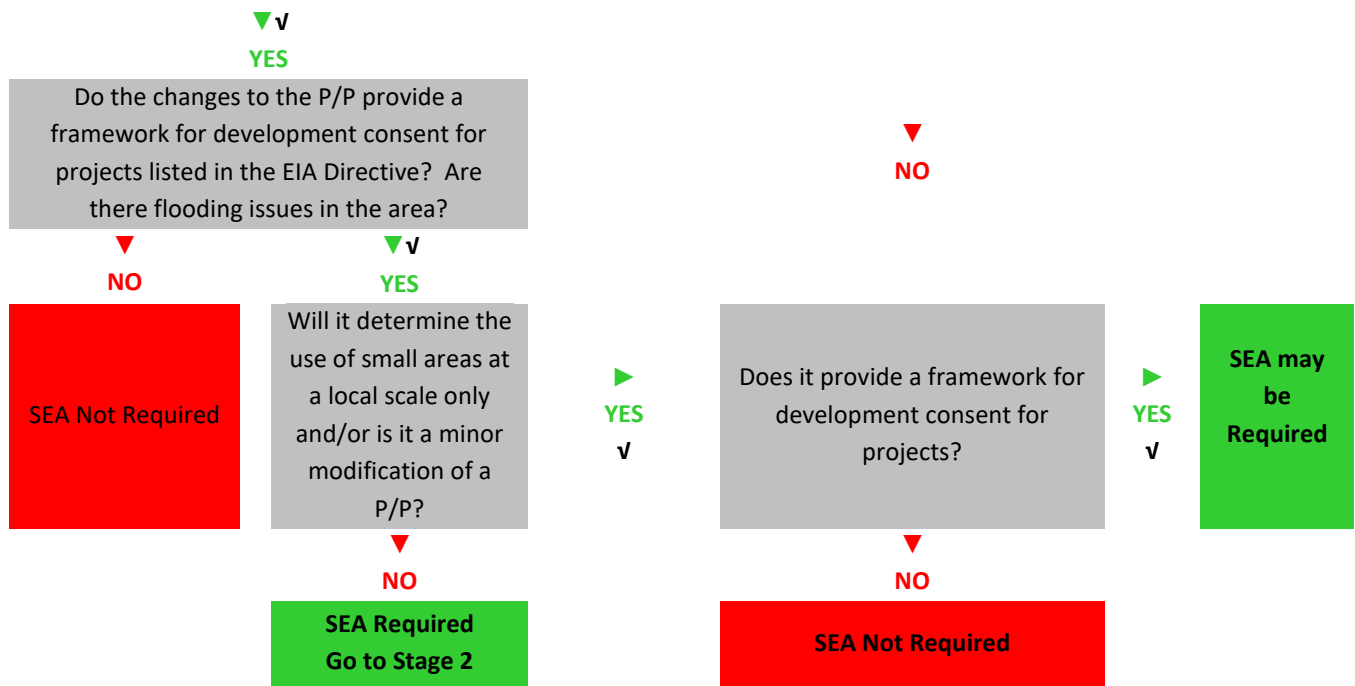
The population of Rathkeale was 1,494 according to the 2006 Census and in 2016 the Census population of the town was 1,441. The population growth target for the town identified in the Limerick Development Plan is an additional 403 persons by 2028 (resulting in an estimated total population of 1,844 within the lifetime of the plan) as established by the Core Strategy. The existing zoned area of the Rathkeale LAP 2012 - 2018 (as extended) is 2.93km² (293 hectares) and this reduced to 2.33 km² or 233.6 hectares in the plan. The projected population figures and zoned area figures are below the thresholds for statutory SEA, which are 5,000 people and 50 km² respectively.

3.0 Stage One - Pre-Screening

The first step in determining whether the preparation of the Rathkeale Local Area Plan would require an SEA involves a pre-screening check as outlined in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Pre-Screening Decision Tree





4.0 Stage Two - Environmental Significance Screening

The application of environmental significance criteria is important in determining whether an SEA is required for Local Area Plan/Policies or modifications or reviews of Plans/Policies. Annex II (2) of Directive 2001/42/EC sets out the “statutory” criteria that should be addressed when undertaking this stage.

Table 1 – Criteria for developing the likely significant of the environmental effects and the characteristics of the LAP addressing same

1	<p>The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;</p>
	<p>The Local Area Plan guides development within the settlement boundary of Rathkeale as outlined in the Land Use Zoning identified in the Plan. It achieves this, through zoning and the application of updated planning policies which have come about as result of the adoption of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES). These updated policies place stronger emphasis on centralised, sequential development around the town centre, compact growth, achieving high quality living environments in towns and villages. A new approach at this local area plan level is the inclusion of an assessment of the suitability of lands for development considering the availability of services such as water services, transport links and amenities. This ensures that the land use zoning of the LAP is based on availability of services, as determined by the Settlement Capacity Audit which identifies the availability of infrastructure</p>

	necessary for future development and supports the centralised approach to zoning.
2	<p>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;</p> <p>The review of the existing Local Area Plan is set within the context of the National Planning Framework, the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy for the Southern Region and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. These higher level spatial plans inform the policies and objectives of the Rathkeale LAP. These policy documents have replaced the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-16 (as extended), the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and National Spatial Strategy. The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 is anticipated to be formally adopted in 2022.</p>
3	<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;</p> <p>The review of the Rathkeale LAP 2012 – 2018 (as extended) is undertaken in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and takes into account the need to incorporate policies and objectives of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and its Core Strategy. The Core Strategy <i>“must integrate relevant EU directive related considerations that development plans must comply with”</i>, amongst them the SEA Directive, Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>The adoption of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy also contain updated policy content in relation to compact growth, climate change and achieving better environmental solutions.</p>
4	<p>Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;</p> <p>The capacity of the Waste Water Treatment Plant in Rathkeale is 4,000 population equivalent and the plant is currently treating the loadings received (Annual Environmental Report Rathkeale 2020 Irish Water). There is sufficient capacity within the plant to cater for the projected population targets in the plan. The report also concludes that the WWTP has no observable impact on water quality.</p>
5	<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).</p> <p>The LAP is prepared to align with the significant changes in the higher-level spatial plans referred to above. The Rathkeale LAP places greater emphasis on climate change, environmental solutions and consolidation of growth within the town centre. The National Climate Action Plan 2021 is the latest in a series of guidance and legislation provides a detailed plan to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021.</p> <p>The LAP will comply with all relevant climate legislation, guidance and targets that</p>

	will emerge over the lifetime of the plan. Chapter 12 in Section 12.2 deals with climate action, both mitigation and adaptation. Other sections such as those dealing with transport promote modal shift.
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Table 2 Characteristics of the Effects and of the area likely to be affected

1	Probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects
<p>The effects are likely to be located within the plan area. Ex-situ effects are most likely through pollution from the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP). However, as indicated above the WWTP has sufficient capacity for the population increase and the 2020 Irish Water Report on this WWTP indicated that its operation did not have an effect on local water quality.</p> <p>Where development takes place within the plan area these effects are likely to be irreversible if green field sites are developed. However, the emphasis on development following the contents of both the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy are likely to emphasise sequential development outwards from the town centre, Infill/brown field development and re-use of under-used/vacant sites and buildings minimises the overall effects in the plan area. The emphasis on coordinated development through assessment of properly serviced lands has already been mentioned in item 1, Table 1 above.</p>	
2	Cumulative nature of the effects
<p>Cumulative negative environmental effects are likely to be localised within the plan boundary. As noted above, it is likely that land use zoning has been further rationalised in the LAP which will reduce the overall magnitude of effects as the zoning of the Plan complies with the Core Strategy population projections of the Limerick Development Plan, and the current emphasis for higher-level spatial plans on the principle of compact development. Refer to Map 1 Land use Zoning, Appendix 1.</p>	
3	Trans-boundary nature of the effects
<p>There are no trans-boundary effects anticipated.</p>	
4	Risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)
<p>None anticipated. There are no Seveso sites within the plan boundary. In relation to water supply a 2018 Drinking Water Audit found high turbidity in some water sources in October 2018. (EPA Drinking water Audit Report 18/10/2018). Upgrade works have been recommended and carried out since that event. Night time restrictions on water supply have been put in place in the recent past and seasonal difficulties in the supply of water have been noted particularly at Christmas time. These have implications for the supply of basic necessities in the town and are a constraint on the town's development.</p>	
5	Magnitude and spatial extent of the affects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)
<p>The area that will be affected is within the development boundary of Rathkeale. Refer to Map 1 Land Use Zoning, Appendix 1, which shows a reduction to 2.33 km² in the zoned land from the area of the existing plan which is 2.93 km² in the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2012 –</p>	

2018 (as extended). The 2016 Census population of Rathkeale was 1441. The population target for the plan area by 2028 is 1,884. Both of these figures are below the mandatory SEA threshold.

6	Value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
	<p>- Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</p> <p>The land surrounding the River Deel and its tributary to the east have been zoned for Agricultural or Open Space and Recreation purposes in the LAP. These areas, particularly the land parcel to the south east of the plan area function as flood plains and any development on these areas may impair this function.</p> <p>In terms of cultural heritage, Rathkeale is classified as an historic town (L1029-031001) in the record of monuments and places. There is an additional ten historic monuments located in the town as well as a three monuments whose exact location has been lost. The Council has a policies and objectives on archaeological monitoring on development locations where they might have an impact on archaeological sites. Potential archaeological impacts can also be dealt with at development management stage. During the plan preparation process changes to the zoning, polies and objectives of the LAP will be monitored for possible effects on archaeology.</p> <p>Maintaining the Architectural Conservation Area designation, and the Record of Protected Structures will assist in protecting the historical built heritage of the town.</p> <p>- Exceeding environmental quality standards or limit values;</p> <p>It is not expected that any environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas limited as a result of the review. The likely reduction in the amount of land zoned for development use reduces the likelihood of any standards being breached.</p>
7	<p>-Intensive land-use;</p> <p>As outlined above with the reduction in zoning the intensity of potential land use within the plan boundary is reduced. When coupled with the Service Capacity Audit referred above it is likely that effects of intensive land use would be reduced by the LAP as any development would occur on adequately serviced sites.</p>
8	<p>Effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p> <p>No effects anticipated, none located within the development boundaries of the Plan area. The importance of the town centre in particular have been recognised in the plan and is cross referenced across the Plan, as the prioritised location for further development sequentially outwards from the settlement core also known as the town centre.</p>

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

Following the screening process, whereby the specific context of the review of the Rathkeale Local Area Plan has been assessed against the environmental significance criteria as contained in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive, **it is concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029 at this stage in the plan making process.**

5.0 Appropriate Assessment Screening

This is an Appropriate Assessment Screening of the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 -2029, in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The Council is legally required to update its planning policies and objectives for the Rathkeale Local Area Plan to align with higher level spatial plans, the NPF, RSES and the Limerick Development Plan. The Rathkeale Local Area Plan will replace the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2012-2018 (as extended) and will contains policies and objectives that are informed by new national and regional planning policy.

The Rathkeale LAP 2012 – 2018 (as extended) is nearing the end of its statutory time period. The adoption of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, will also require that lower tier plan are updated to comply with the Development Plan. The LAP is required to be screened for Appropriate Assessment. Based on the *Methodological Guidance on the Provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, a ‘Screening Matrix’ and a ‘Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix’ have been completed. The conclusion is that the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 - 2029 **does not require** an Appropriate Assessment.

The principal consideration for an Appropriate Assessment would be if the LAP were likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site – Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas (SACs and SPAs). There is no SAC or SPA located within the boundary of the Rathkeale LAP. The LAP has been drawn up to ensure that land uses, developments and effects arising from developments based upon this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura sites, regard to their conservation objectives.

1. **Changes to the plan:** as outlined above in the SEA screening, there has been substantial changes to plan policies to reflect current higher-level spatial plan policies and objectives. The National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region, and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028(2022-2028) emphasise the principles of compact growth, active travel

and climate action, prioritising the development of infill/brownfield sites, re-use of under-use/vacant site and buildings, and sequential development to the town centre. The LAP applies this principle to the local level in Rathkeale. Similarly, the LAP has updated policies on ecological issues and climate change to reflect national policy.

The conclusion is at this stage of the plan making process for the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029, is that it **does not require** the preparation of a Natura impact statement or any progress beyond the screening stage of the appropriate assessment process.

5.1 Screening Matrix

Table 3 – Screening Matrix

Brief description of the project or plan:
The Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029 replaces the existing Rathkeale LAP 2012-2018 (as extended) The LAP aligns policies and objectives with those of higher level spatial plans and Government Guidance and legislation published since 2012 with particular emphasis on sustainable mobility, active life styles and climate action, town centre first approach, compact growth, natural and built heritage and obligations under EU legislation and environmental issues.
Brief description of the Natura 2000 sites:
There are no Natura sites within the town. The Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) site is approximately 13 km to the north west of the town. This site has been selected because of a range of riparian Habitats and species such as wet woodlands, tidal mudflats, estuaries and for species such as otter, salmon and lamprey. Maintenance of high water quality is an important factor in ensuring the preservation of these Habitats.
The Askeaton Fen Complex (SAC site 002279) is 3.5km to the north of the town, while the Curraghchase Woodlands (00174) lies 6.5km to the north east. The fen complex is a series of low lying fens and wetland complexes in the midst of intensive agricultural land. Curraghchase Woodlands consist of both woodlands with mixed chiefly planted species and the remains of Curraghchase House, which is a roost for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat.
Due to distance and lack of pathways it is not considered that there will be effects on any Natura 2000 sites in Limerick.
Describe the individual elements of the plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site:
The main way in which ex-situ impacts could be created is through pollution that would affect water quality downstream in the Lower River Shannon SAC site or abstraction, which could threaten the Askeaton fen sites which are closer. Details outlined above demonstrate adequate capacity in the treatment plant to cater for the projected growth.

The water supply from Rathkeale comes from bore holes in Kilcolman 8km to the south of Rathkeale. To date no effects on the fen have been identified from this source.

A policy ensuring that development takes place only in line with the provision of appropriate infrastructure is included in the Plan, as a means of safeguarding sensitive landscapes in proximity to Rathkeale. Objective KI02 ensures that future development complies with the requirements of Irish Water and that there is adequate waste water to cater for existing and proposed development.

Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

Size and scale;

There are no designated sites within the town boundary. Ex-situ impacts are taken into account by including policies that ensure that development takes place in tandem with the establishment of appropriate facilities such as wastewater infrastructure- see SEA screening.

Land-take;

There is no land zoned within any Natura 2000 site, within Rathkeale. Consolidation of the land zoned on the principles of compact settlement, and serviceable lands, the zoning of lands for agricultural, and open space and recreational use, and riparian buffers along the River Deel affords protection to semi-natural habitats within the LAP boundary. While no Natura 2000 sites are within the town species such as Otters and Kingfishers are of conservation interest and their importance is acknowledged and it expected that any works on or close to the River Deel banks should take these species into account.

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

The River Shannon SAC site lies approximately 13km to the north Rathkeale; Askeaton fen complex lies 3.5km to the north; and the Curraghchase Woodlands site lies 6.5 km to the north east. The other SAC and SPA sites in Limerick are of considerable distance from Rathkeale that any effects from the implementation of the Local Area Plan are unlikely.



Figure 4: Designated Sites in proximity to Rathkeale

Resource requirements (water abstraction etc);

No policies within the LAP indicate the need for abstraction of water from the River Deel, the abstraction of ground water for the town lies to the south outside of any designated site.

Emission (disposal to land, water or air);

In the LAP, there are policies and objectives Chapter 9 Key infrastructure to ensure that the pace of development does not over-reach the capacity of the available treatment systems. It should also be noted that there is more than sufficient capacity in the WWTP to cater for the projected population growth for the town.

Excavation requirements;

Any excavation which may be permitted within the scope of the plan will take place within the LAP boundary and would be sufficiently distant from the designated sites so as to ensure that there will be no effect on any designated site.

Transportation requirements;

It is not envisaged that any of the transport policies put forward in the plan will have any effect in terms of encroachment on any designated sites.

Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc;

No construction projects within the plan area will encroach upon designated sites.

Other

None.

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

Reduction of habitat area:

None anticipated, no Natura 2000 sites exist within the town boundary.

Disturbance to key species;

No projects giving rise to disturbance to key species for Natura 2000 sites is likely within the boundary of the Plan as no such sites are present in the plan boundary. The inclusion of policies and objectives ensure that development takes place only in line with provision of wastewater treatment systems which, helps to ensure that no ex-situ effects through water pollution issues are reduced. See Chapter 11 Environment, Heritage and Blue Green infrastructure.

Habitat or species fragmentation

The absence of designated sites and the presumption in the Plan against development that would cause ex-situ effects will help to prevent ex-situ effects. The appropriate zoning of land, including Agriculture and Open Space and Recreation will help prevent fragmentation of non-designated Habitats within the plan area and reduce disturbance for the species that are contained within them.

Reduction in species density

There are no Natura 2000 sites close to or within the Plan area. It is not envisaged that any reductions in non-designated species density would take place through the fact that that de-zoning of residential lands has occurred. In the Limerick Development Plan, the emphasis placed on the nature conservation and ecological assessment and this is reflected in the LAP. Chapter 11 Environment, Heritage and Blue Green Infrastructure emphasises the protection of Natura 2000 sites and also non designated Habitats and landscape features in the plan area.

Changes in key indicators of conservation value

No projects giving rise to significant adverse changes in key indicators of conservation value for Natura 2000 sites are likely given that policies are in place to control possible ex-situ effects and the absence of Natura sites within the plan boundary. The reduction in the area zoned for residential in the current plan and its re-zoning as agricultural/open space lessen development pressure in the plan area, prevents overloading of existing infrastructure and by allowing a buffer around the rivers and tributaries in the Plan area reduces the chances of ex-situ effects on the Lower River Shannon Site in particular.

Climate Change

The consolidation of development within the boundary of the LAP while at the same time recognising the importance of the conservation sites outside the plan boundary is not expected to result in climate change issues that would affect the sites. The Climate Action Plan 2021 provides a detailed plan to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and set out in the Climate Act 2021.

The LAP has sections specifically devoted to climate action and will comply with legislation, guidance and targets that will emerge over the lifetime of the plan.

Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:
<p>Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site</p> <p>None anticipated as there are no Natura 2000 sites within the Plan area or close to it. See emphasis regarding development of sewage facilities in line with development to reduce chances of ex-situ effects.</p> <p>Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site</p> <p>With the consolidation of development by the updating of the plan and the overall conservation objectives set out in the Local Area Plan and by the Limerick Development Plan, it is not expected that the various factors that help designated sites function as particular Habitats will be affected.</p>
Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss - Not applicable. • Fragmentation - Not applicable. • Disruption - Not applicable. • Disturbance - Not applicable. • Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc)- <p>The Askeaton fen complex site synopsis identifies the main risk as being localised drainage. This is outside the control of the LAP and given the distance of the LAP area from the fen any works within its boundary are unlikely to have an effect.</p>
Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts are not known.
Not applicable.

5.2 Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix

Table 4 - No Significant Effects Matrix

Name of Project or Plan:	Rathkeale LAP 2023 – 2029
Name and location of Natura 2000 sites:	<p>Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code 002165) 13 km to the northwest.</p> <p>Askeaton Fen Complex (Site Code 002279) SAC site 3.5km to the north.</p> <p>Curraghchase Woodlands (Site Code 00174) 6.5km to the north east.</p>
Description of the Project or Plan	As given in Screening Matrix above.
Is the Project or Plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site	No

(provide details)?			
Are there other projects or plans that together with the project of plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?		The LAP has been written to ensure that the uses, developments and effects arising from proposals and/or permissions based upon the policies and objectives of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives.	
Assessment of Significance of Effects			
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 sites:		The review of the Rathkeale LAP includes policies relating to sewage infrastructure that minimises pollution risk to the sites and is not likely to affect the designated sites.	
Explain why these effects are not considered significant:		No sites exist within the plan boundaries and policies, including those set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 for the prevention of pollution, nuisance or other environmental effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.	
List of Agencies Consulted: Provide contact name and telephone or email address:		AA Screening Reports were sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.• EPA• Department of Environment, Climate and Communications.• Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.	
Response to consultation		Reponses received during initial consultation	
Data Collected to Carry out the Assessment			
Who carried out the Assessment?	Sources of Data	Level of assessment Completed	Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed
Heritage Officer, Forward Planning, Economic Development and Enterprise	Existing NPWS Site Synopses Site visits during plan	Desktop study, site visits	On display with plan.

Directorate, Limerick City and County Council.	preparation process.		
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6.0 Flood Risk Assessment

6.1 Introduction

The preparation of the Rathkeale Local Area Plan has been subject to a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Office of Public Works, 2009) and Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Circular PL 2/2014. The SFRA provides an assessment of flood risk and includes mapped extents of Flood Risk Zones. This report considers flood extents to inform the preparation of a land use plan.

The Local Area Plan is a land use plan and provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of the town of Rathkeale over the six-year period 2023 – 2029. The principals on which the plan has been developed upon is compact growth, promotion of a self-sustaining settlement supported by sustainable transport, to promote the growth of the town, in a sustainable manner.

Rathkeale is located 31km south west of Limerick City, and south of the N21 National Road. It is a Level 3 settlement as identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

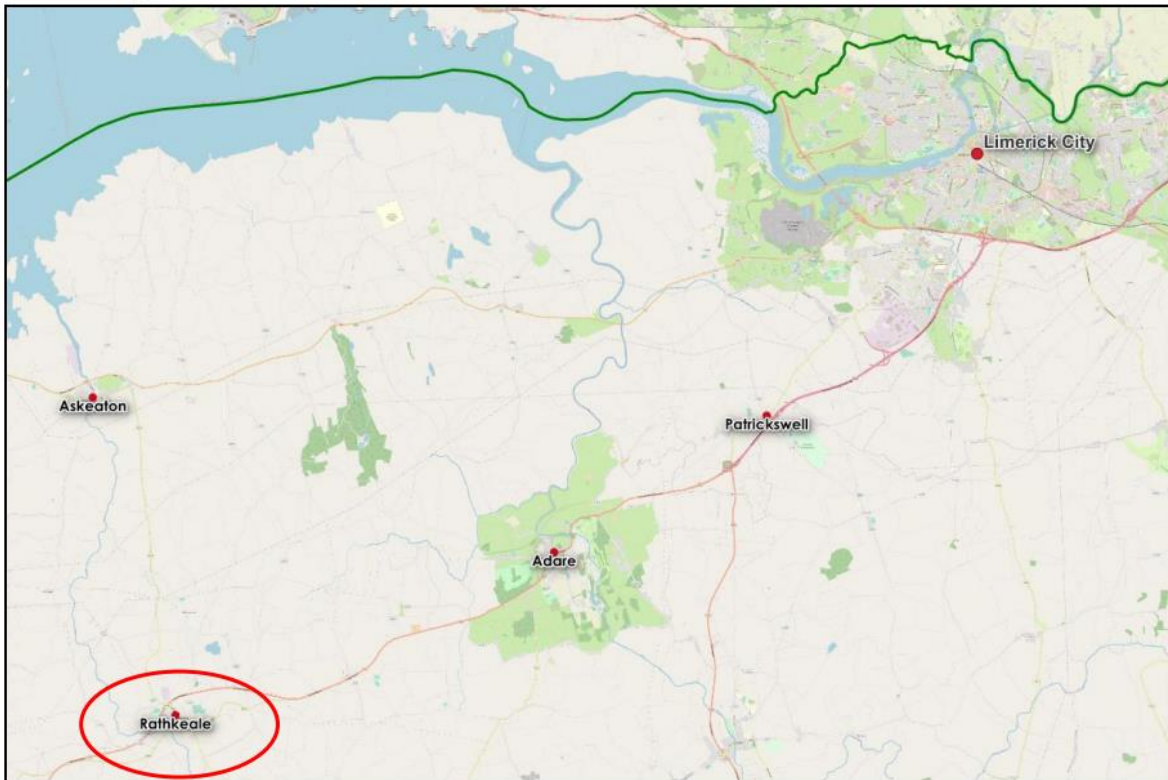


Figure 1: Location of Rathkeale in Limerick

6.2 Flood Risk Management Policy

6.2.1 EU Floods Directive

The European Directive 2007/60/EC provides the overarching European legislation, in relation to managing flood risk, it seeks to reduce and manage the risks that flooding pose to humans, the environment, cultural heritage and the environment. The legislation applies to both inland and coastal water sources and requires EU states to:

- Carry out a preliminary assessment in order to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas, where potential significant flood risk exists;
- Prepare flood extent maps for the identified areas;
- Prepare flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness. These plans are to include measures to reduce the probability of flooding and its potential consequences.

Implementation of the EU Floods Directive is required to be coordinated with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive and the current National River Basin Management Plan.

6.2.2 National Flood Policy

In line with evolving European legislation and evolving national legislation, the government in 2004 established a Flood Policy Review Group and carried out an

interdepartmental review of national flood risk management policy and approved a Flood Policy Review Report. The recommendations of the Report included appointment of the OPW as lead agency for co-ordinating delivery of flood risk management policy. The OPW carries out this role by co-ordinating the implementation of flood risk management policy and measures across three strategic areas:

- Prevention - avoiding construction in flood-prone areas;
- Protection - taking feasible measures to protect areas against flooding.
- Preparedness - planning and responding to reduce the impacts of flood events.

The review also identified a number of key measures for implementation in relation to flood risk management, most relevant to plan preparation is the "Planning System and Flood Risk Management" guidelines published in 2009, which provide guidance to Local Authorities on plan formulation and decision making in areas at risk of flooding. The review also resulted in an enhancement to availability of data on flood risk and reporting on flood events, which assists in decision making in relation to land use planning.

6.2.2.1 National CFRAM Programme

The OPW undertook the National Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme in consultation with the Local Authorities and supported by external engineering consultants. The objectives of the CFRAM Programme was to:

- Identify and map the existing and potential future flood hazard and flood risk in the areas at potentially significant risk from flooding, called Areas for Further Assessment (AFAs);
- identify feasible structural and non-structural measures to effectively manage the assessed risk in each of the AFAs, and
- Prepare a set of Flood Risk Management Plans, and associated Strategic Environmental and Habitats Directive (Appropriate) Assessments, that set out the feasible measures and actions to manage the flood risk in these areas and their river catchments.

The Programme is being implemented through CFRAM studies that have been undertaken for each of the river basin districts in Ireland. The CFRAM Programme comprises three phases as follows:

- The Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) mapping exercise, which was completed in 2012;
- The CFRAM Studies and parallel activities, with Flood Risk Management Plans and
- Implementation and Review.

The CFRAM programme has provided invaluable background information in relation to flooding throughout Ireland and is invaluable in terms of plan formulation. These maps have

recently been updated with the National Indicative Fluvial Mapping and National Coastal Flood Hazard Mapping and probabilistic and historical ground water flood maps prepared by the Geological Survey of Ireland.

6.2.2.2 Flood Risk Management Guidelines

Introduction In 2009, the OPW and the Department of the Environment and Local Government (DEHLG) published Guidelines on flood risk management for planning authorities entitled **The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities**. The Guidelines seeks to establish a regime to assist with flood risk identification, assessment and management and embed this into the planning process.

The core objectives of the Guidelines are to:

- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding;
- Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface water run-off;
- Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains;
- Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth;
- Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders; and
- Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management.

The Guidelines follow the principle that development should not be permitted in flood risk areas, particularly floodplains, except where there are no alternative and appropriate sites available in lower risk areas that are consistent with the objectives of proper planning and sustainable development.

One of the key areas identified in the Flood Guidelines is around identifying flood risk, which is an expression of the combination of the flood probability or likelihood and the magnitude of the potential consequences of the flood event. It is normally expressed in terms of the following relationship:

$$\text{Flood risk} = \text{Likelihood of flooding} \times \text{Consequences of flooding}$$

Likelihood of flooding is normally defined as the percentage probability of a flood of a given magnitude or severity occurring or being exceeded in any given year.

Consequences of flooding depend on the hazards associated with the flooding (e.g. depth of water, speed of flow, rate of onset, duration, wave-action effects, water quality) and the

vulnerability of people, property and the environment potentially affected by a flood (e.g. the age profile of the population, the type of development and the presence and reliability of mitigation measures).

Flood zones are geographical areas within which the likelihood of flooding is in a particular range and they are a key tool in flood risk management within the planning process as well as in flood warning and emergency planning.

There are three types of flood zones defined for the purposes of the Flood Guidelines:

- Flood Zone A – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding);
- Flood Zone B – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding and between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 year and 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding); and
- Flood Zone C – where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding).

Flood Zone C covers all other areas that are not in zones A or B.

6.3 Stage 1 Flood Risk Identification

Flood risk identification was undertaken in order to identify whether there may be any flooding or surface water management issues within or adjacent to zoned lands and consequently whether Stage 2 SFRA (flood risk assessment) should be proceeded to. Stage 1 SFRA is based on existing information on flood risk indicators based on available flood detail.

The River Deel lies south west of Rathkeale and eventually flows to the Shannon Estuary at Askeaton. Rathkeale town is situated on the N21 (Limerick to Tralee) and extends across the right and left banks of the River Deel. However, the majority of the settlement is located on the right bank. The area between Church Street and New Line Road (on the right bank) has a small tributary of the Deel, which runs north-east towards Beechmount Demesne. There has been a history of flood events in Rathkeale, which have been recorded on www.floodmaps.ie

6.3.1 Flood Risk Indicators

One of the best indicators of flood events is the historical layer on flooding. This detail has been reproduced below which shows recurring flood events at the Deel Bridge in the town. There are also flood events associated with N21 also spanning the River Deel. Past reports indicate that they are associated with prolonged rainfall events.



Figure 2: Taken from www.floodinfo.ie this shows past flood events in Rathkeale

6.3.2 Conclusion of Stage 1 SFRA

The information detailed above indicates elevated levels of flood risk in various locations across the Plan area; therefore, a Stage 2 SFRA has been proceeded to.

6.4 Stage 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

6.4.1 Introduction

Stage 2 SFRA is being undertaken to:

- Confirm the sources of flooding that may affect zoned and adjacent areas;
- Appraise the adequacy of existing information as identified by the Stage 1 SFRA; and
- Scope the extent of the risk of flooding through the preparation of a Flood Zone Map.

6.4.2 Assessment of information outlined above and Delineation of Flood Zones

In order to inform the Stage 2 assessment, the village was inspected, which involved numerous site visits in order to examine, the potential source and direction of flood paths from fluvial sources, locations of topographic features that coincide with the flood boundaries and to identify vegetation associated with a high frequency of flood inundation. The OPW have identified a Rathkeale Flood Relief Scheme for Rathkeale, which is identified as a small scale scheme, initial assessment and walkover surveys have been carried out to support the scheme, which has assisted in informing this report and has informed the zoning decisions in the Local Area Plan.

6.4.3 Flooding from Other Sources

The ground water flooding data viewer on the GSI Website identifies surface water flooding from the winter of 2015, in an area just outside the north of the plan area. The winter of 2015 was exceptional in terms of rainfall and would as a result be a good standard for comparison for ground water flooding events and surface water flooding events. Also to the north of plan area an area of ground water flooding is shown (purple shading). There is one area of surface water flooding within the plan area to the southeast but this is within an area of land zoned for agricultural purposes, which reflects its current usage.

Local soil conditions and percolation characteristics can influence issues such as surface water ponding and surface water flooding. In the location where surface water flooding has been indicated on the GSI website, the soils present are Howardstown Gleys, which the Teagasc soil survey (1966), describes as being poorly drained. The other soil type is the Elton grey brown podzolic group that is described as moderately well drained. This is shown as red shading in Figure 4 below.

Another possible source of flooding is the movement of surface water over impermeable surfaces. Local rainfall events can generate sufficient volume of run off to move down gradient towards lower ground. This can lead to drainage infrastructure being overwhelmed, particularly if drains and culverts become blocked by debris.

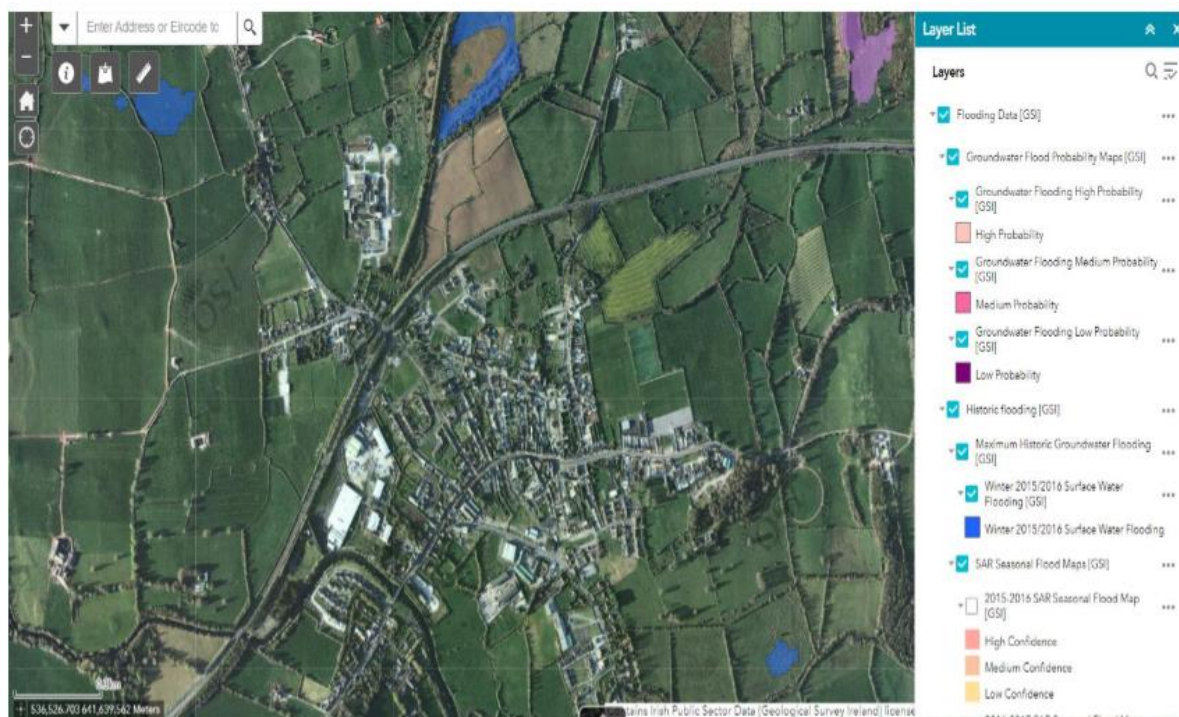


Figure 4: GSI website extract, which shows surface water flooding and ground water flooding inside and outside the LAP boundaries

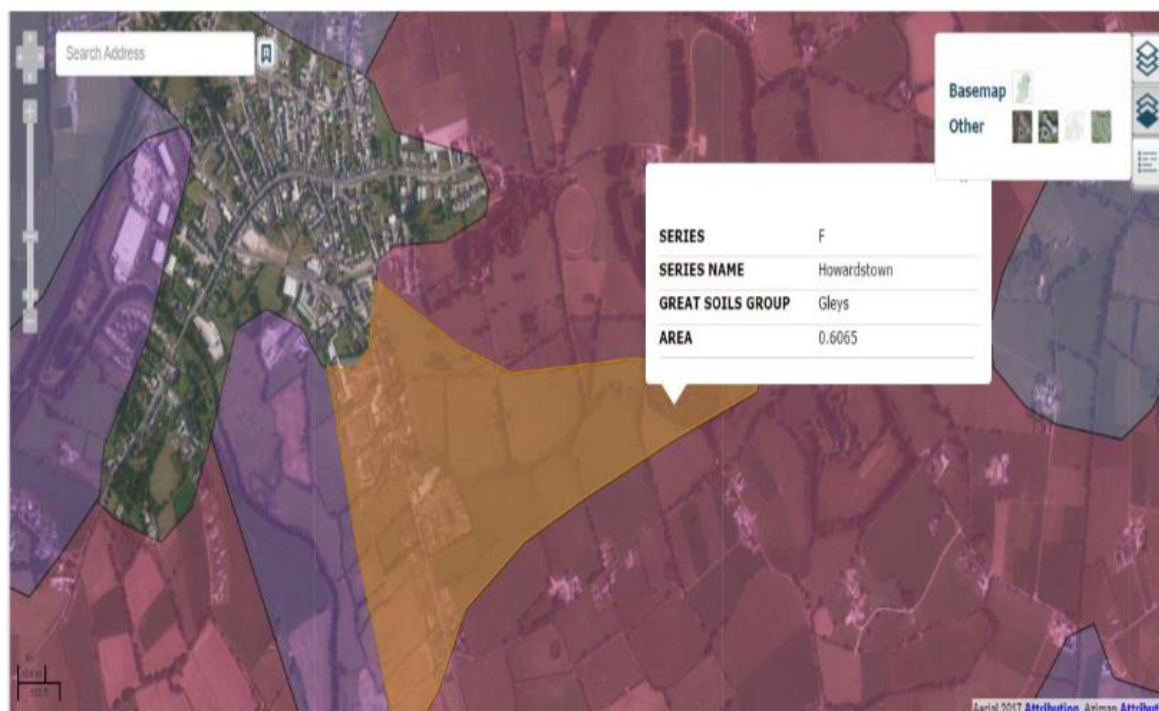


Figure 5: Soil types in the area of surface water flooding within the plan area

6.4.4 Flood defences

The Flood Risk Management County Summary for Limerick outlines a proposal for a small scale flood relief project. This is under consideration by the Local authority and OPW, to consider the benefits of the scheme.

6.4.5 Flood Risk Zone Mapping

A Flood Risk Map has been produced taking into account the findings of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 SFRA as detailed above. The map is illustrated below identifies Flood Zone A (darker blue) and Flood Zone B4 (lighter blue). As per the Guidelines, the flood zones in Rathkeale are as follows:

- Flood Zone A – where the probability of flooding from the River Shannon and its tributaries is highest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding);
- Flood Zone B – where the probability of flooding from the River Shannon and its tributaries is moderate (between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding); and;
- Flood Zone C – where the probability of flooding from the River Shannon and its tributaries is low (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for river flooding).

6.4.6 Climate change considerations

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Technical Appendices, 2009 recommends that a precautionary approach to climate change is adopted due to the level of uncertainty involved in the potential effects. In this regard, the Guidelines recommends:

- Recognising that significant changes in the flood extent may result from an increase in rainfall or tide events and accordingly adopting a cautious approach to zoning land in these potential transitional areas;
- Ensuring that the levels of structures designed to protect against flooding such as flood defences, land raising or raised floor levels are sufficient to cope with the effects of climate change over the lifetime of the development they are designed to protect (normally 85-100 years); and
- Ensuring that structures to protect against flooding and the development protected are capable of adaptation to the effects of climate change when there is more certainty about the effects and still time for such adaptation to be effective

Advice on the expected impacts of climate change and the allowances to be provided for future flood risk management in Ireland is given in the OPW Draft Guidance on Assessment of Potential Future Scenarios for Flood Risk Management (2009). Two climate change scenarios are considered. These are the Mid-Range Future Scenario (MRFS) and the High-End Future Scenario (HEFS). The MRFS is intended to represent a "likely" future scenario

based on the wide range of future predictions available. The HEFS represents a more "extreme" future scenario at the upper boundaries of future projections. The mapping provided in the SFRA Flood Zones A and B have been informed by the OPW's CFRAMS Present-Day Scenario. However, the flood relief scheme currently being design is developed to incorporate climate change.

In addition to considering climate change factors in the SFRA, the Council have embedded the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Nature Based Solutions (NBS) into the Local Area Plan, which not only has climate benefits, but also a range of environmental benefits to support the delivery of sustainable development. The approach taken in the, in line with the recently adopted Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, is to seek to adopt SuDS and nature based solutions as appropriate, not just on key development sites. Objective CC O3 incorporates the use of SuDS, as a means of managing surface water.

The approach taken in the Rathkeale Local Area Plan , in line with the recently adopted Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, which seeks to adopt SuDS and nature based solutions as appropriate not just on key development sites. The Council will work with developers to promote SuDS and nature based solutions on a case by case basis and tailor solutions to the specific sites.

6.5 Section 5 Recommendations and Integration with Local Area Plan

6.5.1 Introduction

In order to comply with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Circular (PL 2/2014) and contribute towards flood risk management within the Plan area, the recommendations below have been made by the SFRA process.

- Previously undeveloped lands within Zones A or B should not be zoned for incompatible uses, unless a Justification Test is passed (including a planning conclusion that there are no alternative locations available for accommodating such uses). With respect to previously developed lands, the potential conflict between zonings and highly vulnerable development will be avoided by applying a limiting land use policy approach, as outlined in Objective CC O3 shall be applied on these lands. Full details of all flood justification tests are included in Appendix 1.
- Incorporate a policies and objectives to manage surface water in line with Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and nature based solutions.

6.5.2 Integration of provisions of Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Management into the Local Area Plan

In the formulation of the Local Area Plan to date, the Council have sought to ensure that appropriate integration of the recommendations of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Rathkeale Local Area Plan has taken place, in order to comply with the Flood Guidelines and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Objectives as follows are critical to complying with the relevant legalisation:

- Objective CC O3 – Climate Change and Flood Risk Management – which seeks to comply with the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL2/2014, it also seeks to cooperate with the OPW in delivery of the flood relief scheme and to safeguard access to drainage channels. This policy also directly relates to sustainable surface water management and protecting surface water resources.

Coupled with key policies and objectives in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, which are as follows:

- Policy CAF P5 – Managing Flood Risk - It is a policy of the Council to protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate lands, in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 (or any subsequent document) and the guidance contained in Development Management Standards and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).
- Objective CAF O20 – Flood Risk Assessments – It is an objective of the Council to require a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for all planning applications in Flood Zones A and B and consider all sources of flooding (for example coastal/tidal, fluvial, pluvial or groundwater), where deemed necessary.
- Objective IN O12 – Surface Water and SuDS – The Development Plan sets out that there are many approaches to management of surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution), biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity and these are collectively referred to as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). The use of SuDS to address surface water and its diversion from combined sewers is encouraged, in particular, in infill/brownfield sites and higher density areas as appropriate.

It is considered that the approach outlined above and the policies and objectives of the Limerick Development Plan and the Rathkeale Local Area Plan Local Area Plan, provide a robust approach to support the Plan making process.

6.5.3 Conclusion

Stage 2 SFRA has been undertaken as part of the Plan-preparation process and the SFRA has informed the preparation of the Plan. The SFRA has mapped boundaries identifying areas at risk of flooding, taking into account many factors to determine the extent of flooding. In the preparation of this Local Area Plan, significant rationalisation of the zoning pattern has been carried out, the Council have, in so far as possible sought to avoid zoning of lands at flood risk or have zoned lands for water compatible uses. The Council have also sought to incorporate nature based solutions and blue green infrastructure measures into the plan, as a means of dealing with surface water, while also benefitting climate action. The Council, in conjunction with the OPW are currently developing a flood relief scheme for the town of Rathkeale, which will seek to safeguard the town from flood risk.

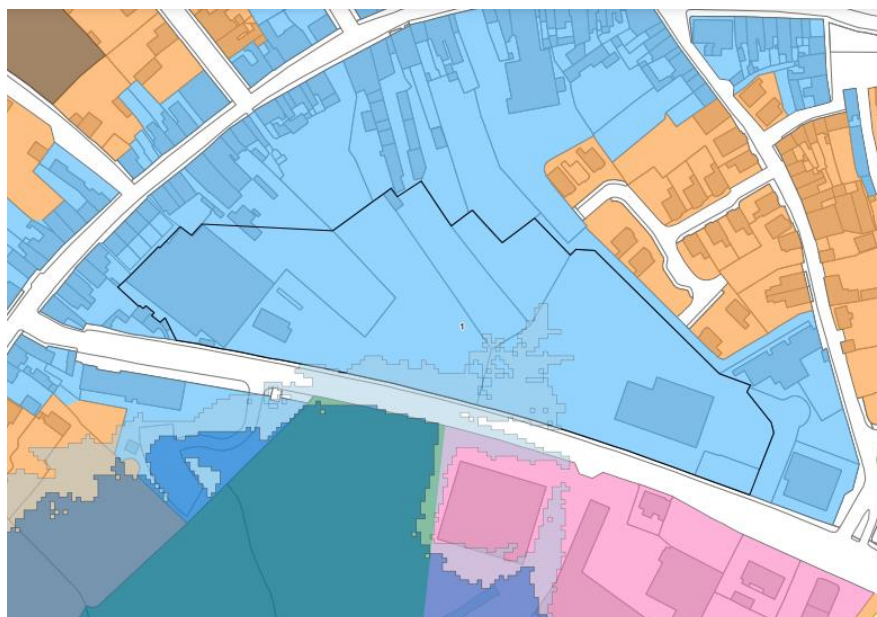
Appendix I - Flood Justification Tests

As per Section 4.2 of Flood Guidelines, Flood Justification Tests has been undertaken for lands zoned in the LAP, which are identified as liable to flooding, according to the most up to date flooding maps available. These lands are in the main are developed or unsuitable for development and where unsuitable for development have been zoned for purpose of agricultural use or Open Space and Recreation, which will generally only permit water compatible uses.

(a) Former Mart Site

1 The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.

Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy, identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities supporting Rathkeale’s hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town. The site is located adjacent to Main Street and has potential to support a broad range of employment, retail, community, residential and transport functions for the existing town centre, in addition to critical infrastructure creating a connection between Main Street and New Line, which will support pedestrian and cycle modes and create greater connectivity within the town.



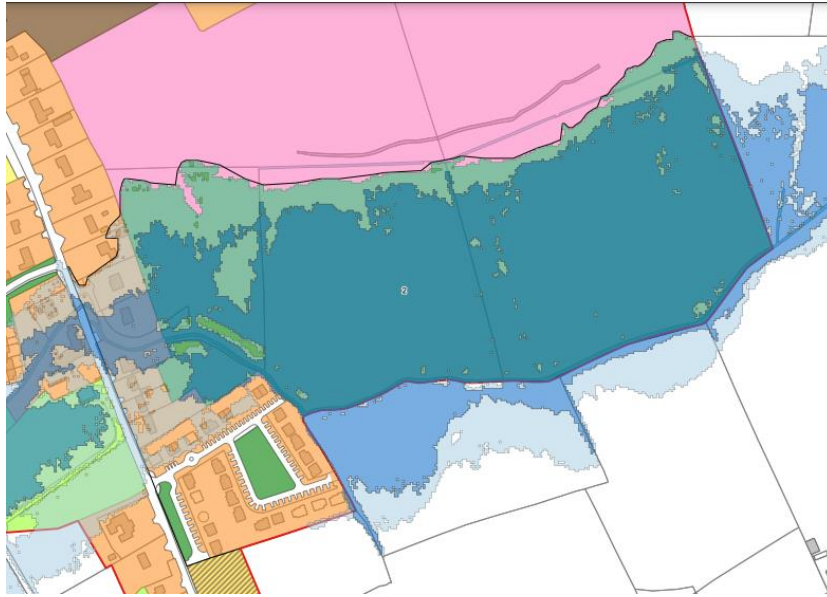
2	<p>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</p>	
	<p>(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement</p>	<p>This brown-fill site is ideally located in the town centre and is of sufficient scale to offer opportunities, for connectivity between Main Street and community facilities at New Line, including public library, school and crèche. It satisfies national planning policy in terms of compact growth, the re-development of vacant, under-used lands and applying the sequential approach to development by prioritising the development of lands adjacent to the town centre, in this case Main Street in Rathkeale. Appropriate development of these lands supports the envisaged population growth of Rathkeale as per the Core Strategy and higher-level spatial plans within the lifetime of the LAP. A limited area of a large site, is identified as being at flood risk, which subject to a site specific flood risk assessment could be designed to incorporate water compatible uses on these lands, identified as being at flood risk.</p>
	<p>(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands</p>	<p>This site was the location of the former Mart in Rathkeale Town. This site is vacant and the under-used structures have fallen into dereliction.</p>
	<p>(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement</p>	<p>The lands are zoned town centre and located immediately adjoining the core of the town. A number of key services are within 150m of the site. The site satisfies the 10 Minute Town Concept and redevelopment of the site would support/strengthen the town centre.</p>
	<p>(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth</p>	<p>The redevelopment on these lands will contribute to compact urban growth aligned to higher-level spatial policy.</p>
	<p>(v) There are no suitable</p>	<p>Lands are located on Main Street is the central</p>

	alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	and historic core of Rathkeale. The lands will assist in consolidation of the core of the town, provide connectivity within the town and support sustainable means of movement.
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	A limited part of these lands are subject to flooding as indicated in the map above. The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines to consider this limited piece of land, in the overall development of a masterplan for the lands. On this limited area of flood risk, the masterplan can be designed to ensure that water compatible uses can be considered on the lands.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures outlined above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands as town centre for development is appropriate subject to more detailed site-specific flood risk assessment on the limited proportion of lands, which shall be submitted with planning applications on these lands.		

(b) Abbeylands/Ballywilliam

These lands are located on R518 Ballingarry Road, approximately 800m from the town centre and are zoned Existing Residential.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy, identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.



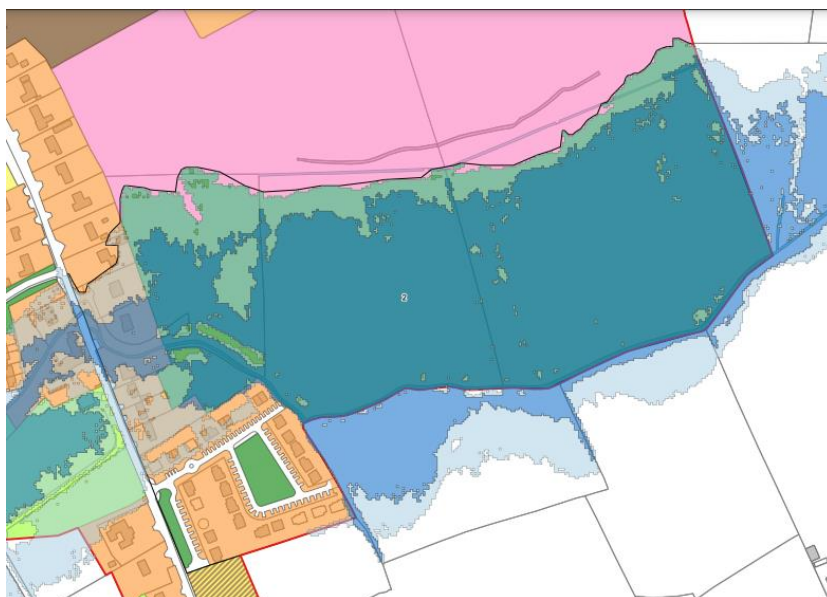
2	<p>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</p>	
<p>(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement</p>	<p>Lands are located 800 metres from the town centre and lands are zoned for residential development and contains existing dwelling houses.</p>	
<p>(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands</p>	<p>Lands are located 800 metres from the town centre and lands are zoned for residential development and contains existing dwelling houses.</p>	
<p>(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement</p>	<p>Lands are located 800 metres from the town centre and lands are zoned for residential development and contains existing dwelling houses.</p>	
<p>(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth</p>	<p>Lands are located 800 metres from the town centre and lands are zoned for residential development and contains existing dwelling houses.</p>	
<p>(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement</p>	<p>Lands are already developed.</p>	

3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	The extent of Flood Zone A/B across much of this zoning is limited and risks can be managed by limiting development to minor developments in areas at risk of flooding as per Section 5.28 of the Flood Guidelines.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test <p>Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands as existing residential for development is appropriate subject to the provisions of Section 5.28 of the Flood Guidelines and as set out in Circular PL 2/2014, developments shall be limited to minor developments.</p>	

(c) Abbeylands/Ballywilliam

These lands are located on R518 Ballingarry Road, approximately 800m from the town centre and are zoned Open Space and Recreation.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines. <p>Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy, identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.</p>
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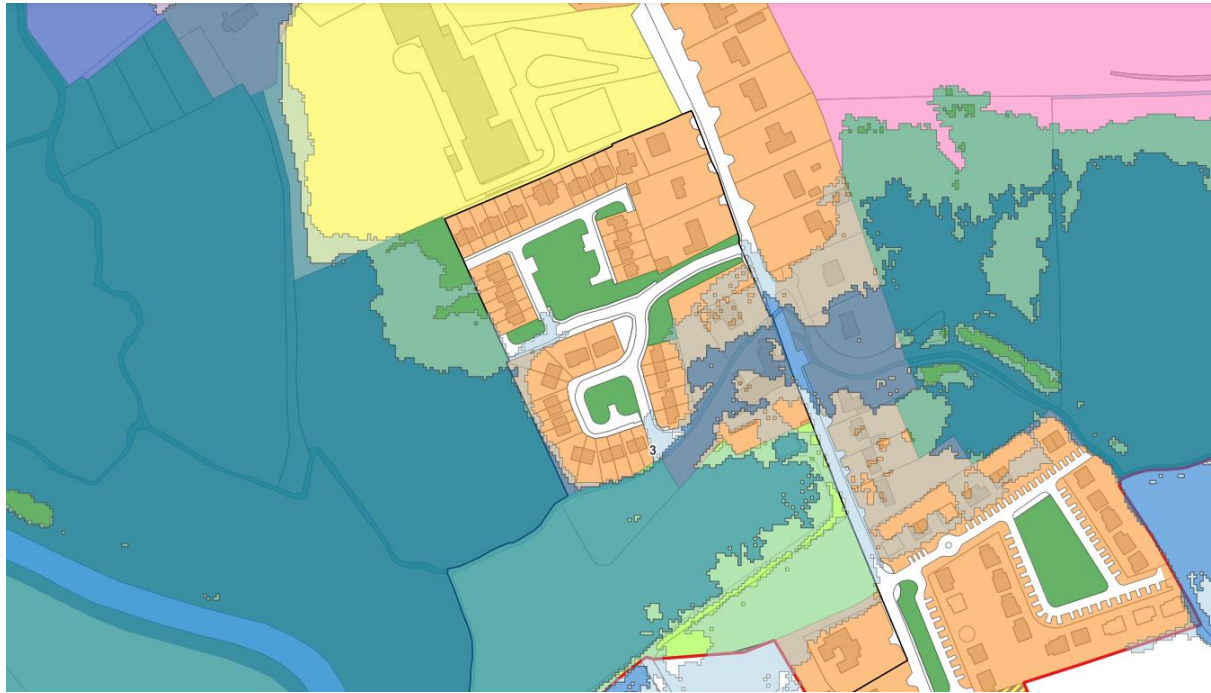
2	<p>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</p>	
	(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	The lands are zoned Open Space and Recreation, having regard to the extent of flood risk on the lands. Development in this area would be restricted to water compatible development.
	(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	No.
	(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	Within 800 metres of the town centre.
	(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	No.
	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	The lands are zoned Open Space and Recreation, having regard to the extent of flood risk on the lands. Development in this area would be restricted to water compatible development.
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the	Development in this area would be restricted to water compatible development, in line with the Flood Guidelines.

<p>Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.</p>	
<p>4 Conclusion of the Justification Test</p>	
<p>Given the measures above, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands as Open Space and Recreation is appropriate and accordingly, development should be limited to water compatible uses.</p>	

(d) Englishtenements – Cois Deel

These lands are located on R518 Ballingarry Road, approximately 700m from the town centre and consist of an occupied housing estate (Cois Deel) zoned Existing Residential and residential development directly served by the R518, zoned Existing Residential.

<p>1 The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.</p>
<p>Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy, identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.</p>



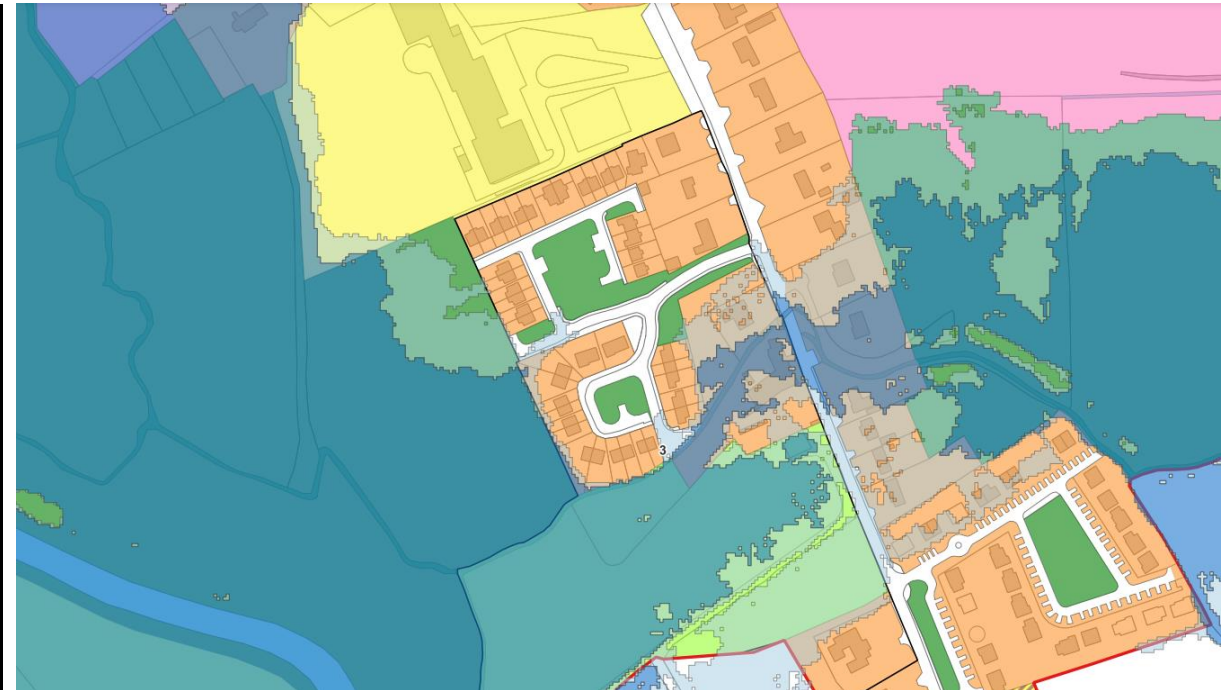
2 The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:	
(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	Lands are located 700 metres from the town centre and lands are zoned for residential development and contains existing dwelling houses.
(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	Lands are located 700 metres from the town centre and lands are zoned for residential development and contains existing dwelling houses.
(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	Lands are located 700 metres from the town centre and lands are zoned for residential development and contains existing dwelling houses.
(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	Lands are located 700 metres from the town centre and lands are zoned for residential development and contains existing dwelling houses.
(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower	Lands are already developed.

	risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	The extent of Flood Zone A/B across much of this zoning is limited and risks can be managed by limiting development to minor developments in areas at risk of flooding as per Section 5.28 of the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL/2/2014..
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
	Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands as existing residential for development is appropriate subject to the provisions of Section 5.28 of the Flood Guidelines and as set out in Circular PL 2/2014, developments shall be limited to minor developments.	

(e) Enligthenements – adjoining Cois Deel

These lands are located on R518 Ballingarry Road, approximately 700m from the town centre and consist of a lands zoned Open Space and Recreation.

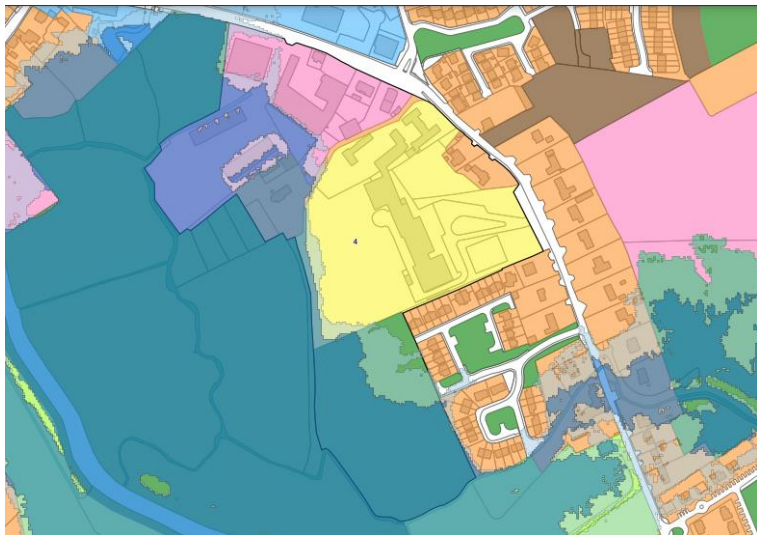
1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities, which supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.

											
2	<p>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="209 1032 783 1178">(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement</td><td data-bbox="783 1032 1437 1178">The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="209 1178 783 1279">(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands</td><td data-bbox="783 1178 1437 1279">No.</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="209 1279 783 1424">(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement</td><td data-bbox="783 1279 1437 1424">The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="209 1424 783 1525">(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth</td><td data-bbox="783 1424 1437 1525">The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="209 1525 783 1771">(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement</td><td data-bbox="783 1525 1437 1771">Lands are zoned Open Space and Recreation, water compatible uses shall be consider</td></tr> </table>	(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation	(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	No.	(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation	(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	Lands are zoned Open Space and Recreation, water compatible uses shall be consider
(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation										
(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	No.										
(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation										
(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	The lands zoned as liable to flooding are zoned Open Space and Recreation										
(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	Lands are zoned Open Space and Recreation, water compatible uses shall be consider										
3	<p>A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process,</p> <p>The lands are zoned Open Space and Recreation, having regard to the extent of flood risk on the lands. Development in this area would be restricted to water compatible development.</p>										

	which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test
Given the measures above, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands as Open Space and Recreation is appropriate and accordingly, development should be limited to water compatible uses.	

(f) Englishtenements – New Line Road

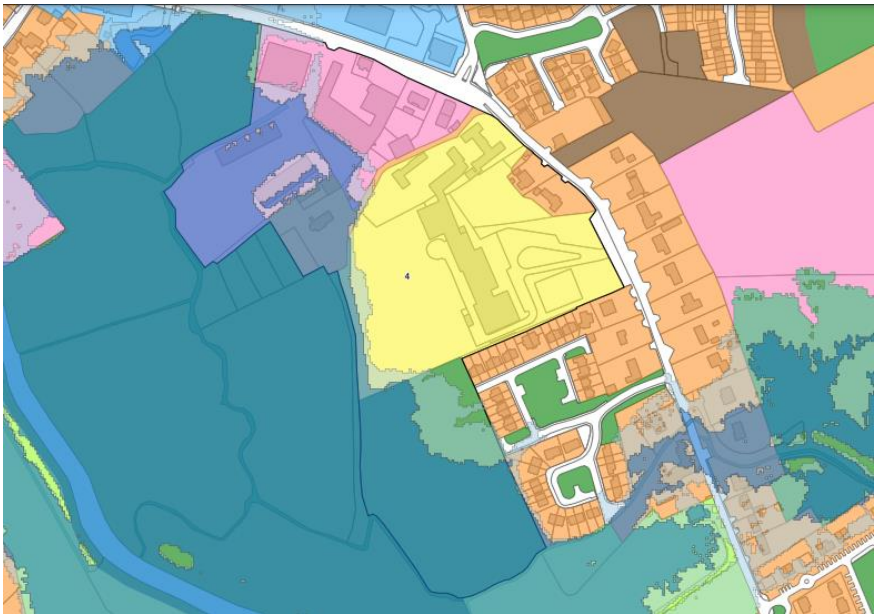
These lands are located on R518 Ballingarry Road, approximately 700m from the town centre and are zoned Enterprise and Employment.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	<p>Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.</p> 
2	The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town

and in particular:		
	(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	Lands zoned Enterprise and Employment reflect existing uses as businesses in operation on the lands.
	(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	Currently developed.
	(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	The lands are within 700m of town centre and the zoning reflects existing use.
	(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	The zoning reflects existing use.
	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	Lands zoned Enterprise and Employment reflect existing uses as businesses in operation on the lands.
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as indicated in the map above. The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Future development is generally limited to minor developments, in areas liable to flooding in line with the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL 2/2014.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands.		

(g) Englishtenements – New Line Road

These lands are located on R518 Ballingarry Road, approximately 700m from the town centre and are zoned Community and Education.

1	<p>The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.</p> <p>Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.</p> 				
2	<p>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="231 1688 724 1935">(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement</td><td data-bbox="724 1688 1394 1935">Lands zoned Community and Education reflecting the existing use as a post primary school in operation on the lands. The outer edges of the site are identified as being at flood risk.</td></tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="231 1935 724 2031">(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or</td><td data-bbox="724 1935 1394 2031">Currently developed.</td></tr> </table>	(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	Lands zoned Community and Education reflecting the existing use as a post primary school in operation on the lands. The outer edges of the site are identified as being at flood risk.	(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or	Currently developed.
(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	Lands zoned Community and Education reflecting the existing use as a post primary school in operation on the lands. The outer edges of the site are identified as being at flood risk.				
(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or	Currently developed.				

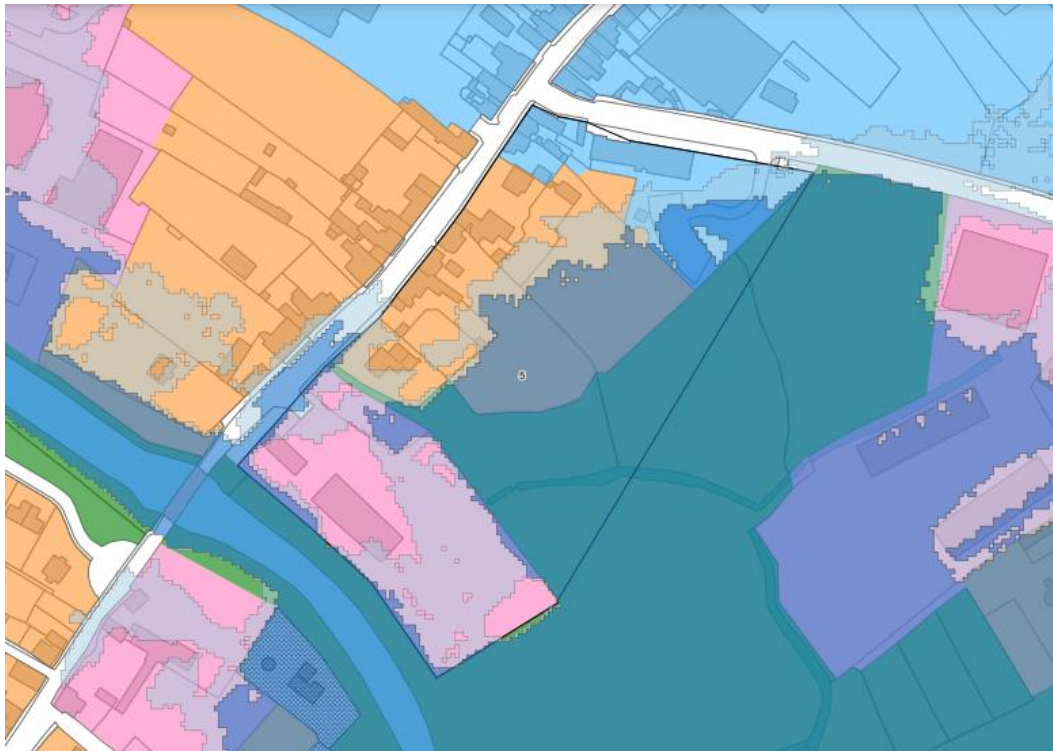
	under-utilised lands	
	(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	The lands are within 700m of town centre and the zoning reflects existing use.
	(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	The zoning reflects existing use.
	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	Lands zoned Communication and Education reflecting the existing use on the lands, as a post primary school.
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as indicated in the map above. The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Future development is generally limited to minor developments, in areas liable to flooding in line with the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL 2/2014.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands.		

(h) Lower Main Street – South of Main Street/R523

These lands are located to the rear of the south streetscape of Lower Main Street and New Line. The lands are zoned Town Centre.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick

Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.



2	The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:	
(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	These lands are zoned Town Centre and are critical to facilitating the regeneration and expansion of Rathkeale Town Centre.	
(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	These land use zones reflect existing use.	
(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	These lands are zoned Town Centre and are critical to facilitating the regeneration and expansion of Rathkeale Town Centre.	
(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	These lands are zoned Town Centre and are critical to facilitating the regeneration and expansion of Rathkeale Town Centre, critical to	

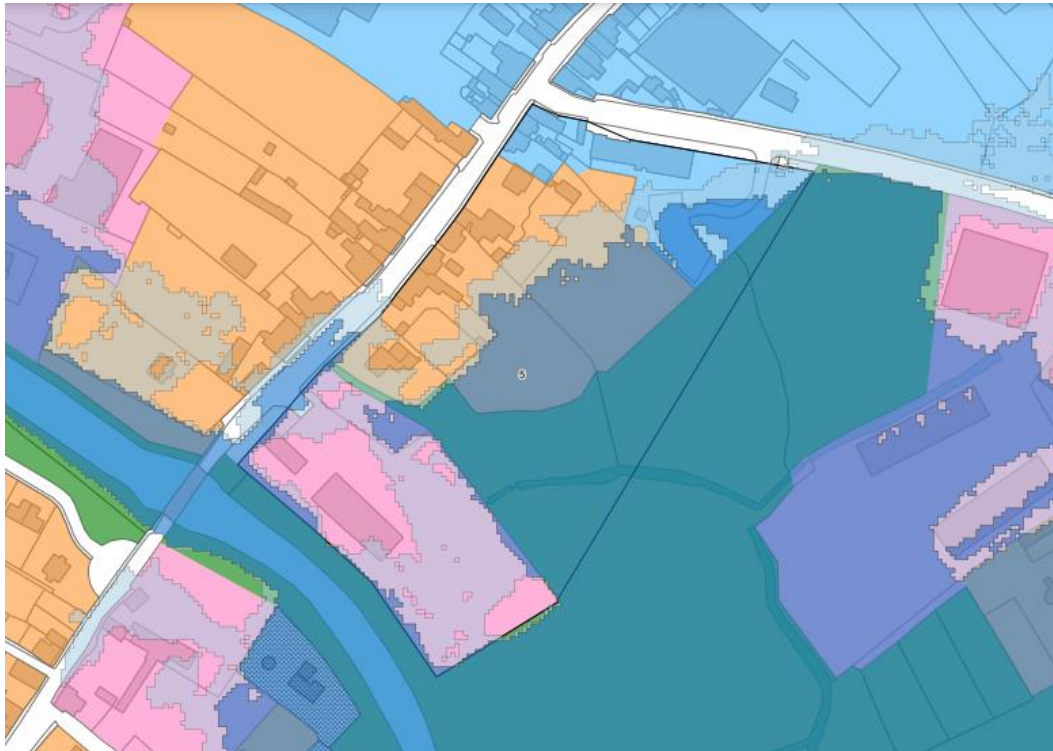
		achieving compact growth in Rathkeale.
	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	Having regard to the location of the lands in such a critical location, it is considered that they remain zoned to support town centre development and be subject to appropriate flood risk assessment.
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of an appropriate level of site specific flood risk assessment carried out to support new development to consolidate the town centre.		

(i) Lower Main Street – South of Main Street/R523

These lands are located to the rear of the south streetscape of Lower Main Street and New Line. The lands are zoned Existing Residential.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes

targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.



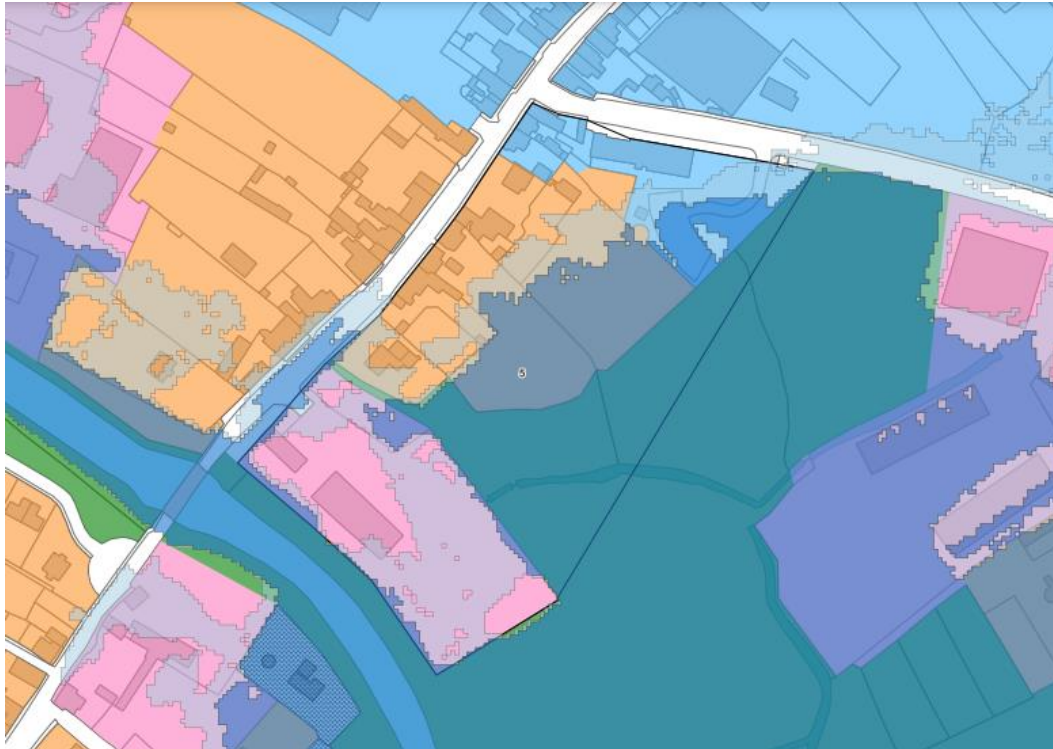
2 The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:	
(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.

	settlement	
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as indicated in the map above. The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Future development is generally limited to minor developments, in areas liable to flooding in line with the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL 2/2014.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands.		

(j) Lower Main Street – South of Main Street/R523

These lands are located to the rear of the south streetscape of Lower Main Street and New Line. The lands are zoned Enterprise and Employment.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.



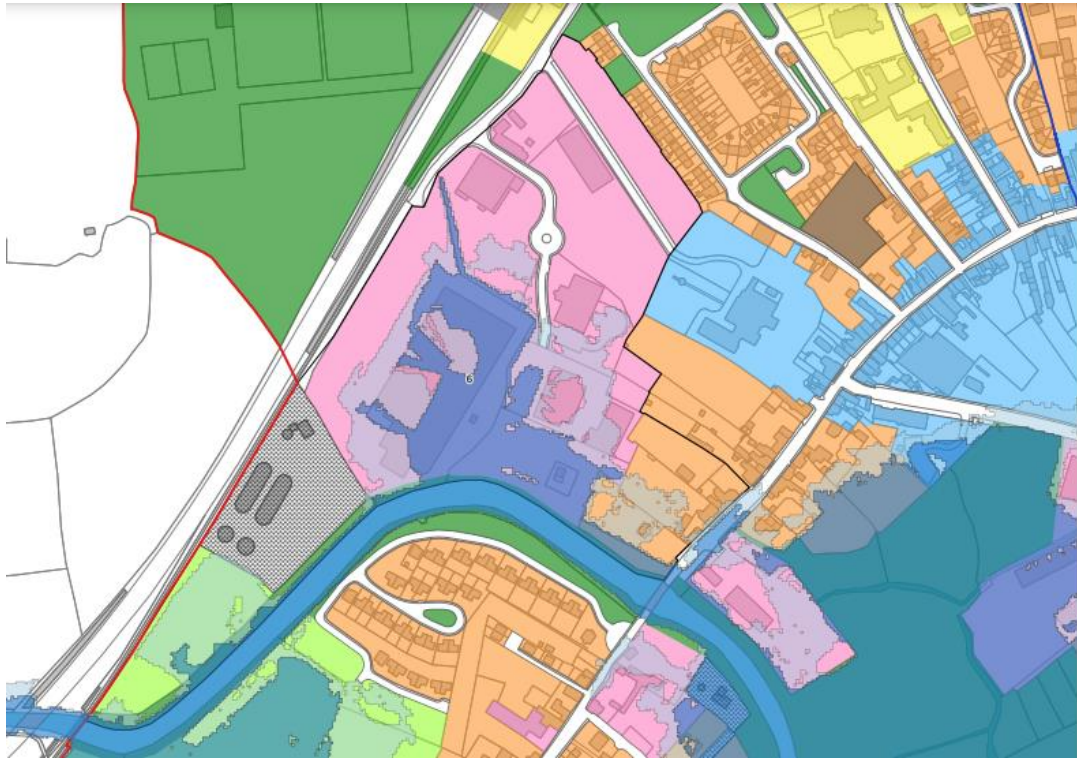
2	The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:	
	(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	These lands are zoned Enterprise and Employment to reflect existing use.
	(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	Currently developed.
	(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	Located on the Main Street.
	(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	Yes.
	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	These lands are zoned Enterprise and Employment to reflect existing use.
3	A flood risk assessment to an	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as

<p>appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.</p>	<p>indicated in the map above. The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Future development is generally limited to minor developments, in areas liable to flooding in line with the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL 2/2014.</p>
<p>4 Conclusion of the Justification Test</p>	
<p>Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands.</p>	

(k) Rathkeale Enterprise Park

These lands are located on the northern bank of the River Deel and east of the N21 and the Limerick Greenway. These lands are zoned Enterprise and Employment reflecting a number of businesses operating in the N21 Rathkeale Business Park. These lands are located circa 400m walking distance of the Town Centre.

<p>1</p>	<p>The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.</p> <p>Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy as identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.</p>
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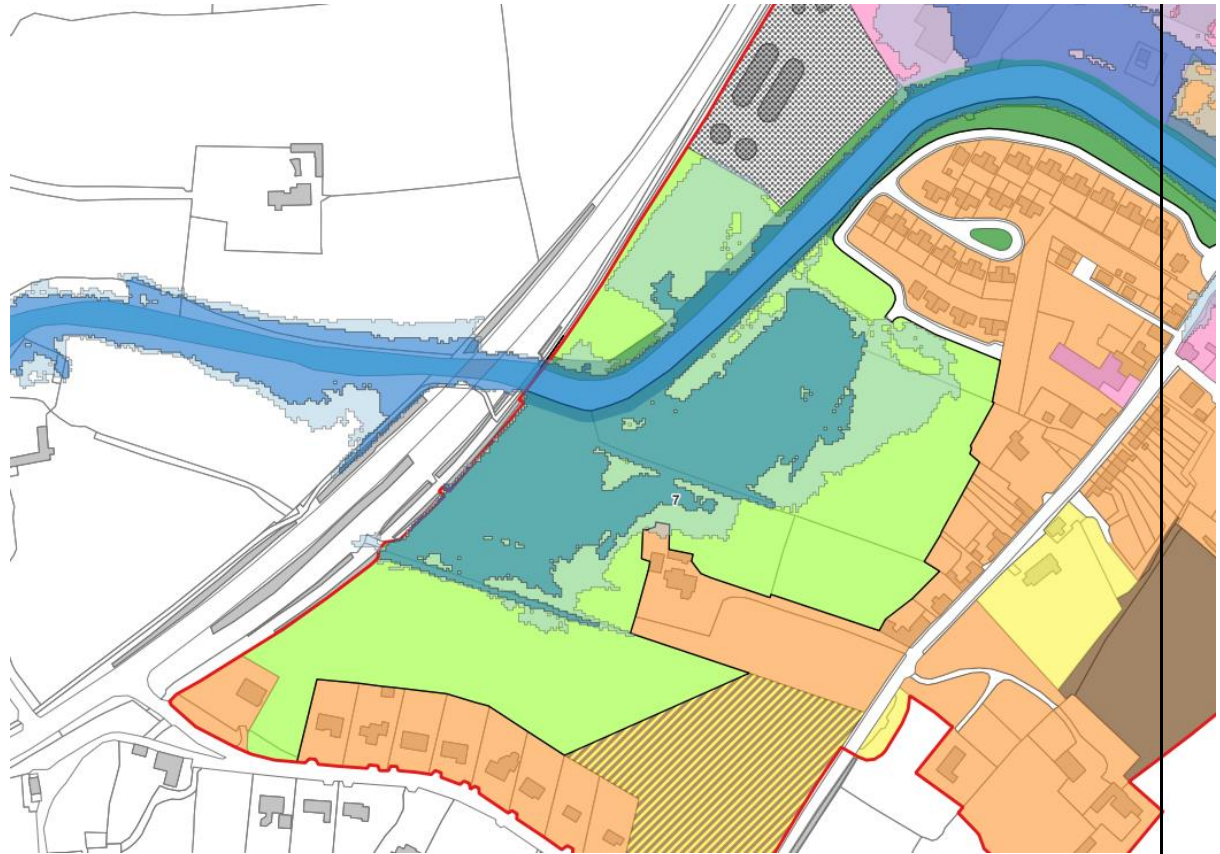
2	<p>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</p>	
(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	This Business Park is critical for the economic sustainability and employment generating opportunities in Rathkeale and its hinterland.	
(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	At present these lands are near full occupancy for business activity.	
(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	The business park is within 400m walking distance of the Town Centre.	
(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	The location is ideal in terms of employment opportunities within walking distance of the Town Centre and supports the 10 Minute Town Concept whereby residential areas are within walking distance of employment opportunities.	
(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or	The zoning as Enterprise and Employment reflects the established business located in this part of Rathkeale.	

	adjoining the core of the urban settlement	
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as indicated in the map above. The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Future development is generally limited to minor developments, in areas liable to flooding or open space recreation facilities such as walkways.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands, in line with Flood Guidelines and Circular PL 2/2014.		

(I) Enniscough – Castlematix, south bank of River Deel

These lands are located on north of the R523 Old Newcastle West Road, the southern bank of the River Deel, and south the N21. These lands are used primarily for grazing and have been zoned Agricultural.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities, which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.



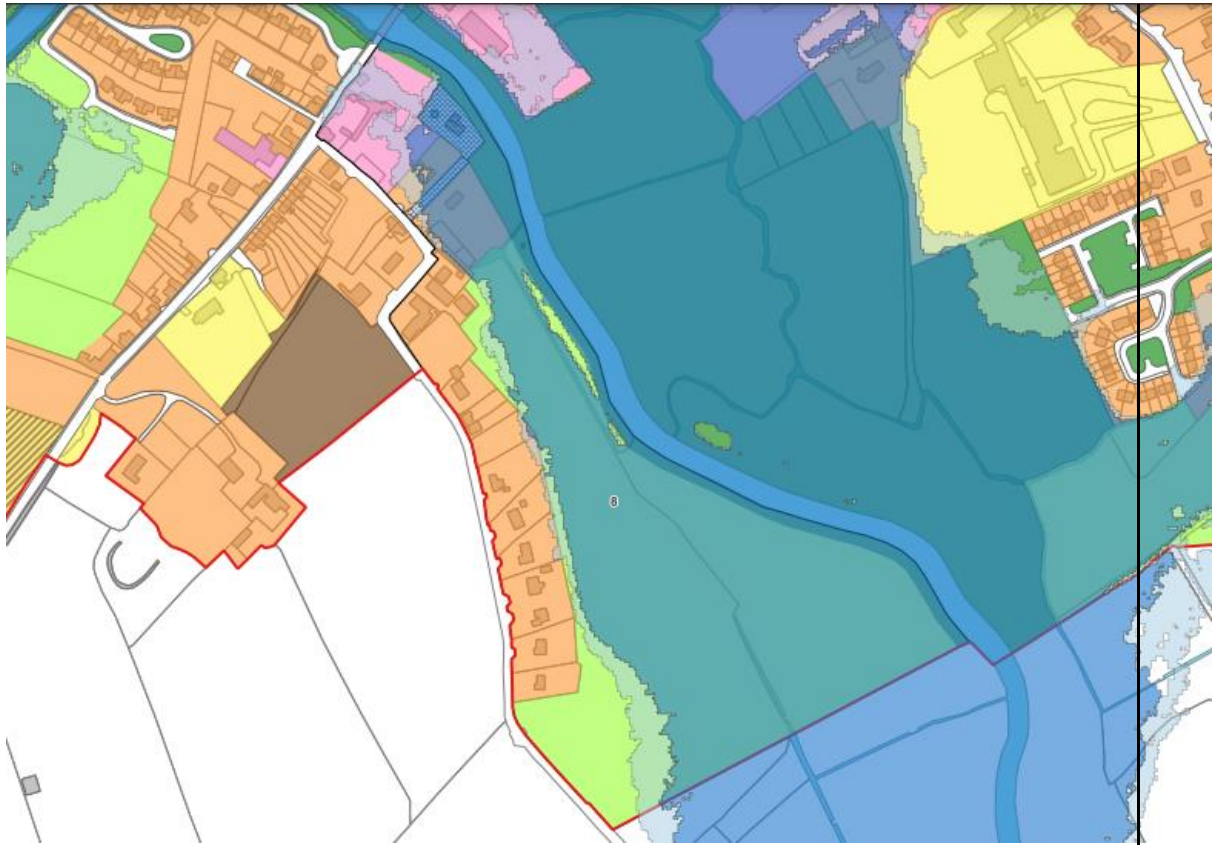
2	The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:	
	(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	As a less vulnerable use, agricultural use is deemed most appropriate to these lands.
	(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	Not applicable – presently used for grazing.
	(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	No. There are more appropriate locations for residential, enterprise and employment, community facilities located sequentially to the Town Centre in the interest of compact urban growth as promoted by higher-level spatial policy.
	(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	Located in close proximity to the settlement.
	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or	Agricultural use is considered for appropriate for these lands as a less vulnerable use to

	development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	flooding as per the Flood Guidelines.
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as indicated in the map above. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Development on these lands will be limited to uses associated with Agricultural uses.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands to less vulnerable uses associated with agriculture.		

(m) Enniscouch – Chestnut Grove

These lands are located on the eastern western bank of the River Deel. The lands are zoned for agricultural use.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy as identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.



2 The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:

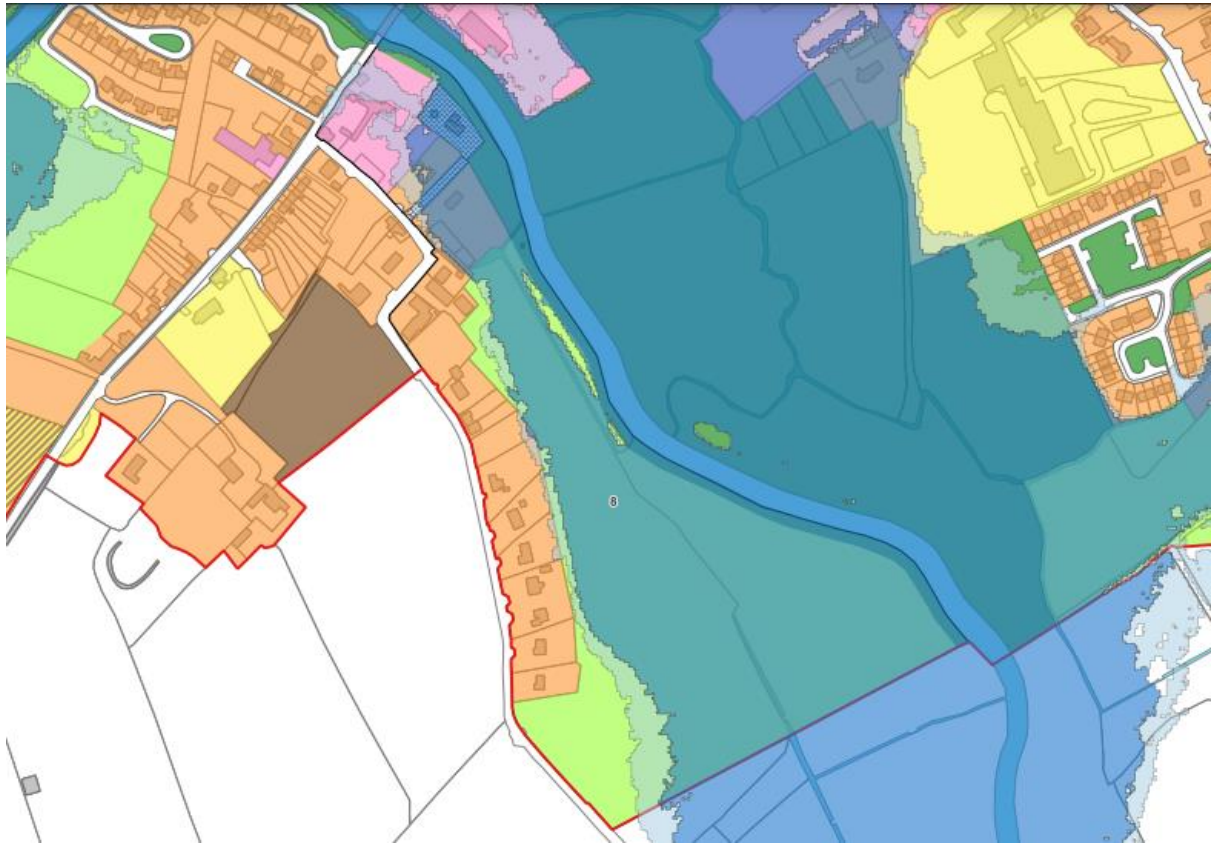
(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	As a less vulnerable use, agricultural use is deemed most appropriate to these lands.
(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	Not applicable currently used for grazing.
(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	No. There are more appropriate locations for residential, enterprise and employment, community facilities located sequentially to the Town Centre in the interest of compact urban growth as promoted by higher-level spatial policy.
(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	No.

	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	Yes alternative lands available to facilitate vulnerable uses.
3	A flood risk assessment to an appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as indicated in the map above. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Development on these lands will be limited to uses associated with Agricultural uses.
4	Conclusion of the Justification Test	
Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands to less vulnerable uses associated with agriculture.		

(n) Enniscouch – Chestnut Grove

These lands are located on the eastern western bank of the River Deel. The lands are zoned for Enterprise and Employment.

1	The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.
	Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.



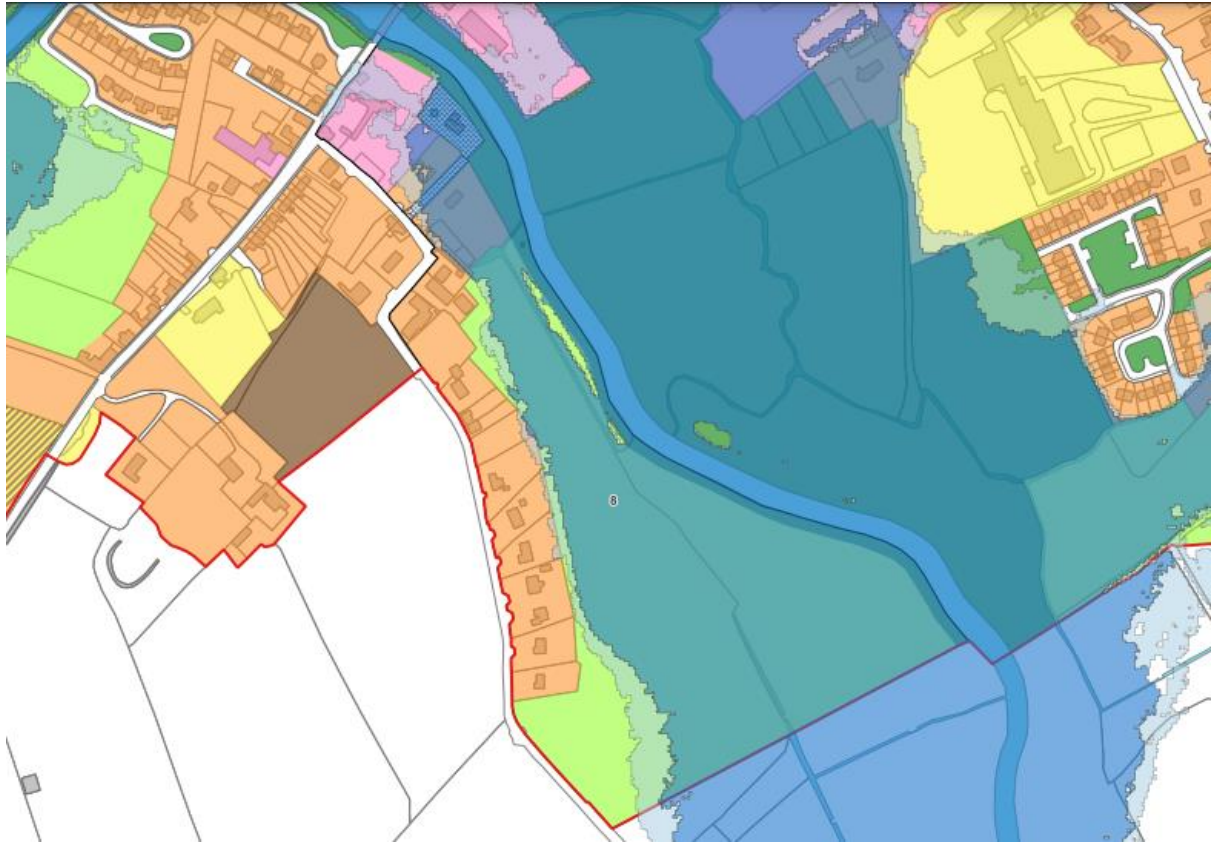
2	The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:	
	(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	These lands are zoned Enterprise and Employment to reflect existing use.
	(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	Currently developed.
	(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	Relatively close to the town centre.
	(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	Yes.
	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	These lands are zoned Enterprise and Employment to reflect existing use.
3	A flood risk assessment to an	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as

<p>appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.</p>	<p>indicated in the map above. The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Future development is generally limited to minor developments, in areas liable to flooding in line with the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL 2/2014.</p>
<p>4 Conclusion of the Justification Test</p>	
<p>Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands.</p>	

(o) Enniscough – Chestnut Grove

These lands are located on the eastern western bank of the River Deel. The lands are zoned for Existing Residential.

<p>1 The urban settlements for growth under the National Planning Framework, Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy, statutory plans under the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, relevant Directives and the Planning Guidelines.</p>
<p>Rathkeale is a Level 3 Settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Limerick Development Plan promotes Level 3 towns as secondary development centers for population growth sustaining a wide range of functions, services and employment opportunities which also supports its hinterland. Rathkeale requires investment in services, infrastructure, transport, employment and housing. In line with National Policy 3c 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within the existing built-up area of the town.</p>



2	<p>The zoning or designation of the lands for the particular use or development type is required to achieve the proper planning and sustainable development of the town and in particular:</p>	
	(i) Is essential to facilitate regeneration and/or expansion of the centre of the urban settlement	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
	(ii) Comprises significant previously developed and/or under-utilised lands	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
	(iii) Is within or adjoining the core of an established or designated urban settlement	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
	(iv) Will be essential in achieving compact or sustainable urban growth	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
	(v) There are no suitable alternative lands for the particular use or development type, in areas at lower risk of flooding within or adjoining the core of the urban settlement	These lands are zoned Existing Residential to reflect existing use.
3	A flood risk assessment to an	Part of these lands are subject to flooding as

<p>appropriate level of detail has been carried out as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment as part of the local area plan preparation process, which demonstrates that flood risk to the development can be adequately managed and the use or development of the lands will not cause unacceptable adverse impacts elsewhere.</p>	<p>indicated in the map above. The Planning Authority will require applications on these lands to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment as per Flood Guidelines. The Council continue to collaborate with the OPW regarding flood risk in Rathkeale. Future development is generally limited to minor developments, in areas liable to flooding in line with the Flood Guidelines and Circular PL 2/2014.</p>
<p>4 Conclusion of the Justification Test</p>	
<p>Given the measures above, the objectives of the LAP, the Planning Authority is satisfied that the zoning of these lands is appropriate, reflecting the existing uses on site and the measures identified in terms of limiting development on these lands.</p>	