

Draft Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029 Volume 1



Forward Planning
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Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

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CHAPTER 1 - Introduction

1.1 What is a Local Area Plan?

A Local Area Plan (LAP) is a land-use plan which sets out the development strategy for an area within the lifetime of the plan 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 Newcastle West LAP 2014 - 2020 was extended until 2024 under Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The adoption of the LAP is a reserved function of Elected Members of the Municipal District of Newcastle West.

The plan contains an overall vision for the area and includes specific land use objectives to guide future development to achieve this vision. The new LAP will consider the current context of Newcastle West, in terms of population trends, socio economic factors, land use changes, the need for the distribution of facilities and amenities, availability of services and

infrastructure, along with heritage and environmental considerations.

The LAP must be consistent with the objectives of the higher order plans, including the Limerick Development Plan, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Region and the National Planning Framework.

The RSES seeks to support and grow the role of Newcastle West, as a driver of economic development for County Limerick and wider region. Newcastle West is identified as a Key Town in the RSES.

As part of the proposed plan, a new zoning map will be prepared to take account of current and future population needs of Newcastle West, subject to environmental and other planning considerations.

There are three key components of this Local Area Plan:

- **Volume 1:** Contains the Written Statement for the LAP, which includes the development strategy for the life of the Plan, including Policies and Objectives, Land Use Zoning, Record of Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) and Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) maps.
- **Volume 2:** Contains Local Transport Plan.
- **Volume 3:** Contains Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA), Natura Impact Report (NIR) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

1.2 Review Process

1.2.1 First Issues Stage

Given the expiration of the extended lifetime of the existing Newcastle West Local Area Plan in 2024, a new LAP is required for the town. Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the process for the making of a Local Area Plan as outlined in Figure 1.2 below. The formal process, for the preparation of this Draft Local Area Plan commenced on 28th January 2023, with the publication of the Issues Paper.

Public consultation is an important aspect of any plan-making process, including the pre-draft stage, in order to identify local issues relating to Newcastle West, and to ensure that the final LAP acknowledges community aspirations and concerns. Public consultation during this pre-draft stage, included:

- The publication of an Issues Paper;
- Engagement with primary schools including Courtenay School and Gaelscoil Ó Doghair;
- Engagement with post primary schools including Desmond College and Scoil Mhuire agus Ide;
- The transition year students from both schools also trialled a digital mapping tool, developed by Limerick City and County Council to assist school students to identify issues, which they wanted to be addressed in the Local Area Plan;
- A public consultation evening held on the 23rd February 2023 in Newcastle West; and an online social media campaign was formulated to keep the public informed.

During the public consultation period for the pre-draft stage, 22 no. written

submissions were received and the students' submitted maps and numerous digital responses through the mapping tool. The preparation of the Draft Plan has been informed by these submissions and by consultation with relevant stakeholders, service providers, Government Departments and with internal Local Authority departments.



Figure 1.1: Students of 5th Class Courtenay School Newcastle West identifying issues in Newcastle West

1.2.2 Draft Plan

The publication of the Draft Plan will include further public consultation, in line with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). During this time, written submissions will be invited and considered in a Chief Executive's Report to be issued to the Elected Members of the Municipal District of Newcastle West. Subsequent to consideration of the Chief Executive's Report and its contents, there may be further consultation on Material Alterations, prior to the adoption of the Local Area Plan by the Elected Members. The Planning Authority envisage that the final Plan will be adopted late 2023.

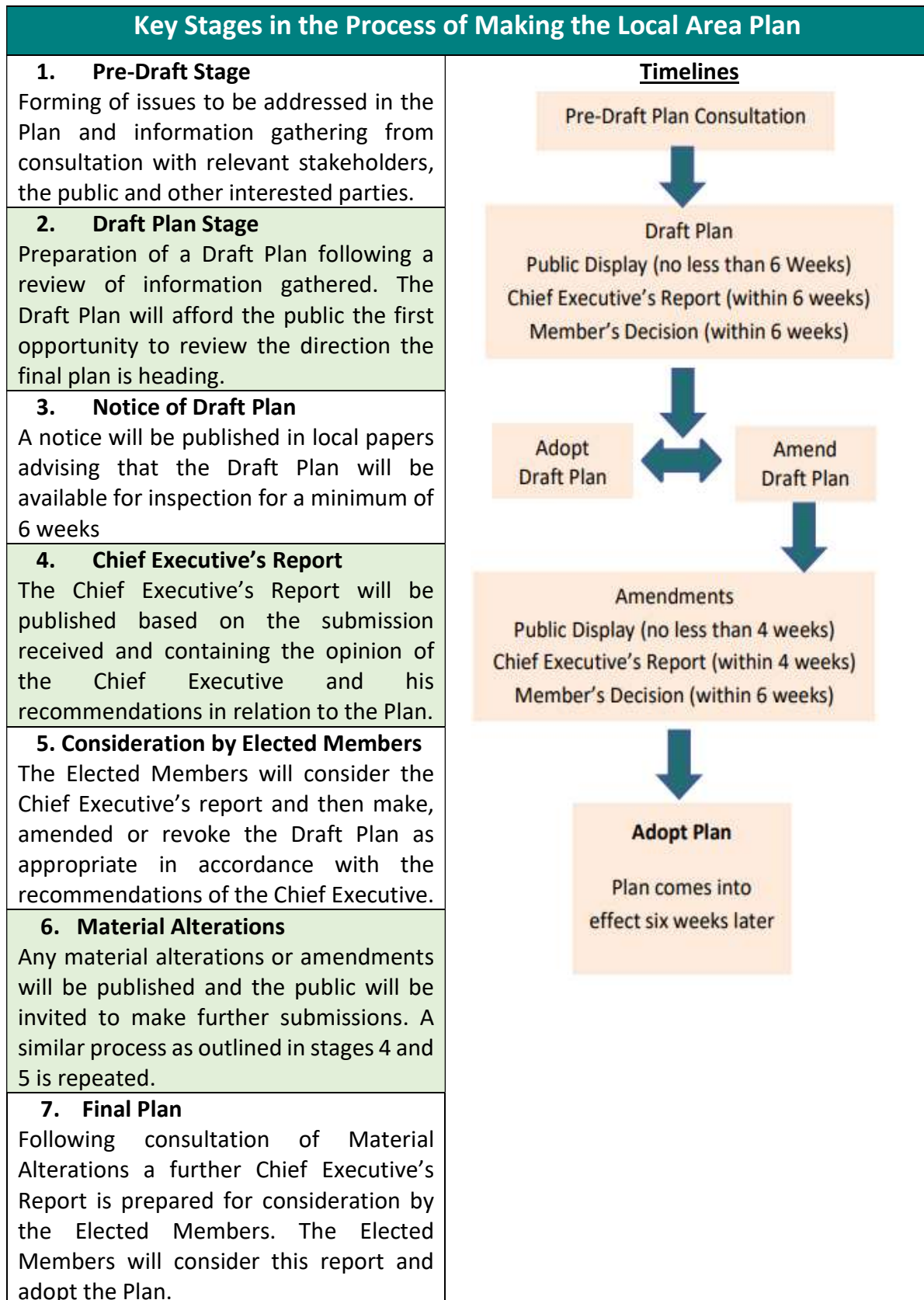


Figure 1.2: Key Stages – LAP Process

1.3 Policy Context

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 1.3: Spatial Planning Hierarchy

1.3.1 National Planning Framework

Newcastle West has been defined as an Urban Settlement by the CSO and this reference has been mentioned in the National Planning Framework (NPF). A primary focus of the NPF is to deliver an increased level of population, jobs and activity generally within existing urban areas, which include towns such as Newcastle West. This approach requires the creation of compact urban development, achieving brownfield and infill targets through innovative design approaches to appropriate density and height reflecting desirable places that can attract more people and generate new

employment opportunities all within the existing footprint of towns, such as Newcastle West.

1.3.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

Newcastle West is designated a Key Town in the RSES for the Southern Region. Regional Policy Objective RPO 35 of the RSES seeks to develop urban places of regional scale through delivering significant compact growth in Key Towns including Newcastle West. This will be achieved by focusing on delivering new homes, within the existing built up

footprints of settlements such as Newcastle West.

The RSES supports a “ten-minute” sustainable town model where short travel time and ease of access via sustainable travel modes is achieved between where we live, work, access services, access recreation and amenity inter alia;

RPO 22 sets out the 5 specific objectives for Newcastle West as follows:

(i) To support and promote the role of Newcastle West as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context. In particular, it is an objective to promote the opportunity for interregional collaborations across county boundaries with Abbeyfeale, Listowel and Rathkeale and locations identified in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary, which offer collective strengths and potential for project partnerships to drive sustainable economic growth in the West Limerick/North Kerry area;

(ii) To support the initiatives of the Atlantic Economic Corridor to realise the full potential of the Newcastle West enterprise assets to support job creation, improve competitiveness, attract investment and create future economic growth;

(iii) To support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West, subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments;

(iv) To support and promote the tourism potential of Newcastle West’s historical heritage to facilitate the expansion of the existing tourism offer and to develop

connectivity to and synergies with Newcastle West and the Limerick Greenway;

(v) To support the identification of opportunities for investment in incubation and innovation infrastructure for ICT and related companies and capitalise on Newcastle West’s ability to accommodate remote working, enterprise start-ups and up scaling companies.

The key infrastructural requirements are also identified as:

(i) Newcastle West Distributor Road and other transport measures through a Local Transport Plan;

(ii) Wastewater treatment and water services improvements;

(iii) Development of a regional athletics hub to service 9 athletic clubs and 41 primary and post-primary schools in the catchment area of Newcastle West;

(iv) Investment for the development and full utilisation of the Limerick Greenway.

1.3.3 Limerick Development Plan

It is an objective of the LDP 2022 to 2028 to promote Newcastle West as a key service centre and to promote the sustainable growth of the town to become a self-sufficient settlement and act as a service centre for its inhabitants and rural hinterland.

The Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 makes assumptions with respect to population projections and allocation in Limerick and in settlements across County 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.

Spatial Planning Objective 01:

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that provisions of the Draft Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029 for population and economic growth align with the policies and 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.

1.4 Environmental Assessments

1.4.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Under the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004) as amended by the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011, (S.I. No. 201 of 2011), there is a requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of all Local Area Plans for areas that have a population or target population of 5,000 persons or more. Newcastle West has a population exceeding this threshold; therefore, a full SEA is required as a part of the Plan-making process.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Plan has been prepared in accordance with Directive 2001/42/EC (“the SEA Directive”). The purpose of the SEA Directive is to ensure the environmental consequences of plans are identified and assessed during their preparation and are modified where adverse impacts are likely and/or appropriate mitigation measures are incorporated to alleviate potential

impacts. The SEA recognises and considers the value of ecosystems, the interplay between different ecosystems and how each policy intervention can have positive and negative effects on the constituent and cumulative parts of the environment.

An SEA Scoping Report was prepared and issued to the Environmental Authorities and submission were received. The SEA Scoping Report, dated January 2023 has informed the preparation of the Draft Plan and the SEA Report, which is contained in Volume 3. The findings of the AA and SFRA have also informed the SEA.

The report sets out a series of recommendations which have been fully integrated into Plan.

1.4.2 Appropriate Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required and has been prepared in accordance with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the European Communities Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive). This is contained in Volume 3 of the Plan. The mitigation measures identified in the Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment - Natura Impact Report has been incorporated into the Plan. The emerging conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

1.4.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines (DEHLG, 2009) and Circular PL02/2014 (August 2014). All SFRA recommendations have been integrated into the Plan with a precautionary approach applied to the zoning of lands identified as potentially at risk of flooding.

1.4.4 Climate Action

The NPF and the Climate Action Plan 2023 have set out the scale of the climate change challenge. It has established a national policy position to achieve a 50% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and sets a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government and the Climate Act 2021. To achieve this objective, radical change is required in how we plan our cities, towns and rural areas. This Plan places climate action at the heart of its vision and will

promote a framework to achieve compact growth and best practice in achieving a reduction in our carbon footprint. Climate Change is a crosscutting theme of the LAP. In reinforcing climate action, this Plan places a priority and focus on enhancing and protecting the biodiversity, natural heritage and environment of the town. The SEA of the Plan, in accordance with the National Adaptation Framework (2018), supports the integration of climate action and land use considerations in the plan-making process.

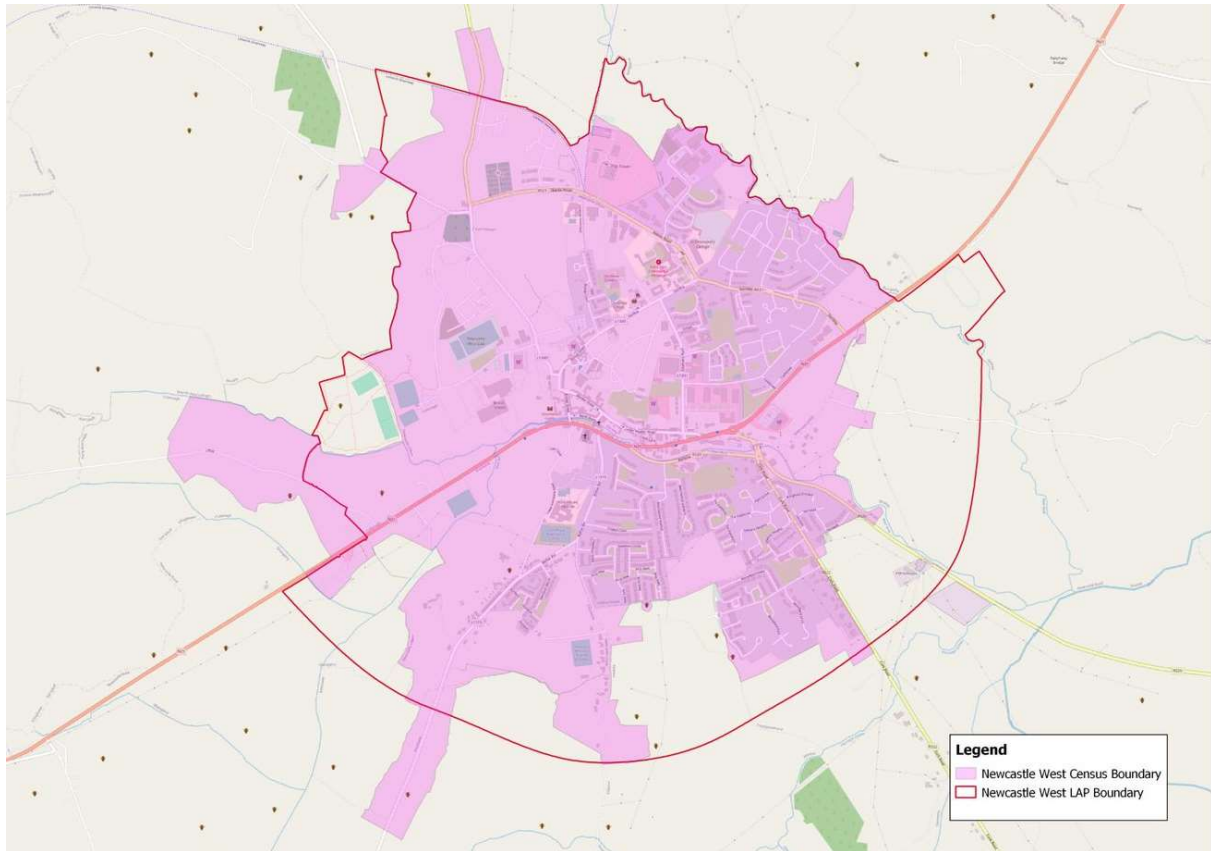


Figure 1.4: Newcastle West Census and Local Area Plan boundaries

CHAPTER 2 - Strategic Context and Town Profile

2.1 Strategic Context

Newcastle West is the largest settlement in Limerick outside of Limerick City. It is designated as a Key Town in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region. Historically a town of fairs and butter markets, Newcastle West is now a large centre of employment with a strong business and enterprise culture.

Newcastle West located approximately 45km south west of Limerick City on a relatively flat plain at the foothills of the Mullaghareirks mountains approximately 4km to the west of the town. The Arra River rises in Knockanimpuha and flows easterly through Newcastle West adjacent to the N21 on North Quay. The Dooally River rises in Ballynabearna to the north of the town, and flows south easterly to join the River Arra upstream of the town. On

the north east boundary of the town the River Daar flows.

The national route, the N21 Limerick to Tralee road, traverses the town and strategic regional roads extend northwards to Ardagh and Foynes (R521), southeast to Dromcollogher and Charleville (R522), and eastward to Ballingarry and Kilmallock (R520).

The Limerick Development Plan promotes Newcastle West as a key Town and secondary development centre to the Limerick City Metropolitan Area for population growth. For Newcastle West to fulfil this role identified in the Limerick Development Plan 2020-2028 the town requires consolidation of land use, catch-up in investment in services, infrastructure, sustainable transport options, amenities and local employment balanced with housing delivery.



Figure 2.1: Geographical Context of Newcastle West, Limerick

2.2 Demographic and Socio-economic profile

The principal demographic trends for Newcastle West as set out in CSO Census data are outlined in the following sections. This data is significant in terms of the demands for service provision such as schools and childcare facilities, the provision of housing, health-care, employment opportunities and future accommodation including providing suitable independent and assisted living accommodation for older people as well

as availability of labour force, standards of education/training attained and disposable income.

Newcastle West is the largest town in County Limerick, with the 2016 Census results showing that the total population of Newcastle West was 6,619 persons in 2016. This represented an increase of 4.6% (292 persons) since 2011, which outperformed the County and State averages for the same period (Table 2.1 below).

	2011 (Number)	2016 (Number)	Actual Change 2011- 2016	% Change 2011-2016
Newcastle West	6,327	6,619	292	4.6%
Limerick	191,809	194,899	3,090	1.6%
State	4,588,252	4,761,865	173,613	3.8%

Table 2.1: Population Growth 2011-2016

Source: CSO Census 2016

In terms of population structure, 22.2% of the population was under 15 years, which was higher than both the average for the county (20.3%) and nationally (21.1%). However, only 9.2% of the town's population were age 15-24 years which was significantly lower than in Limerick (13.3%) and nationally (12.1%). Some 54.1% were aged 25-64 years, which was a very favourable trend for the town as it was higher than both the county and State averages, and impacts labour supply. Newcastle West has a larger cohort of the older population age 65 years and over (14.6%) relative to Limerick and national trends, thereby creating a demand for services to support the needs of an ageing population.

In 2016, Newcastle West had the largest daytime working population in the County with 2413 workers.

The labour force participation rate, which indicates the proportion of the population at work and those available for work, was recorded at 61.4% in Newcastle West. This is very favourable for the town as it is similar to the national labour force participation rate and higher than the average for Limerick of 58%. The predominant sector for employment in Newcastle West is Commerce and Trade with 23.8% of the population employed in this sector. This is closely followed by the Professional Services sector, which contributes to 21.7% of the town's employment. This reflects the importance of the town as a commercial and service centre and a vital centre of regional

economic activity. Manufacturing Industries is the third largest employer in the town (19.5%) with considerably more males than females employed in this sector.

In Newcastle West, important stages in the family cycle, include the pre-school and early school groups, accounting for 27.8% of all families. Families in the empty nester and retired stages account for 17.3% of all families in Newcastle West.

These trends in the family cycle will require additional services such as healthcare, options for the downsizing of dwellings, and independent/assisted living for older people and pressure on childcare and school enrolments.

Newcastle West has a median gross household income of €34,453 (NCW Urban) – 46,594 (NCW Rural). The national median average is €45,256.

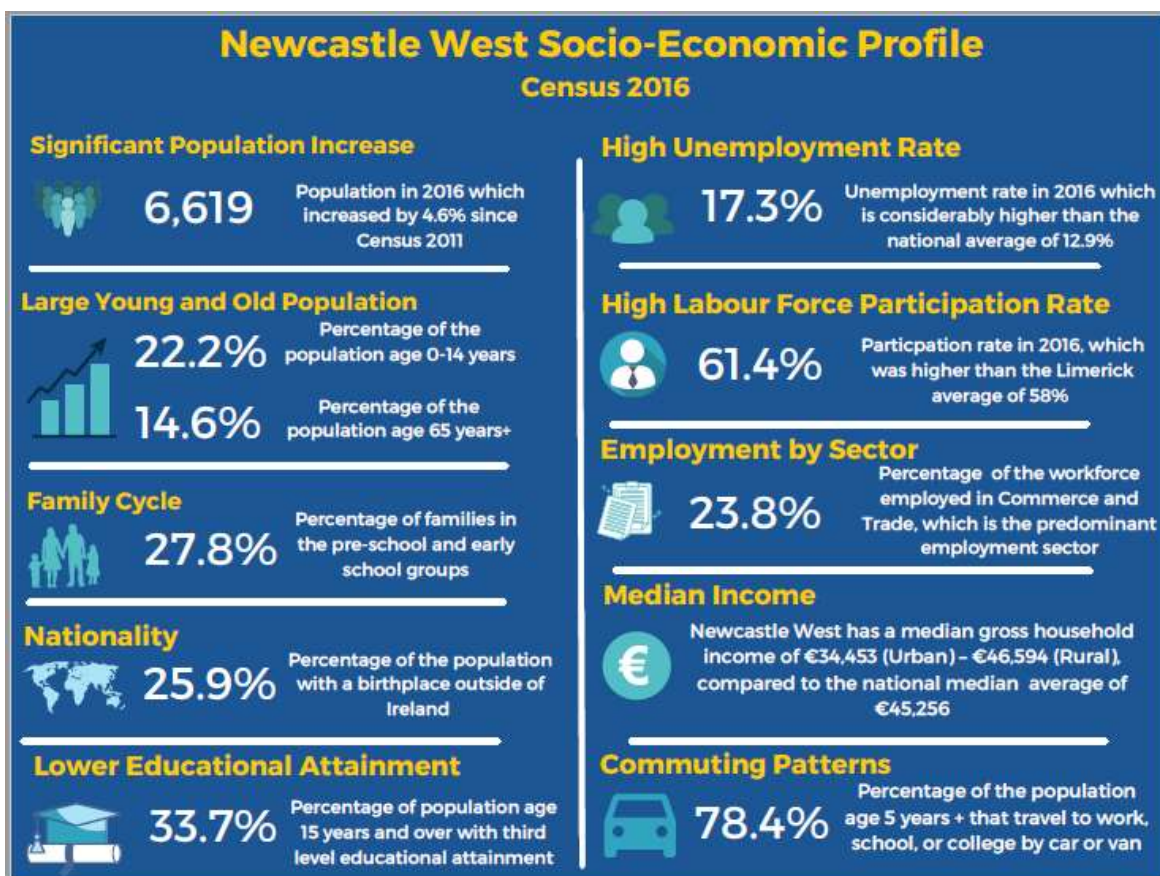


Figure 2.2: Newcastle West Socio Economic Profile

2.3 Historical Context

It is most likely that Newcastle West was founded by the Geraldines. After the defeat of the Geraldines at the end of the 16th century the town and surrounding lands were forfeit to the crown. The Desmond Roll (1583) gives the first full

account of Newcastle West mentioning at least two mills, street names and gardens. Despite these references, however, the medieval street pattern is unknown. In 1591, the town was granted to Sir W. Courtenay and its subsequent

development was heavily influenced by that family.

Agriculture was a source of economic prosperity in Newcastle West from the 17th Century onwards. The town provided an important service through its weekly markets and various annual fairs. A 1709 survey shows the Square and the modern street pattern well established presumably as a result of landlord planning. From the 1700s onwards the town began to expand into the outlying areas, again mainly due to landlord improvements. The Square was mostly a residential area in the 17th and 18th centuries. The River Arra was realigned and New Quay (North Quay) was formed.

Lord Courtenay built the first recorded school house in Newcastle in 1720 (Cussen 1979, 3)¹. He also built a church to the south of the castle in 1777. Lewis (1837, vol. II, 425) refers to the state of industry in the early 19th century, 'There are several establishments in the town for dying woollens, also a large ale and beer brewery, and a great number of shoe and brogue makers, a bleaching establishment in the immediate vicinity, which occupies 8 acres and gives work to a number of men'². Most of the standing buildings in the Square are nineteenth century in date (Cussen 1990, 42)³. St. Ita's Hospital (1839), the Court House (1842), the Sisters of Mercy Convent (1850) and the Protestant School (1850) were all established in the 19th century. The Newcastle West Junction of the North Kerry railway was opened in 1878 (Murray

& McNeill 1976, 117)⁴. Up to 1860 the river Beesoms flowed openly down the middle of Bishop Street. The river was covered over during the 1860's and the street line was extended (Cussen 1990, 45).

By the 20th Century, development spread along arterial roads. The late 20th Century saw development spreading mostly on the outskirts of the town along the Limerick to Tralee road, known as the N21.

2.4 Emerging Opportunities and Development Challenges

There are challenges and opportunities that Newcastle West must address. Challenges include, commercial vacancy and under-use of land/buildings. In addition to meeting the needs of the emerging population profile from young families to an aging population and adapting to climate change.

Methods to address these challenges can be best achieved through the sustainable and compact growth of Newcastle West, with emphasis on the regeneration and repopulation of the town centre and built-up areas. This approach focuses on maximizing the use of infill, vacant and underutilized sites and of buildings that are suitable and capable of re-use to provide housing, amenities, jobs and services. The names of several of the existing housing estates in Newcastle West, as shown in Figure 2.3 below Have a historical context.

1. Cussen, R. 1979 'Early Schools in Newcastle', Journal of the Newcastle West Historical Society, 3-15.

2. Lewis, S. 1837 A topographical dictionary of Ireland, Vol II, London.

3. Cussen, R. 1990 'Newcastle: The face of the town', Journal of the Newcastle West Historical Society, 44-7.

4. Murray, K.A. & McNeill, D.B. 1976 The Great Southern & Western Railway, Dublin.

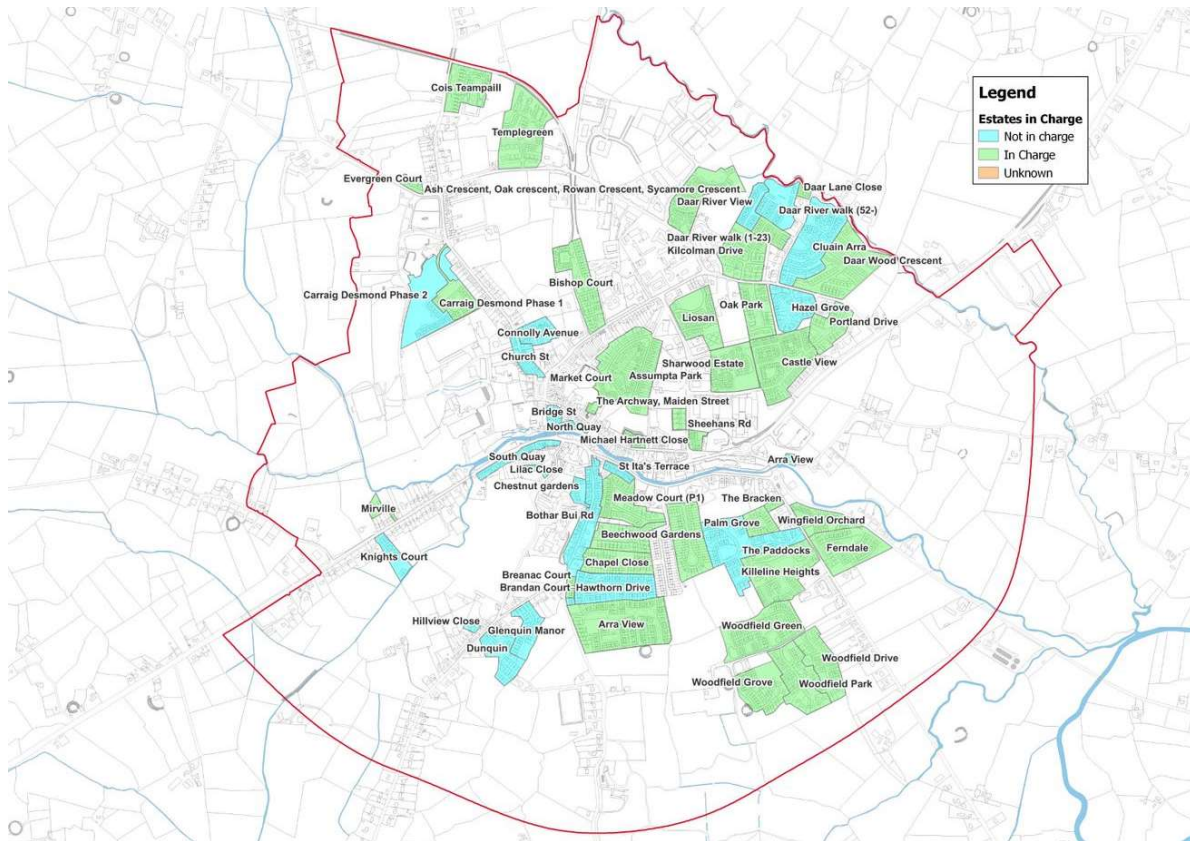


Figure 2.3: Newcastle West Housing Schemes

The Plan will focus on the following Key Challenges and Emerging Opportunities:

Compact Growth – The LAP shall adhere to the targets set out in the core strategy, and Settlement Strategy and Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

Town Centre First – A successful town centre, includes a retail sector, which plays a crucial role in terms of economic growth and development. The LAP promotes stimulating regeneration and renewal of the town centre, thereby contributing to overall economic viability and delivery of high-quality public realm and built environment.

Opportunity Sites – Newcastle West has a number of sites with potential

opportunities for compact growth and environmental improvement.

Economic Activity - Ensuring the enhancement of Newcastle West’s manufacturing base in healthcare, joinery, food, beverages, and machinery. Conditions for the creation of enterprise and innovation are embraced and developed to encourage and facilitate a diversity of employment opportunities, promote inward investment and commerce. The Atlantic Economic Corridor (western seaboard) has the potential to act as a key enabler for the regional growth objectives of the National Planning Framework.

Tourism Potential - Newcastle West has significant tourism potential; it is home to the Desmond Castle and Banqueting Hall located in the centre of the town, the historic town square, an obvious historical

landmark and adjacent Castle Demesne. Following the old Limerick to Kerry railway line, the Limerick Greenway seamlessly links the West Limerick landscape with Newcastle West and some of the County’s most historic sites.

Integration of Land Use and Transport - Co-ordination of transport and land use planning plays a pivotal role in the sustainable development of the local economy. Where and how we build our residential and work environments and supporting transport infrastructure including roads, footpaths, cycle ways, buses and rail infrastructure impacts, is fundamental for sustainable communities, climate action and quality of life considerations. The improvement of

regional connectivity, linking together the major urban areas to allow the Atlantic Economic Corridor to achieve its potential, is a major priority.

Flooding - Flood risk issues are an important consideration in the preparation of the LAP, particularly in zoning lands for appropriate uses in flood risk areas.

Environment and Climate Change - Delivery of sustainable growth and preserving the environmental assets of the surrounding area is a key consideration of the LAP, which includes delivering positive environmental outcomes, including for water and climate change.

2.4.1 SCOT Analysis

The SCOT Analysis is a study of the Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats that exist within Newcastle West. Such analysis identifies both the key issues

in Newcastle West and the opportunities that exist to address these issues. This SCOT Analysis has helped inform the overall Development Strategy for the Plan Area.

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most populated town in the county, with population growth expected to continue • Identified as a Key Town in the RSES. • Accessible to regional and national road network • Limerick Greenway serving the town • Has a number of key community and regional services • Has a strong history of community development and a vibrant local voluntary sector • Rich built fabric and traditional streetscape • Picturesque location on the banks of the River Arra 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood risk identified in the town • High number of vacant commercial and residential units • Lack of employment opportunities in the town • High unemployment rates • Traffic congestion and high volume of traffic on the N21. • Housing supply deficits

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively young and educated population • Quality open space and recreation facilities – the Demesne and Limerick Greenway • Has a large daytime working population 	
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land zoned adjacent to N21 for small and medium size employment. • Further development of community initiatives with the experience of a strong voluntary sector. • Reduced congestion in the town as a result of the proposed by-pass • Tourism and amenity development potential • Valuable historical heritage generally intact e.g. Desmond Hall • Traditional streetscapes • Good quality river biodiversity • The development of the regional athletics hub • Potential investment in active travel • Digital / remote working opportunities 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of unfinished housing developments in the town • Contagion effect of building vacancy • Uncertainty regarding the release of zoned lands

Figure 2.4: Newcastle West Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats

CHAPTER 3 - Development Strategy

3.1 Strategic Vision and Strategic Aims

'To fulfil the role of Newcastle West as a Key Town, acknowledging its strategic location in the Southern Region. This will be achieved by delivering ambitious and sustainable growth and promoting a vibrant, living town centre, creating green and liveable communities, a diverse and innovative economy, while also building on the town's potential as a tourism destination. Whilst supporting the sustainable growth of Newcastle West, the cultural, natural and built environment must also be protected. The future development of Newcastle West will provide for low carbon, sustainable and consolidated growth in a coherent spatial manner.'

This Draft Local Area Plan is based on a number of general objectives designed to improve the quality of life of the citizens, which the Council will endeavour to implement during the lifetime of the plan. The development of Newcastle West 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.

3.2 Spatial and Development Strategy

The Spatial Development Strategy as presented in Figure 3.1 has been developed having considered the Strategic Environmental Assessment process and the need to provide a framework to support sustainable compact growth, developing the town's socio-economic assets while protecting the environmental quality of the town and its setting.

In particular, securing compact and sustainable growth is a key objective of this plan. This means tackling the inefficient recent pattern of urban sprawl through more compact forms of development that focus on reusing 'brownfield' land, building up infill sites and reusing or redeveloping existing sites and buildings. Newcastle West is well placed to support new consolidated development within its footprint and provide new life and opportunities in a compact setting. The plan also aligns with higher level spatial plans seeking future development to locate within the settlement on the principle of the '10 minute' town concept (see chapter 4 for further detail).

Overall Strategic Development Objectives:

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Promote Newcastle West as a key service centre and to promote the sustainable growth of the town to become a self-sufficient settlement and act as a service centre for its inhabitants and rural hinterland.
- (b) Support and promote the role of Newcastle West, as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context. In particular, it is an objective to promote the opportunity for interregional collaborations with Abbeyfeale, Listowel and Rathkeale and locations identified in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary, which offer collective strengths and potential for project partnerships to drive sustainable economic growth in the West Limerick/ North Kerry area.
- (c) Support the initiatives of the Atlantic Economic Corridor to realise the full

potential of the Newcastle West enterprise assets to support job creation, improve competitiveness, attract investment and create future economic growth.

(d) Support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified in the RSES for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments.

(e) Support and promote the tourism potential of Newcastle West's historical heritage to facilitate the expansion of the existing tourism offer and to develop connectivity to, and synergies with, Newcastle West and the Limerick Greenway.

(f) Support the identification of opportunities for investment in incubation and innovation infrastructure for ICT and related companies and capitalise on Newcastle West's ability to accommodate remote

working, enterprise start-ups and up-scaling companies.

(g) Safeguard, showcase and support the sustainable development of the natural and built heritage of the town; enhancing amenity and providing a high-quality environment for locals, visitors and future generations while having the potential to facilitate climate change adaptation and flood risk measures.

(h) Facilitate the development of infrastructure and utilities that will support sustainable socio economic growth and protect the quality of the environment of the town.

(i) Ensure the future development of Newcastle West 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.

Source b to f: Southern Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy page 81

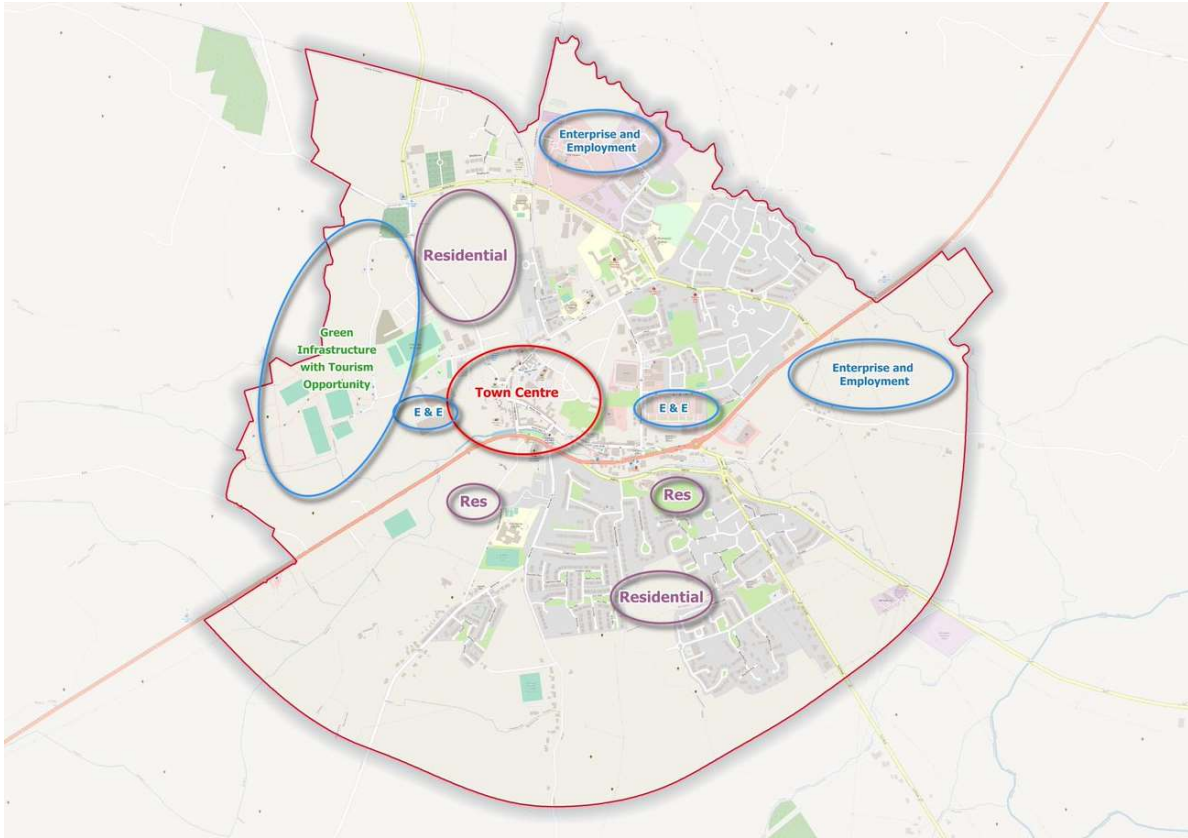


Figure 3.1: Spatial and Development Strategy (indicative Figure)

3.3 Population and Housing Growth

The Core Strategy for Limerick is set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The Core Strategy identifies the population projections for all settlements in Limerick over the lifetime of the Development Plan. 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...”*.

This LAP aims to balance the provision of good quality housing that meets the needs of a diverse population, in a way that makes Newcastle West an attractive and inviting place to live. Adequate housing provision is essential for the creation of an environment which will attract business

and enterprise to Newcastle West and the plan identifies the quantum of zoned lands to meet this demand. The Council is also informed by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage’s Town Centre First approach, seeking to create a vibrant community, which seeks to attract families back into the heart of the towns through enhanced place-making, good quality urban design and sustainable mobility options.

Newcastle West is identified as a Key Town in the Limerick Development Plan, with projected population growth of 1,988 additional persons to 2028, representing a 30% increase on the 2016 Census population. This envisaged population increase seeks to ensure that the growth will be sustainable in line with service provision and development of community facilities. This ensures that the capacity of

the town to accommodate this additional growth can occur without damage to the settlement's character and the carrying capacity of its environment and infrastructure.

According to the Census, Newcastle West had a population of 6,619 persons in 2016, representing a 4.6% increase on the 2011 population. On foot of this reasonable increase, the Planning Authority through the Core Strategy, as established by the Limerick Development Plan envisages that Newcastle West is capable of achieving further significant population growth, over the lifetime of this LAP. This is supported by the level of services in the town, its location on the N21 with connectivity to Limerick City, Abbeyfeale, Killarney/ Tralee, Listowel, Glin and the Shannon Estuary, supporting economic opportunities and the potential synergies that may develop. Newcastle West's tourism potential as a hub on the Limerick Greenway, and its location on the N21, a major tourist route between Limerick and Kerry also affords opportunities for the town, to grow and sustain additional population.

The Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan sets out population projections and allocation of population throughout Limerick. Details 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 assumed Newcastle West population growth allocation is an additional 1,988 persons to 2028 (+30% on the 2016 Census figure) which equates to an additional 706 residential units. For the purposes of this Local Area Plan, the projected requirement for population growth is 826 units to 2029. The provision of 826 units is determined by taking the proposed population growth per annum (118 units per annum), as outlined in the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan, and applying this figure for the seven-year period (from 2022-2029) as illustrated in Figure 3.1 below. The calculation of the quantum of lands required for housing units in Figure 3.1 also accounts for the most recent vacancy analysis in the town in 2023 and the estimated housing unit yield of the opportunity areas identified in Chapter 4 and lands zoned town centre and mixed use.

Limerick Development Plan Additional Projected Population and Households Forecasted 2022-2028 for Newcastle West	+ 1,988 persons + 706 residential units
Forecasted households per year	118 units
Forecasted households for years 2022-2029 for Newcastle West	826 units (118 x 7 year period from 2022-2029)
Vacancy - residential vacancy Town Centre Health Check 2022	33
Forecasted households – residential vacancy	826 units – 33 units = 793 units required
No. of new units required 2022-2029	90% as New Residential = 714 units 10% as Serviced Sites = 79 units
Total Hectares Required	New Residential – 714 units @ 35 uph = 20.4 ha Serviced Sites – 79 units @ 10 uph = 7.9 ha
Additional 25% of hectares for New Residential units provision	New Residential 20.4 ha X 25% = 5.1 ha + 20.4 ha = 25.5 ha
Total Hectares	New Residential: 25.5 ha Serviced Sites: 7.9 ha Total land required: 33.4 ha required to accommodate population growth to 2029 as New Residential and Serviced Sites

Table 3.1: Core Strategy Units Allocated

In the interests of securing a compact settlement, prioritising brownfield, infill development, addressing vacancy and dereliction, and the protection of the existing built-up area of the settlement, existing vacancy must be considered in delivering on the projected population growth. Details in relation to vacancy are dealt with further in Chapter 4.

In June 2022, The Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities were published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Guidelines identifies the potential provision for additional lands in the order

of 20-25% above the required quantum of zoned residential or a mix of residential and other land uses, in certain circumstances. These lands which are considered as “Additional Provision” must be identified, quantified and explained. In this instance an additional 25% has been included in Table 3.1 above for the purposes of New Residential zoning. The rationale to support the inclusion of these lands is to build on the strategic location of the town on the Limerick – Kerry border, enhance its inter-urban synergies with settlements in North Kerry and West Limerick to support employment opportunities and also to build on the

Town Centre First Initiative, to revitalise the town centre, to offer real opportunities to introduce high quality residential development in the centre of the town. The location of lands zoned New Residential are within the settlement boundary, within a 10-minute walking distance of the town centre, bus stops, on serviceable lands and these locations have been assessed sequentially from the town centre. In the interest of delivering high quality housing at appropriate densities for the settlement and to support sustainable development, the Draft Plan

outlines an allocation of 90% of units to New Residential and 10% to Serviced Sites to support the development of a variety of housing, in terms of tenure and mix.

Furthermore, in line with the Development Plan Guidelines, regard must be had to the extent of extant permitted in Newcastle West town, these permissions for residential development units are outlined in Table 3.2 below. Live permissions are in place for 26 units within the town and have been considered in the formulation of zoning requirements.

Planning Ref:	Location	No. of Units	Type of unit	Current Status	Proposed Zoning
20/598	Maiden Street , Newcastle West, Co. Limerick	6	5 no. two storey terraced dwelling houses and 1 no. first floor apartment over proposed car park entrance	Not commenced	Retain Town Centre Zoning
18/994	Daar River Walk, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.	6	Six semi-detached dwelling houses and associated site works	Not commenced	Retain Residential Zoning
21/1561	Churchtown, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick	4	4 no. two storey, semi-detached houses	Not commenced	Retain Residential Zoning
19/1148 and ABP	Rathnaneane, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.	10	10 no. two storey,	Not commenced	Retain Residential Zoning

307187-20			dwelling houses		
Total units extant		26			

Table 3.2: Total Units Extant in Newcastle West

A Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) assessing the key infrastructure available to the individual sites identified as suitable for the provision of residential development has been set out in Chapter 10 of this Volume. 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 also included.

Policy DSP1 - Core Strategy:

It is a policy of the Council 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 Newcastle West, including the number of residential units constructed on an annual basis.

The objectives, policies and development management standards that apply to Newcastle West are set out in the Limerick Development Plan. The objectives and policies that are specific to Newcastle West or necessary to emphasis their importance are included in this LAP. This approach will facilitate the streamlining of this LAP to the issues relevant to the Newcastle West and allow an overall reduction in the duplication of content. This approach should not be viewed as a diminution of the level of importance or indeed protection afforded to this area.

3.4 Residential Development Strategy

A key objective of the NPF, RSES and the Limerick Development Plan is to focus on the sustainable development of rural areas, the compact growth of urban areas optimising the use of serviced lands by focusing development on infill, brownfield, backland and vacant/derelict sites and in doing so, maximising the viability of investment in social and physical infrastructure. A key focus of the Department of Rural and Community Development’s Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 is the Town Centre First Approach that supports the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns and villages. The primary focus behind the Town Centre First Approach is to create the conditions for individuals and families to live back into the heart of the towns and villages through place-making, good quality urban design and sustainable mobility.

The Housing Strategy, policy/objectives and standards set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 will apply directly in Newcastle West. This LAP aims to balance the provision of good quality housing that meets the needs of a diverse population, in a way that makes Newcastle West an attractive and inviting place to live in.

As set out above 33.4 ha of residential zoned land is required to accommodate population growth for the plan period.

Table 3.3 illustrates that there is sufficient land zoned to meet this requirement.

Settlement Tier	Census Pop. 2016	Additional households forecasted 2023-2029	Quantum of land required - ha	Total land zoned Serviced Sites - ha	Total Land zoned New Residential - ha
Level 2 – Key Town	6619	793	33.4*	7.3	36.5
			Total	43.8	
*Refer to Table 3.1 Core Strategy Units Allocated					

Table 3.3: Quantum of land Zoned

Objective DSO1 - Development Strategy - Sustainable Residential Growth Objectives - It is an objective of Council to:

- (a) Ensure the sequential development of the 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 and 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 and infill development schemes.
- (d) Ensure that in any proposed alterations to the streetscape of the town centre, that adequate consideration is given to conservation, restoration and reconstruction, where it would affect the settings of protected structures, or the integrity of the eighteenth and nineteenth century streetscapes.
- (e) Prioritise the completion of unfinished housing estates and require the extension of existing housing developments be completed in tandem with a landscaping

plan for the overall scheme to ensure quality living environment and appropriate permeability.

Policy DSP2 - Development Strategy

It is a policy of Council 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.

3.4.1 Residential Development – Density, Housing Type, Mix and Open Space Provision

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 Newcastle West, which presents housing development opportunities, through redevelopment of brownfield, infill and vacant sites and green field sites.

The principles of quality and sustainability must be foremost in all future residential development.

This plan emphasises a requirement for universal design. The Council will be guided by the Government policy outlined in *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Guidelines for Planning*

Authorities (DECHG, 2009) and *Urban Development and Building Heights: Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DHLGH, 2018) and any subsequent replacement Government policies and Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy and Chapter 4: Housing Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

Settlement Hierarchy	Density Applied
Level 2 Key Towns	Minimum 35 uph for 90% of dwelling units proposed in New and Existing Residential Zoned land and 10 uph for 10% of dwelling units proposed in Serviced Sites zoned land.

Table 3.4: Density Standards

Objective DSO2: Development Strategy - New Residential Development Objectives – It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Ensure that all residential development complies with the residential density requirements set out in Table 3.4 and encourage a range of densities on all New and Existing Residential and other mixed-use lands, in accordance with the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas: Cities, Towns and Villages (2009).
- (b) 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.
- (c) Ensure all new residential layouts prioritise walking and cycling, are fully permeable for pedestrians and cyclists to access a range of local services and enable the efficient provision of public transport services.
- (d) 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 Open Space requirements set out in Section 11.3.6 of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

3.4.2 Serviced Low-density Sites

In Newcastle West, an allowance is made for the development of low-density serviced sites as alternative to the un-serviced 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 a minimum 10 housing units per hectare.

Please refer to Section 4.3 *Serviced Sites in Towns and Villages* of the County Development Plan 2022-2028.

Objective DSO3: Development Strategy - Serviced Sites Objective - It is an objective

of the Council to

Permit serviced sites on adequately zoned lands within the settlement boundary of Newcastle West in line with particulars outlined in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. The Council requires a minimum net density of 10 dwelling units per hectare on lands zoned Serviced Sites.

3.4.3 Specialised Housing including Older Persons Housing, Assisted Independent Living and Traveller Accommodation

Specialised housing accommodates the needs of those that require specialised design and planning needs such as older persons, disabled or mobility-impaired people and the travelling community. The Local Authority will ensure that all new housing developments or retrofitting existing units will be designed to the highest quality with respect to the principles of universal design and placemaking. The provision of specialist housing should be located in existing residential areas, well served by appropriate levels of infrastructure, within walking distance of shops, services, public transport, open space and based on the principles of age friendly public realm. Consideration of the nature of the existing housing stock and existing social mix in the area will be considered and provision will be made to a range of new housing types, tenures and adaptability for all age groups and abilities.

Limerick City and County Council has an adopted Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024, which outlines the accommodation needs, policy and implementation measures to address the accommodation needs of the Traveller Community. Objective HO O15 of the Limerick Development Plan, 2022-2028

outlines Limerick City and County Council’s objective to support the quantity and quality of delivery of traveller-specific accommodation with the relevant agencies in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme and any subsequent document.

3.4.4 Social and Affordable Housing

‘Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland’ is the government’s housing plan to 2030. The plan includes ambitious actions to address homelessness, the provision of affordable housing and accelerating the delivery of social and affordable housing schemes. Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) is one of the means through which Limerick City and County Council can seek to address demand for social housing in Limerick. The Council works in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Approved Housing Bodies to deliver and manage social housing.

Objective DSO4: Development Strategy - Social and Affordable Housing Objective - It is an objective of the Council to

Promote the provision of social 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), Limerick City and County Council’s Housing Delivery Action Plan 2022-2026 and any subsequent replacements thereof.



Figure 3.3: Sycamore Crescent

3.5 Urban Design, Placemaking and the 10 minute Town Concept

Urban Design involves examining all elements that contribute to a place (buildings, uses, streets, footpaths, open spaces) and ensuring that those elements create an attractive and distinct environment.

Quality public realm has socio-economic, environmental and cultural benefits, including:

- Increased pedestrian flow, which can enhance the vitality and vibrancy of the town
- Increased dwell time by visitors - leading to increased spend in local businesses
- Increased rents and property values - leading to enhanced viability
- Increased street activity, through retail, cafés, on-street performance - making the town more attractive for visitors
- Reduction in accidents and crime, due to the increase of people on the street
- Decreased noise/pollution, due to better traffic management.

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.

Objective DS05: Development Strategy - Placemaking Objective - It is an objective of the Council to

- (a) Ensure development proposals have given proper consideration to the urban design and placemaking criteria of site context, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking and detailed design.
- (b) Public realm provisions shall reflect high quality, easily maintained street furniture, soft landscaping and drainage solution shall adhere to best practice principles, designed on the principles of SuDS.

CHAPTER 4 – Town Centre First

Town Centre Strategic Vision:

To facilitate the development of the town centre as a place to live, work, visit and enjoy by ensuring a vibrant mixed-use environment, facilitating high quality new development and through the enhancement and development of the town’s rich architectural heritage and development of the public realm.

4.1 Introduction

A Strategic Objective of the Plan is to promote and facilitate the development of the town centre of Newcastle West as a vibrant place to work, live, visit and do business. A successful town is underpinned by a strong local economy and the creation of sustainable employment. Newcastle West has a vibrant commercial core, a unique sense of place dominated by the Town Square and Desmond Castle and adjacent to the high-quality natural environment of the Demesne Parkland.

The potential exists for regeneration within the town core, particularly lands to the rear of Church Street, Bishop’s Street, Brewery Lane, Nash Backlands, The square and Castle Demesne Backlands. These sites have the potential to bring about transformational change in Newcastle West. The provisions of the new LAP must consider the cumulative impacts of regeneration and redevelopment of major sites in tandem and ensure that commensurate social, community and cultural facilities are provided to both facilitate and address projected population growth.



Figure 4.1: Town Centre

Policy TCFP1: Town Centre: It is a policy of the Council to:

- (a) Support the implementation of the Town Centre First Programme in Newcastle West.
- (b) Capitalise on the infrastructural investments in the town that support the Town Centre First programme within the lifetime of this Plan and seek further opportunities to promote Newcastle West as a viable, vibrant and attractive town centre to live, work and visit fulfilling its roles as the service, social, cultural, economic and recreational hub for the local community and hinterland sensitive to the town’s rich architectural heritage and improved public realm.
- (c) 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.
- (d) Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied in the town centre, and the opportunity areas as identified in this Plan.
- (e) Ensure development proposals are designed in such a manner as to enhance

the town centre and should give due consideration to:

- Site context,
- Surrounding Built heritage,
- Climate resilience,
- Connectivity/Permeability,
- Public realm improvements,
- Adaptability,
- Privacy,
- Amenity,
- Parking provision.

thriving town centre with a strong service and social function. This is based on the principle of the '10 Minute' town concept. Through the re-use of buildings, infill development, re-purposing of under-utilised lands within the town centre for mixed uses, including residential, bespoke retail or tourism uses or creative workspaces, the Draft Plan seeks to consolidate the town rather than encourage sprawl. In addition, the Draft Plan supports the investment in high quality pedestrian/cyclist's friendly public realm and attractive public spaces, where people can gather socially.

4.2 Town Centre First Approach and the '10 minute' Town Concept

This Draft Plan promotes the 'Town Centre First' approach with a focus on creating a

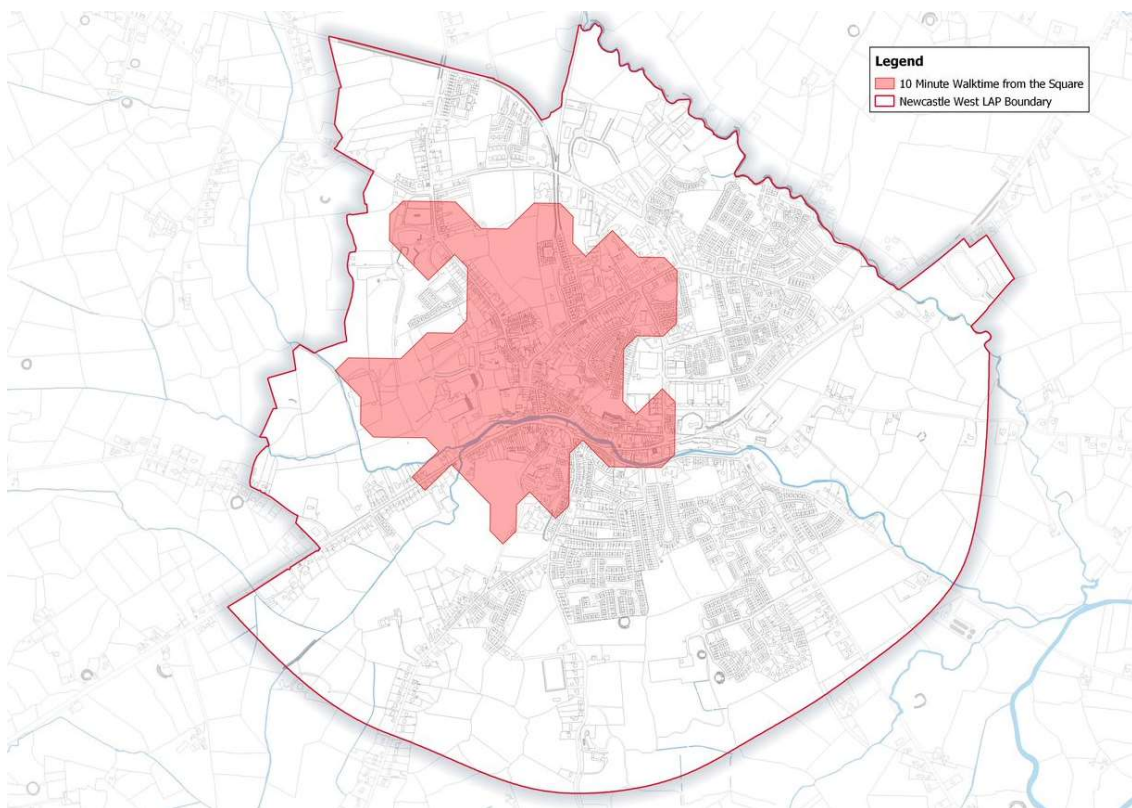


Figure 4.2: Ten-Minute Walk Time

Policy TCFP2: Town Centre First and ‘10 Minute’ Town Concept - It is policy of the Council to:

(a) Implement the 10 Minute Town Concept in accordance with the Ten Minute Towns Accessibility and Framework Report, in Newcastle West ensuring that future development including residential, community and educational facilities, employment centres are within a 10-minute walk or cycle from the town centre and/or accessible by public transport services connecting to settlements, including Limerick City, North Kerry, West Limerick and North Cork.

(b) Prioritise the town centre as the most appropriate location for future development of the town. Planning applications for future development will be assessed as per the zoning objectives of this Plan and considered sequentially in relation to the town centre zoning.

4.3 Vacancy in the Town Centre and the Town Centre Health Check 2023

Unfortunately, a trend of increasing building vacancy has been evident in Newcastle West’s town centre, over a long period. Comparative figures are outlined below, which show some progress made between 2013 and 2023, however both residential and commercial vacancy remain very high in Newcastle West.

4.3.1 Commercial Vacancy

A preliminary building survey of the Town Centre in 2013 highlighted high vacancy rates for commercial/retail units and residences. In February 2023, Limerick City and County Council carried out a further detailed Town Centre Health Check in the town. This is a useful tool to establish a

baseline, to monitor vacancy and dereliction in the town and establishes the use of each building.

The town centre health check established that while Newcastle West maintains a strong retailing function, commercial vacancy is still high, increasing from 22% in 2013 to 24% in 2023. The 2023 health check (Fig 4.4 below) established that Newcastle West has prominent vacancy clusters on Maiden Street where there is evidence of many buildings being derelict giving the street a dilapidated feel compared to the rest of the Town Centre.

4.3.2 Residential Vacancy

Like many of Limerick’s towns and villages, Newcastle West has its own challenges including the effect of vacant properties on the vitality and attractiveness of the town.

The town centre health check established that residential vacancy increased substantially in the town centre from 2013 to 2023. During this period residential vacancy in the town centre increased from 10% to 14%.

The sustainable growth of compact urban settlements is a top priority of national planning policy, with emphasis on the regeneration and repopulation of urban cores and built-up areas. This approach focuses on maximising the use of infill, vacant and underutilised sites and of buildings that are suitable and capable of re- use to provide housing, amenities, jobs and services. This approach focuses on maximising the use of infill, vacant and underutilised sites and of buildings that are suitable and capable of re- use to provide housing, amenities, jobs and services.

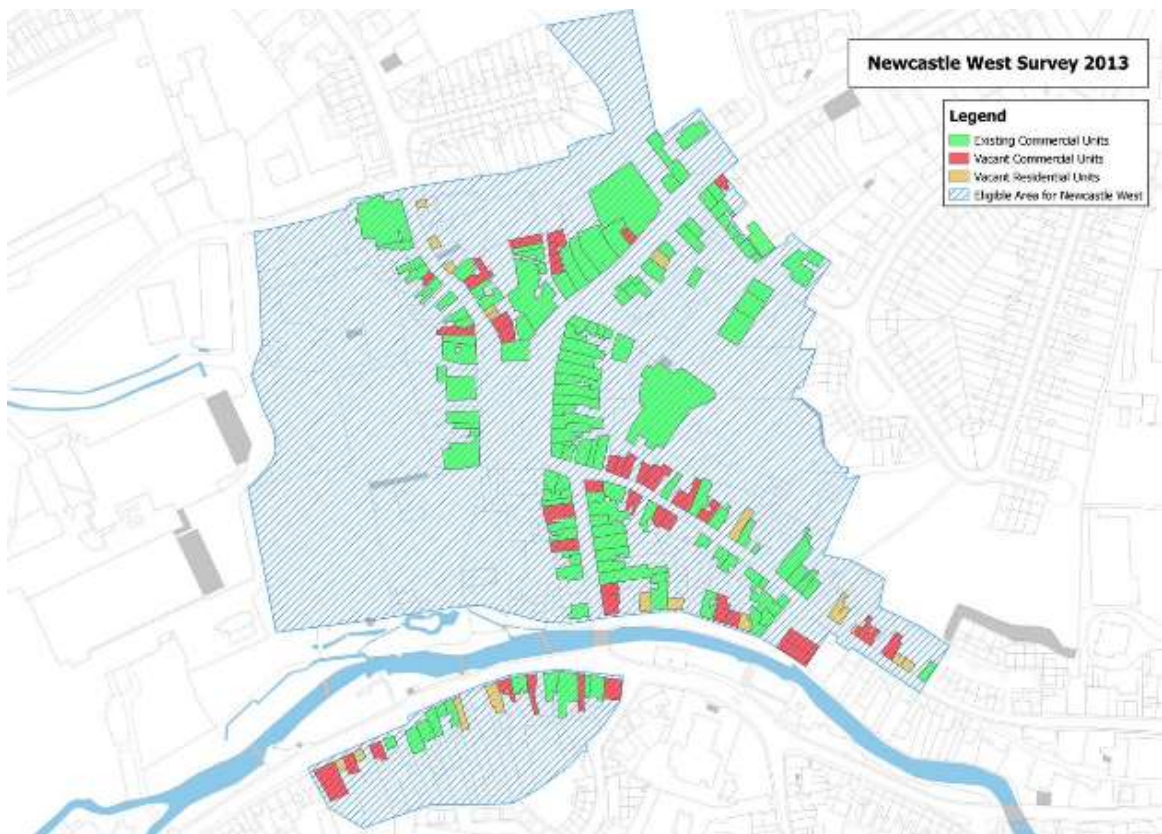


Figure 4.3: Health Check Survey 2013

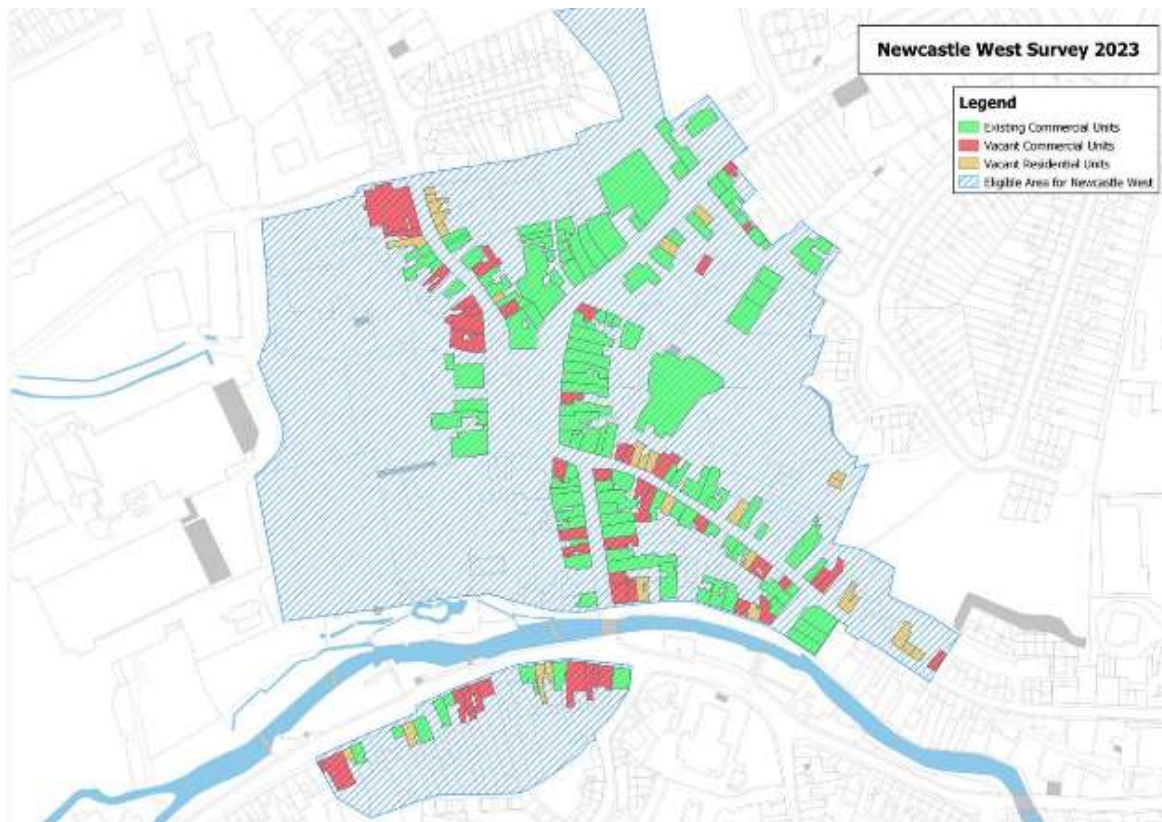


Figure 4.4: Health Check Survey 2023

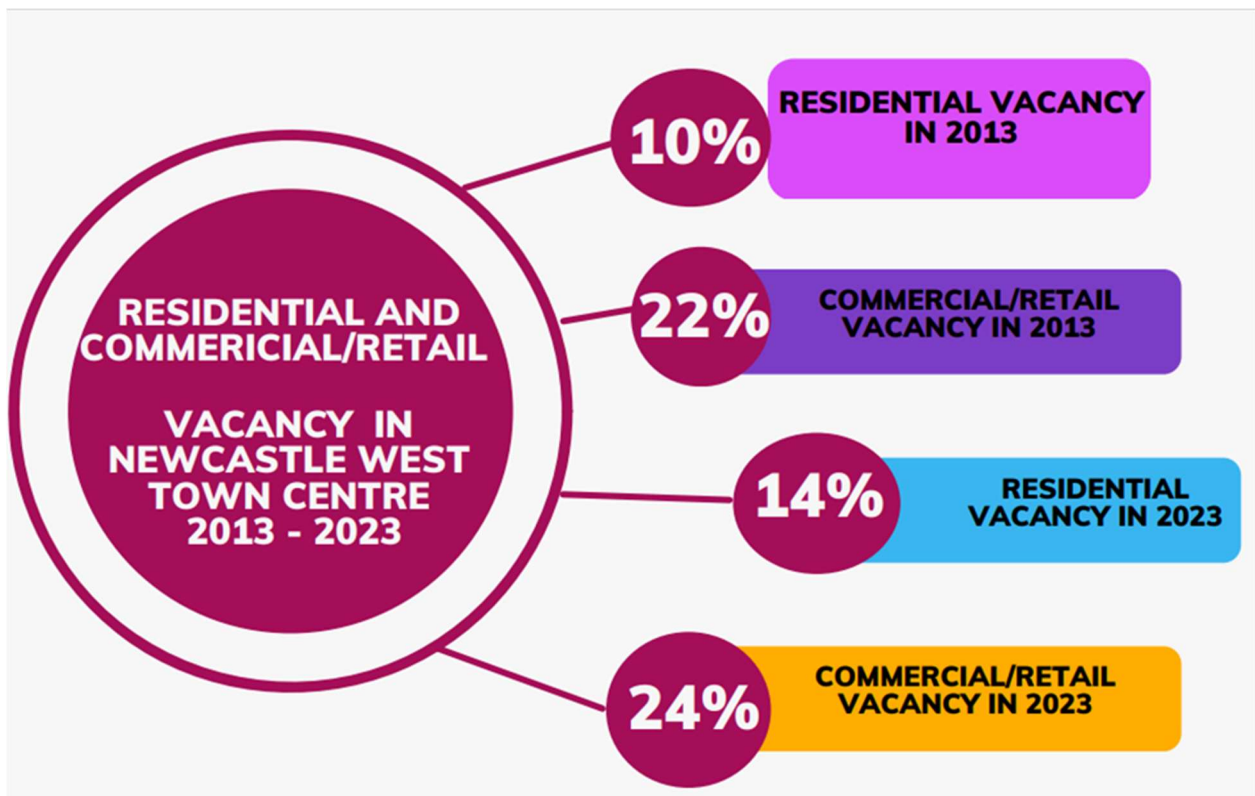


Figure 4.5: Comparative Analysis of Residential and Commercial/Retail Vacancy, Newcastle West Town Centre 2013 - 2023

Policy TCFP3: Vacancy - It is policy of the Council to:

(a) Promote and facilitate the re-use of under-utilised or vacant lands/buildings in Newcastle West through the active land management mechanisms, under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended), 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 bring vacant and derelict buildings back into productive use.

(b) Support the provision of new services, economic opportunities, improved infrastructure, public realm, and the provisions of the Town Centre First programme to encourage the re-use of

buildings and underused lands in Newcastle West's town centre.

4.4 Newcastle West - Town Centre First Programme

The Government published Town Centre First Initiative in 2021 – a major new policy that aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into town centres. It consists of a co-ordinated, whole-of-government policy framework proactively addressing the decline in the health of towns across Ireland and support measures to regenerate and revitalise them. The policy is supported by multi-billion-euro investment spread across major Government schemes such as the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF), the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF), Croí Conaithe (Towns) Fund, European Regional

Development Fund 2021- 2027, the Active Travel Fund, Climate Action and Retrofitting Initiatives, Built Heritage supports such Historic Structures Fund and the Town and Village Renewal Scheme.

Central to the Town Centre First programme are local communities and local businesses who will have the opportunity to reimagine and shape the future of their town.

Objective TCFO1 - Town Centre First Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to:

(a) Support and implement the *Town Centre First, A Policy Approach for Irish Towns* to ensure that Newcastle West remains a resilient town with vibrant inclusive communities and a strong cultural and social fabric that delivers a good quality of life for future generations, through a strong commitment to ‘place-making’ so that the environment of Newcastle West is one in which people want to live, do business, visit and is ultimately successful.

(b) 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 national heritage, sustaining Newcastle West as a town in which to live, work, invest in and do business.

(c) **(Residential)** Support and facilitate people to live in town centre locations, and to adapt older buildings to the demands of modern living and recognise the specific challenges this may present.

(d) **(Tourism)** Support and build community and business capacity to invest in and optimise outcomes from recreation, environment, food, heritage and cultural

development to generate jobs for residents, revenues for businesses and income through increased visitor numbers.

(e) **(Enterprise Development)** Support community and individual entrepreneurial capacity to strengthen innovation, production, distribution knowledge, infrastructure and networks to sustain and grow employment.

(f) Support, where appropriate, social enterprise and flexible business spaces including short-term rentals.

(g) **(Opportunity Sites)** Encourage and support the appropriate and sustainable development or redevelopment where appropriate of lands identified as development opportunity sites within the plan.

4.5 Retail Strategy

In retailing terms, Newcastle West is identified as a Tier 2, Key Service Town in the Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 – 2028. A town centre health check undertaken as part of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 established that Newcastle West maintains a strong retailing function even with a 12% (KPMG) commercial vacancy level. The health check determined that Newcastle West has prominent vacancy clusters on Maiden Street where there is evidence of many buildings becoming derelict giving the street a dilapidated feel compared to the rest of the Town Centre. Newcastle West serves a wide catchment area as a service centre, which acts as its primary attractor. In that regard, it serves a very important function, accommodating the needs of a large surrounding rural hinterland.

The core retail area is situated around The Square, Bridge Street, Bishop Street and Maiden Street. The town benefits from a wide variety of retail shops and services, which support the local population. The Town Centre is predominantly commercial/retail use with residential properties surrounding. The centre also benefits from an extensive service sector, which includes hair dressing, dry cleaners, travel agents and an extensive commercial sector, where small scale retailing has emerged. Newcastle West has a long tradition of boutiques and has become a shopping destination as a result of some of these shops. This is something that Limerick City and County Council are keen to foster and see expand.

There is also a good range of restaurants and bars, which give the town a prosperous appearance. Newcastle West has an extensive range of comparison shops. A large Tesco, Lidl, Aldi and Supervalu stores are located within the town settlement.

In Newcastle West, there are two areas outside the Town Centre that have acquired commercial/retail uses. These are located at Gortboy on Station Road by Oak Park and on Sheahan's Road.

As outlined above, the Council, in supporting the 'Town Centre First Approach' will assess retail development applications in accordance with this policy and other applicable/relevant regional/national legislation.

New retail developments will only be permitted on lands, which are zoned as

town centre. The provision of additional retail floor space outside of the town centre which would undermine the Town Centre's primacy as a retail/commercial centre and out-of-centre locations for retail business and services will generally not be permitted in an effort to consolidate the existing retail centre and encourage the reuse of vacant units in the town centre.

The Proposed LAP anticipates that additional retail development in the Newcastle West 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 adopted as part of the Limerick Development Plan process in 2022. Table 4.1 below establishes the Newcastle West Catchment - Indicative Future Retail Floorspace Potential.

The Retail Strategy states that *'The resulting figures indicate that after accounting for vacancy in the Newcastle West Catchment:*

- *There is a small additional need for convenience floorspace in 2024 of 1,137m², increasing to 2,174m² by 2028.*
- *There is no additional capacity for comparison non-bulky floorspace in 2024. This does change over the period, with a moderate increase of 640m² by 2028.*
- *There is no additional capacity for comparison bulky floorspace across the period.'*

Retail Goods Type	Floorspace Capacity (m ²)		
	2024	2026	2028
Convenience Goods	1,137	1,658	2,174
Comparison Goods (Non-Bulky)	-1,421	-478	477
Comparison Goods (Bulky)	-1,329	-695	-11
Total Retail Floorspace Potential	-1,613	485	2,640

Table 4.1: Newcastle West Catchment - Indicative Future Retail Floorspace Potential (Cumulative) – Adjusted for Vacancy and Pipeline.

Source: Table 6.22: Final Future Retail Floorspace Potential (Cumulative) – Adjusted for Vacancy and Pipeline. Limerick City and County Council – Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022-2028

Policy RLP1 - Retail – It is a policy of Council to:

- (a) To support the sustainable long-term retail growth of Newcastle West as a Tier 2 Level 2 Town, in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan and the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 – 2028.
- (b) Support the improvement of retail facilities in Newcastle West Town Centre through the provision of modern shop units and a growth in floorspace.
- (c) Support opportunities for brownfield redevelopment to support mixed-use sustainable urban development.
- (d) Improve on and enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre and increase its competitiveness with other retail destinations.
- (e) In areas adjacent/contiguous to the core retail area support the diversity of non-retail uses at street level where such uses attract customers that complement the vitality, vibrancy and activity that brings linked trips to the Town Centre.

Objective RLO1 - Retail: It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Promote the vitality and viability of Newcastle West as a retail service centre and to improve the quantity and quality of retail provision in the town by:
 - I. Emphasising the core retail/commercial area as the primary retail location and ensuring proposals which would undermine the vitality and viability of Newcastle West town centre will not be permitted.
 - II. Encouraging the upgrading and expansion of existing retail outlets and the development of new outlets within the town centre.
 - III. Ensuring that proposals with retail development elements comply with the provisions of the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 – 2028 in relation to site suitability and the sequential approach.
 - IV. 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.

V. Encourage the use of upper floors in retail premises for commercial or residential use.

VI. Enhance the physical environment of the town centre as a location for shopping and business through measures aimed at improving conditions for pedestrians.

VII. 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.

Objective RLO2 – Retail Impact Assessment: It is an objective of the Council to:

Require a Retail Impact Assessment for significant retail development where due to its scale and/or location it may impact on the vitality and viability of centres. Significant retail development constitutes development proposals for both comparison and convenience type development of greater than 1,000m² of net floorspace in Newcastle West.

4.6 Town Centre First – The Way Forward

The NPF recognises that investment in our towns and villages through regeneration, public realm improvements and the appropriate adaptation and re-use of our built heritage are key factors in creating a vibrant and liveable town centre and supporting the socio-economic

regeneration of our wider communities. In line with the principles of *Town Centre First, A Policy Approach for Irish Towns* the focus of the Plan will be to deliver a co-ordinated regeneration strategy for the town, to promote a vibrant town centre, enhance town centre services, facilitate public realm improvement including connectivity and permeability and promote the re-development of key strategic brownfield and infill sites, and increase residential capacity.

Newcastle West town centre needs to be the location offering a full range of services and amenities to attract people to it as a place to live, work and enjoy.

The Town Centre First Strategy is a crosscutting theme of this Local Area Plan. The strategy is set around four key areas to be planned, developed and delivered in partnership with stakeholders and the community over the lifetime of the Plan.

4.6.1. A Vibrant Town Centre

The town centre contains a mix of business, residential and retail, across a compact area, which makes the town functional and accessible. The centre benefits from an extensive service sector which includes boutiques, hairdressing, dry cleaners, travel agents and an extensive commercial sector. There is also a good range of restaurants and bars, which give the town a prosperous appearance.

The Council acknowledge that the role of the town centre has changed in recent times and has evolved with the emergence of on-line retailing and the decline in town centre residential use. The Regeneration Strategy for the Town Centre will seek to enhance and maintain

the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre.

A vibrant town centre will be created by:

- Focusing new retail development within the existing core town centre anchored around The Square, Bridge Street, Bishop Street and Maiden Street.
- Addressing the need to provide social enterprise and flexible business spaces including short-term rentals and accessible high-speed fibre broadband.
- Require compact residential growth through the creation of homes in the town centre close to shops and facilities. This is one of the most sustainable ways to bring life back into urban areas, particularly in the evenings and at weekends while supporting local shops and businesses.
- Building on the Boutique-offer and relationship of town with its local catchment area.
- Implementing a specific yearly cleaning and maintenance programme for public spaces within the core retail area to improve the pedestrian experience (remove gum, pressure wash paving etc.).
- Continue to support the established festivals and events that take place within Newcastle West and consider opportunities for further events.
- Consider the use of events and popup markets (at the square) to generate a buzz around the Town Centre.
- Support the work and objectives of the Newcastle West Tidy Town's team.

4.6.2. Tourism and Heritage

Tourism is a proven economic driver, and can play a significant role in the overall development in Newcastle West sustaining employment and providing opportunities for new business and services. The Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019 – 2023 establishes Newcastle West 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'. Newcastle West has the additional advantage of the 44km Greenway extending to North Kerry with potential connection to Fenit/Tralea, and to Adare and Limerick City as supported in the Limerick Development Plan as well as potential improved connection to the Castle Demesne and town centre. The built heritage of Newcastle West and the quality of public realm can also play a significant role in the delivery of tourism. Refer to Chapter 6 below.

Tourism and Heritage Strategy will:

- Focus on the expansion of the tourism sector within town centre through the development and enhancement of amenity areas, such as the Demesne, the River Arra walkway and Desmond Castle and build on the linkage to the Limerick Greenway through enhancement of the walking and cycling amenity routes to the town centre.
- Support and build community and business capacity to invest in and optimise outcomes from recreation, environment, food, heritage and cultural development to generate

jobs for residents, revenues for businesses and income through increased visitor numbers.

- Focus on enhanced public realm. Public realm supports public interaction, contributes to place making and has the capacity to transform towns into high-quality places to live, visit and invest - encouraging day and evening economies.
- Implement the Streetscape Enhancement Initiative. The initiative is a key part of *Our Rural Future* and will make rural towns and villages in County Limerick and across the country more vibrant and attractive places to live, work and visit.

4.6.3. Place making and Public Realm

High quality urban design and an attractive public realm are essential to grow Newcastle West's strong sense of place. Newcastle West's architectural and cultural history, streetscapes and the Square as an urban space all add to this. The accessibility of services and amenities within the 10 minute walk from the town centre, and the range of businesses/services available in the town provide for a vibrant town centre.

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.

The public realm of Newcastle West, characterised by its streets, public spaces, parks and natural features, has many positive attributes such as the Square and traditional buildings with numerous Protected Structures focused on the Square, Maiden Street and Bridge Street,

the imposing Desmond Hall, the historic Demesne, and the picturesque River Arra and its walkway through the centre of the town. However, as described earlier in this report, Newcastle West currently experiences significant traffic congestion at peak times and severance due to the N21 passing through the town centre on route to County Kerry. This has a substantial impact on the quality of the public realm as well as local traffic movements, including pedestrian and cyclist movements.

There are various other factors that detract from the public realm, common to most other traditional towns, such as vacant buildings, neglected frontages, derelict and under-utilised sites, inappropriate parking, litter, overhead cables and other infrastructural/utilities equipment and structures, poor design of infill buildings (including inappropriate modern materials used on older buildings), poor quality road and footpath surfaces, and clutter from signage and street furniture. Retail/commercial vacancy has persisted as a particularly serious issue in the town, particularly with older premises such as those on Upper Maiden Street, but also recently including newly built units.

Public realm improvements, combined with traffic management measures, can be very effective in addressing these issues, by helping to increase footfall and public confidence in the town, as well as acting as a catalyst for renewed private investment. Both short and long-term programmes can have a significant overall impact. In the short term, efforts to clean, paint and maintain property and public spaces can make a significant

improvement to the public realm and the general impressions of the town. Other measures such as appropriate planting, removal of obsolete signs and infrastructure, and co-coordinating types, styles and colours of street furniture, can further enhance the quality of the public realm.

Longer term, more substantial improvements can include traffic calming, rationalised on-street parking, comprehensive up-grading of public spaces, shopfront improvements, re-surfacing of footpaths, under-grounding of cables, improved pedestrian links and co-ordinated street furniture, lighting and signage, can significantly transform the public realm for the benefit of residents and visitors to the town, and hence the longer-term viability of shops and businesses.

Proposed public realm enhancements are set out in the next section (4.6.4) under 'opportunity sites'.

4.6.4. Opportunity Sites

Strong centres are important for strong local communities. The Section 28 Guidelines – Local Area Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities state that local area plans can play a key role in activating the development potential of central sites through identification of opportunity sites and general briefs suggesting appropriate future use. The purpose of the opportunity sites identified in this Plan is to encourage the restoration, consolidation and improvement of these lands mostly located in the town core. Appropriate, sensitive redevelopment of these sites would consolidate the town ensuring amenities are within walking distance. Developers are strongly advised

at an early stage to engage with the planning authority and avail of a pre-planning meeting to discuss their proposal. The Plan identifies nine opportunity sites the town. These are as follows:

- Opportunity Area 1- Churchtown
- Opportunity Area 2 - Lands to rear of Church Street and Bishop's Street
- Opportunity Area 3 - Brewery Lane
- Opportunity Area 4 – Connecting the Demesne and River Arra Walkway
- Opportunity Area 5 - Market Place
- Opportunity Area 6 - Nash Backlands
- Opportunity Area 7 - Former Olympic Ballroom
- Opportunity Area 8 – Maiden Street
- Opportunity Area 9 – The Square

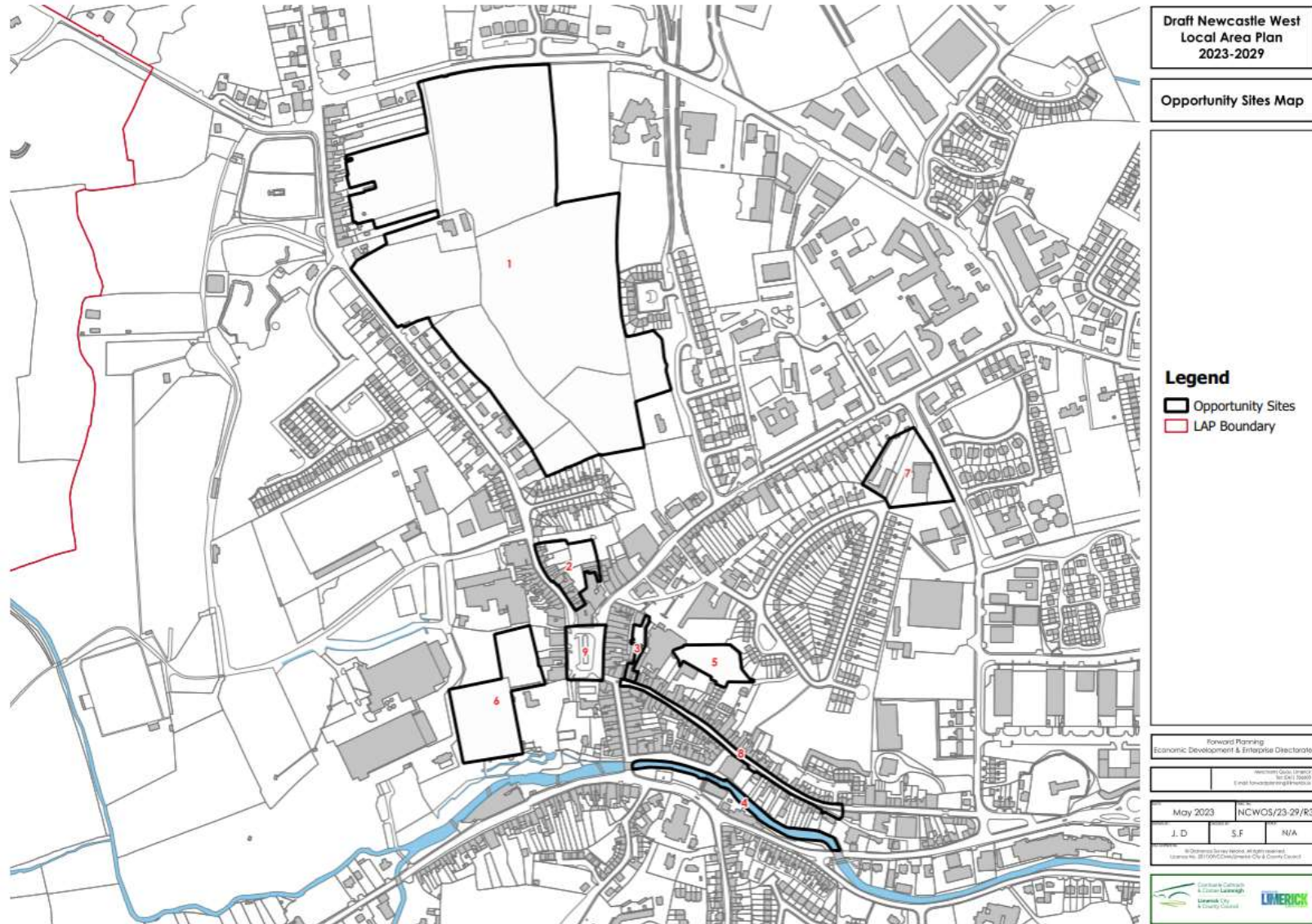





Figure 4.6: Opportunity Sites


Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 1 - Churchtown</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ca. 12 hectares zoned New Residential • Within walking distance of the town centre, the Demesne parkland and is adjacent to the Gaelscoil and the Greenway. • Site is a prime location adjacent to the town centre with opportunities for redevelopment, the provision of public realm, connectivity and permeability. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New mixed tenure residential neighbourhood appropriately designed to create a sense of place. 2. Any development to address linkages to the Gaelscoil, Greenway, Demense and the town centre to ensure that local residents have easy access to facilities and amenities and ensure quality permeability. 3. Masterplan required to guide the comprehensive development of this site. 4. Implement Local Transport Plan recommended actions: RN2, RN3, RN4 RN18, CI1, CI2, CI21,CI24, WN3,WN4,WN5, WN24,WN27 	

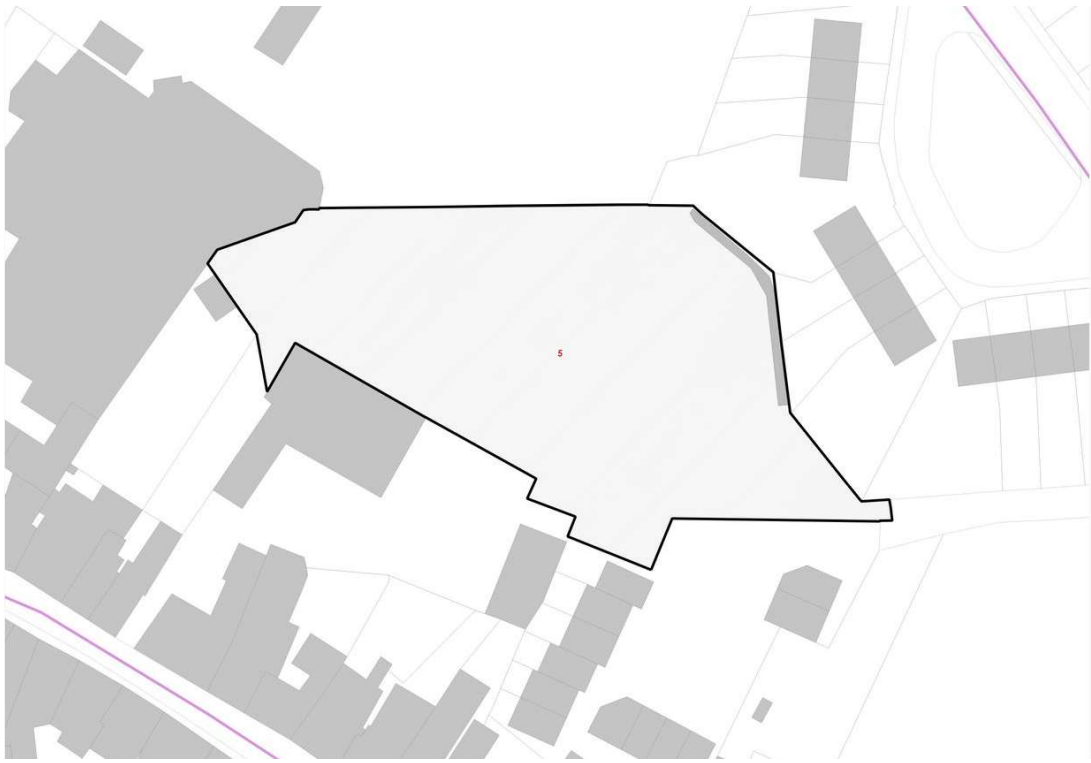
Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 2 - Lands to rear of Church Street and Bishop's Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.4 ha. Site zoned Town Centre • The site consists of a number of single storey and two storey residences and former commercial units on the ground floor on Church Street, and a stone masonry business operating to the rear with access from the lane to the public car park. • Bridewell Lane provides pedestrian access to Bishop Street. • There is a high level of vacancy on Church Street and some of the more recently built retail/commercial units on Bridewell Lane are also vacant. • The site is located in an ACA • Site is a prime location adjacent to the town 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any proposal should maximise the opportunity of the existing pedestrian access at Bridewell Lane and access to the existing car park. The design and layout shall reflect this and active frontage should address the car park. 2. The amalgamation of plots is encouraged. A comprehensive masterplan will be required to demonstrate a planned, integrated scheme for the re-development of the area to avoid piecemeal development, which could inhibit the future potential of the area. 3. Desirable re-development of the site includes, a mix of residential units, commercial, tourist related services, tourist accommodation, office development or a cultural/arts facility. 	


Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
	<p>centre opportunities redevelopment, connectivity and permeability.</p> <p>with for and</p>	<p>4. Any development works shall respect and incorporate, where reasonable the architectural heritage of the site.</p> <p>5. Implement Local Transport Plan recommended actions: RN3, RN4. CI1, CI3, WN4, WN5.</p>	

Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 3 - Brewery Lane is a formal thoroughfare linking Market Square to Maiden Street. It is located approximately 100m east of The Square in the ACA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This site acts as a formal thoroughfare linking Market Square to Maiden Street. It is located approximately 100m east of The Square in the ACA and within the curtilage of a number of Protected Structures. • Poor quality path, not maintained, uneven surface. • Site is a prime location adjacent to the town centre with some opportunities for redevelopment, but with more opportunities in terms of public realm, connectivity and permeability. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This area is important from a public realm and improvements would provide a better quality pedestrian link in the heart of the town through quality surfacing, signage and lighting. 2. There is potential for the development of the lands adjoining the lane to provide residential and retail development. 3. Any infill proposal of this site will be required to respect the access to the rear of the terrace of Protected Structures on the Square. 4. Consideration could be given to widening or opening up the entrance at the Market Square and the provision of quality street furniture, seating and bicycle parking. 5. Implement Local Transport Plan 	


Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
		<p>recommended actions: RN4,RN6,RN7,RN17,CI3,CI 6,CI5,CI20,WN5,WN7,WN 8,WN22.</p>	


Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 4 – River Walkway connecting the Demesne and River Arra linking into the Castle Demense</p>	<p>Site is a prime location adjacent to the town centre with vast potential in terms of public realm, connectivity and permeability.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve pedestrian and cycle links adjacent to the River Arra 2. Encourage linkages with the Demense to provide for greater connectivity. 3. Investigate the potential of providing a tourism hub at Fuller’s Folly. 4. Upgrade Street Furniture 5. Sympathetic lighting 6. Enhanced connection between the river and the Demense/Desmond Hall. 7. Up-graded footways. 8. Implement Local Transport Plan recommended actions: RN6, RN10, RN17 CI4 ,CI7, CI20 WN6,WN7,WN9 ,WN22, WN23 	


Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 5 - Market Place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circa 0.355 ha • Lands located in the heart of Newcastle West • South west of Assumpta Park • Site is currently underutilized • Site comprises grassland • Site is currently zoned Town Centre 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Site is a prime location adjacent to the town centre with some opportunities for redevelopment including potential for residential, and community uses, but also with opportunities in terms of public realm, connectivity and permeability. 2. Any proposal should maximise the opportunity of the existing pedestrian access. 3. Implement Local Transport Plan recommended actions: CI 5, CI20. WN7, WN22. 	

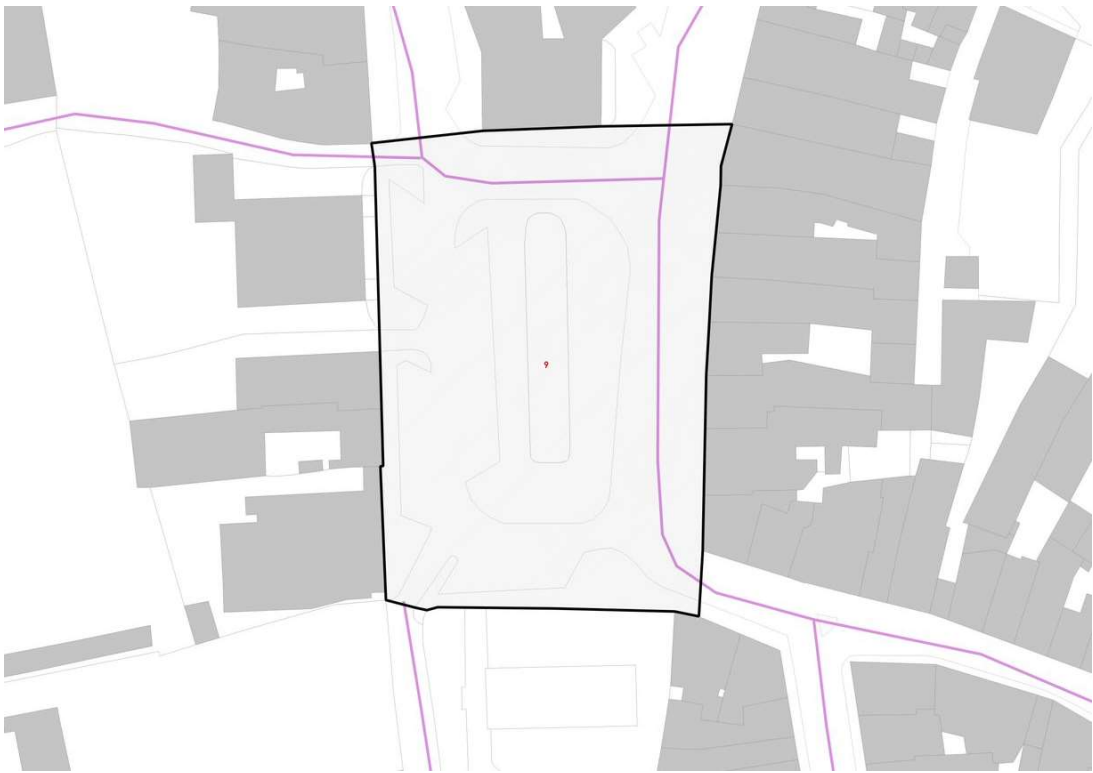
Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 6 - Nash Backlands, The Square and Castle Demesne</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C. 1.2ha • Site is located to the east of Ballygowan and is located immediately off The Square. • Site is currently underutilized • Site contains grassland and trees. • Site is currently zoned Town Centre 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Given its strategic location in relation to the retail core and its considerable size, the site presents significant potential for reinforcing the use, function and character of the Town Centre. 2. The site would provide an opportunity for increased permeability, linking the square to the Demesne. Opportunity for a mixed use development in the heart of The Square including residential, office, retail and tourism. 3. The existing laneway would benefit from resurfacing in appropriate high quality materials and improved signage and lighting. 4. Implement Local Transport Plan recommended actions: RN3, RN4, RN7, CI1, CI3, 	

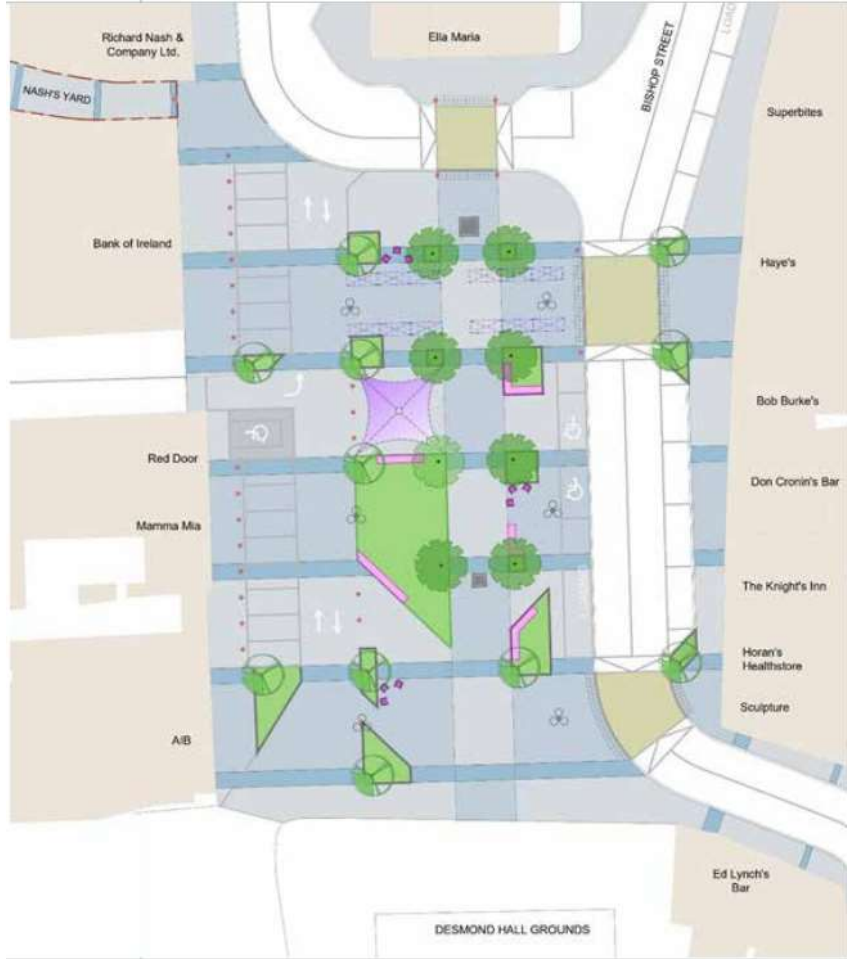
Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
		CI6,CI18, WN8,WN20. WN4,	


Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 7 - Former Olympic Ballroom, Sheehan's Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site contains 2 plots with a combined area of approximately 0.776 hectares • The existing Ballroom is approximately 117square metres with a stepped front façade commonly found at ballrooms around the county. • The site is zoned New Residential. • Site is a prime location proximate to the town centre with opportunities for redevelopment, and the provision of Public Realm. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Residential redevelopment opportunity 2. Sites to be redeveloped either together or separately. 3. Site is a prime location proximate to the town centre with opportunities for redevelopment, and the provision of Public Realm. 4. Implement Local Transport Plan recommended actions: RN 4, RN5, RN16, CI3, CI4, CI19, CI26, WN5, WN6, WN21. 	

Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 8 - Maiden Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maiden Street is a narrow, one-way thoroughfare defined by traditional 2 and 3-storey buildings providing ground floor commercial space and some upper floor residential accommodation. It is an attractive street with many independent shops and pubs. • Site is a prime location adjacent to the town centre with vast potential in terms of public realm, connectivity and permeability. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve pedestrian and cycle links along Maiden Street to increase permeability and east of movement towards the Square. 2. Link in with The Square to provide for greater connectivity. 3. Investigate the potential of providing traffic calming measures. This could include a shared surface treatment with no raised kerbs, which would reinforce the presence of pedestrians and act as a traffic calming device. 4. The character of the street would be enhanced through high-quality surface finishes and street furniture. 5. A shopfront improvement scheme would enhance the attractiveness of the street for visitors and locals, thereby encouraging increased 	

Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
		<p>footfall and vibrancy for the benefit of traders.</p> <p>6. The opening-up and enhancement of Brewery Lane would further increase the vitality of Maiden Street by providing a direct pedestrian link to Market Place and associated parking areas.</p> <p>7. Implement Local Transport Plan recommended actions: RN6, RN8, RN17, CI5, CI7, CI20, WN7, WN9, WN22, WN23.</p>	<p>Maiden Street Proposal</p> 

Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
<p>Opportunity Area 9 – The Square</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Square is the spatial, historical, and business centre of Newcastle West, with important facilities such as the Library, the Demesne Arra riverside, Desmond Complex and most local educational institutes located within a 500m radius. The overall aim for the Square is to create a welcoming space that caters for a wide range of civic uses and enhances the setting of Desmond Hall. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Minor changes to the roadway on eastern side of the Square – existing parking and loading bays retained. Raised and wider pedestrian crossings connecting eastern side to the Square, and with Loading/Set Down bay and 2no. disabled parking spaces. Two-way vehicle access to western side of the Square, on shared surface of high-quality materials. Rationalised parking to western side, with provision for 16no. perpendicular spaces (including 1no. disabled space). Vehicle access to existing residential and commercial properties on the south-west corner of the Square retained. High-quality surface materials (granite) throughout the Square, with defined spaces for 12no. market stalls. 	

Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
		<p>7. Footpath improvements to eastern edge of Square and linking to Nash’s Yard.</p> <p>8. Existing trees and sculptures retained.</p> <p>9. Raised planters and/or grass areas and rain gardens with integral seating.</p> <p>10. Provision of lightweight canopy structure for events and weather protection.</p> <p>11. New feature lighting, street furniture, signage and trees.</p>	<p>The Square Proposal</p> 

Opportunity Sites	Attributes	Development Potential	Map
			 An aerial photograph of a town square. The square is paved and features a central green area with young trees. It is surrounded by multi-story buildings, some with blue facades. A street with parked cars runs along the right side of the square. In the background, a large stone tower or castle is visible, surrounded by more buildings and greenery. The sky is clear and blue.

CHAPTER 5 – Sustainable Communities

5.1 Sustainable Communities - Introduction

A sustainable community creates the conditions where human, natural and economic opportunities are met while ensuring that adequate resources are available for future generations. The concept encompasses many different elements including equal opportunity for all, access to adequate health and community services, housing and good quality education, creating a sense of belonging and sense of place whilst protecting the local environment, landscape and heritage and implementing the principles of the circular economy and waste management. Developing the infrastructure for the above aspects of sustainable communities is one of the best ways to address climate change.

High quality social and community services in an area makes for a more attractive place that encourages the establishment of new business and places where people choose to live.

Newcastle West has a number of well-established community and social facilities and has many active community groups operating within the town involved in a wide range of activities including sports, arts and culture, local history and heritage, youth, environmental and local development.

The Local Authority is committed to the provision, upgrade and expansion of community facilities and social infrastructure in conjunction with private, public and voluntary organisations. Limerick City and County Council's Local

Community Development Committee (LCDC) performs a role in developing, coordinating and implementing a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development, through the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2021 (LECP), which is currently under review.

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 Newcastle West, provides a range of community facilities, services, recreational and cultural amenities and employment opportunities within short walking and cycle timeframes from homes, or accessible by public transport services connecting people to larger settlements such as Limerick City. Re-use of buildings, infill, services and amenities including crèches, schools amenities, recreation and other community facilities should be provided in tandem with residential development. Re-purposing of under-used lands have the potential to deliver this concept.

Policy CIP1 Community Infrastructure, Strategic Policy:

It is the policy of the Council to support the provision of a broad range of high quality social/community, educational, healthcare and recreational facilities and infrastructure in Newcastle West, which are within accessible walking/cycling distances from residential development.

5.2 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 Newcastle West. There are 10 early year services registered with Tusla in Newcastle West. The provision of new childcare facilities within the Plan boundary will be supported in accordance with the requirement of the policies set out in the LDP 2022-2028. Newcastle West is served by three national schools, including Scoil Iosaf, Courtenay Boys and Gaelscoil O Doghair and two second level schools. There is also a HSE Training Centre and a Brothers of Charity Workshop for people with special needs while agencies such as West Limerick Resource provide other training opportunities in the town.

The Council consults with schools, the LCETB and the Department of Education and Skills to identify sites for schools as necessary. In this regard, given the projected population growth to 2030, the Plan supports the proportionate expansion of education facilities in the town and lands are zoned for this purpose.

Objective CIO1: Childcare and Educational Facilities- It is an objective of the Council to:

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

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

transport and comply with all relevant standards.

(c) Facilitate the development of lifelong learning facilities and digital capacity for distance learning.

(d) Ensure that existing school sites are protected for educational use.

5.3 Health

St. Ita's Community Hospital is located in Gortboy offering residential care for elderly people in the greater West Limerick area. There is also a HSE clinic on Bishop's Street and a newly constructed Primary Care Centre at Station Road Gortboy. The Newcastle West Primary Care Centre will bring together a broad range of medical services under one roof providing a comprehensive level of care in one centralised and accessible location providing a fully integrated primary care services featuring - GP clinics, Shannon Doc, dental surgery, radiology and ultrasound services, pharmacy and café.

In addition, the Brothers of Charity also have facilities in the town. They provide a training centre at Gortboy to assist people with independent living. The Desmond Complex offers Day Care facilities, a Resource Centre and an integrated childcare facility for both pre-school and after-school children.

The primary role of the Planning Authority with regard to healthcare is to ensure that there is an adequate policy framework in place inclusive of the reservation of lands, should additional services be required. The Council will continue to support further economic and social progress with regard to health services including capital investment in community and continuing

care services at the HSE (West) Health Clinic in Newcastle West.

Objective CIO2 – Provision of Healthcare Facilities: It is an objective of the Council to:

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

5.4 Community, Cultural Facilities

The Desmond Complex was imagined and built through local voluntary effort and now provides crèche facilities and facilities for our older citizens as well as being a centre for meetings and social occasions.

The Men’s Shed, the Arra Walking Group and the Active Retired all provide social outlets for different groups of people in the town.



Figure 5.1: Desmond Complex

The Council recognise the lack of evening/night-time amenities in the town. There is no cinema in Newcastle West. Similarly, there is no arts/cultural centre in the town. Such amenities help sustain evening and night-time activities and will be encouraged, where appropriate.

5.5 Parks, Open Space and Recreation

Newcastle West has a broad range of public amenities, sports and recreational facilities including GAA, soccer and rugby and is home to several cycling clubs, an athletics club, tennis club, has a pool and several gyms.

The Castle Demesne is a mature parkland of over 100 acres set in a secluded location within walking distance of Newcastle West town centre. The Demesne provides a variety of leisure, play and sporting facilities for all to enjoy including a 1.8km looped walkway. In the fields beyond the Cullenagh Mór Bridge you will see some of the 28,000 trees planted early this century with the assistance of Coillte. The Wet Meadow and Fox Cover are vital areas for flora and fauna as well as holding a special place in the history of leisure activities for many generations. To the north near the water tower and St. David’s Cemetery, there are tremendous views of the countryside and hills surrounding the town.

Each year, the town hosts Eigse Michael Hartnett, a literary and arts festival with a very special atmosphere. It is run by a local committee in partnership with Limerick City and County Council and brings leading writers, poets, artists and thinkers to the town.

The Great Southern Trail Group is another voluntary group. Their work over 20 years brought the 44km Limerick Greenway into being, the first long-distance greenway in the country and part of the Euro-Vélo 1 route. It is now under the management of Limerick City and County Council and there are plans for to extend it east to the city and to continue it on to Listowel.

Over the past number of years, the Newcastle West Development Association an umbrella organisation which brings together the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Association, Tidy Towns and the Community Council has been spearheading a five-year plan for the town in dynamic collaboration with Limerick City and County Council and the Newcastle West Municipal District. A number of elements of that five-year plan are already underway with the development of a Regional Athletics Hub and the feasibility of a tourism hub at Fullers Folly being investigated. Limerick City and County Council are committed to the provision, upgrade and expansion of leisure facilities

in the Newcastle West in conjunction with private, public and voluntary organisations.

The strategic vision for Newcastle West set out in Chapter 3 recognises that if Newcastle West is to fulfil its role as a Key Town settlement as set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, it needs to provide community infrastructure in tandem with population growth. New open space/recreation facilities should be provided in conjunction with new residential developments and there will be a requirement to provide new open spaces as part of these developments in line with the following criteria.

Type of Public Open Space	Area Required	Accessibility from residential units	Notes
Play lot/ pocket park – primarily for play for younger children	400m ² – 0.2ha.	Every home within 100m walking distance	All residential areas in excess of 50 units should incorporate a play lot provided at a rate of 4m ² per residential unit; Required in all housing estates, overlooked with passive surveillance by as many houses as practicable; Not to be located to the side or rear of dwellings; Developers will be required to provide a minimum of two permanent play features.
Small Park	0.2ha. – 2.0ha.	Every residential unit within 400m walking distance	To accommodate a small playground with a minimum of 4 play features, kick around space, and passive recreation; Overlooked with passive surveillance by as many houses as practicable; Not to be located to side or rear of dwellings.

Local Park	2.0ha. – 20ha.	Residences to be within 1km	To accommodate a wide range of uses including playing pitches, passive recreation and biodiversity areas.
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Table 5.1: Public Realm Open Space Provision in Residential Developments in Newcastle West

Objective CIO3 Community, Sports and Cultural Facilities: It is an objective of Council to:

(a) Require future development of new community facilities to generally meet the following criteria of the 10 Minute Town Concept:

- Generally located within 800m walking distance of the town centre;
- Located centrally with respect to the community it serves, taking into account limitations of topography and the road and footpath network;
- Be either serviced or serviceable by public transport;
- Clustered with complementary community facilities, local retail services etc. and integrated with housing; and
- Located where a substantial proportion of the population reside, in particular older and less mobile/mobility compromised members of the community.

(b) Support and facilitate sports clubs, schools, cultural groups and community organisations in the provision, improvement and expansion of community services, sports and recreation amenities, multi-purpose spaces at appropriate locations that are universally accessible. The Council promotes opportunities for multi and co-use active and passive recreational amenities including sports and recreational facilities, playgrounds and

outdoor gym equipment within existing areas of open space.

- (c) Prepare a Masterplan for the Castle Demense, which seeks to enhance existing leisure, play and sporting facilities, while also providing new amenities, facilities and infrastructure to better utilise this valuable resource for use by residents of and visitors to Newcastle West. Part of the aim of the master plan would be the preservation of local ecology and where possible enhancement of local biodiversity.
- (d) **(Cultural/Arts Facility)** – Support the provision of a cultural/arts facility in Newcastle West.
- (e) Support the extension of Calvary Cemetery in Newcastle West, on lands located to the north and east of the existing cemetery. The lands shall be safeguarded for the future expansion of the existing cemetery.
- (f) Investigate the potential of providing a sports and recreational hub adjacent to the Athletics Hub in order to develop synergies with the existing facility.

Objectives CIO4 Walkways, Cycleways and the Limerick Greenway: It is an objective of the Council to:

(a) Encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Newcastle West, and facilitate the provision of an attractive and coherent network of off-road footpaths

and cycle facilities. This will be achieved by:

- Providing a safer connection between the Limerick Greenway and the town centre.
- Development of a greenway hub in Newcastle West.
- Providing secure cycle parking infrastructure at appropriate locations as opportunities arise.

(b) Support of development of the Limerick Greenway, ancillary facilities, connectivity between the Greenway and the town centre and connectivity to the heritage and cultural assets of the town.

(c) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map (Appendix 1, Map 3) in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties overlook proposed walkways.

(d) Proposals for new Walkways/Cycleways, Greenways and Blueways will be subject to appropriate environmental assessments. Any development which would have adverse effect on the integrity of European sites or cause a net loss of bio-diversity will not be permitted.

Objectives CIO5 Parks, Open Space and Recreation: It is an objective of the Council to:

(a) Examine the feasibility of blue-way opportunities along the River Arra and River Daar in Newcastle West, subject to appropriate ecological assessments.

(b) Protect existing open space by not permitting development, which encroaches on such open space, and protect semi-natural open space from inappropriate development.

(c) Facilitate/support the provision of allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.

(d) 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, overlooking permeability, place-making and requirements set out in Section 11.3.6 of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028.



Figure 5.2: Castle Demense Playground

5.6 Age Friendly

Limerick 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 Strategy should be read in tandem with this chapter.

Objective CIO6: Age Friendly – It is an objective of the Council to:

Support Healthy Limerick initiatives and the Age Friendly Limerick Strategy 2015 – 2020 and any subsequent replacement initiative/strategy to deliver recreation, environmental improvements, active travel, health infrastructure, as well as addressing the need for the development of independent living, sheltered housing, and respite accommodation for changing demographic needs. The Council be guided by the National Positive Aging Strategy and any replacement thereof.

CHAPTER 6 – Economic Development and Tourism

6.1 Introduction

Newcastle West is a key town, which provides a long established employment base in the west of the County. The Settlement Hierarchy as set out within Chapter 2 Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan (LDP) 2022-2028 identifies Newcastle West as a Level 2 (Key Town) settlement. Therefore, the town has an important economic role in the western part of the County where regionally strategic employment centres are provided. The plan will support critical employment growth in the coming years. Infrastructure delivery and improvements to public realm and facilities will be prioritised in the plan area. This accords with the approach set out in Chapter 5 A Strong Economy of the LDP 2022 to 2028.

Newcastle West has a proven track record in sustaining economic development and employment given its' success as a Manufacturing base in healthcare, joinery, food and beverages, and machinery. New investment from companies such as Ortec Inc (locating its European headquarters in Newcastle West) and the expansion of Filtertek has created a more resilient employment base.

Limerick City and County Council is committed to facilitating the creation of employment in Newcastle West. 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 was adopted in 2016 and a new plan is currently being prepared. Both of these documents should be read in tandem with this chapter.

The population of Newcastle West aged 15 or over at work was 50.7% in the 2016. Census 2016 shows that the town has a high unemployment rate at 17.3%, which was above the unemployment rates for Limerick (14.4%) and the State (12.9%). As an employment hub according the 2016 Census of Anonymised Records (POWSCAR) the availability of labour (20-39-year age group) accounts for almost a third of the population and has a relatively high percentage with third level education. This is an important factor in expanding the growth potential of the local economy.

6.2 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 Greenway and initiatives of the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary and the initiatives of the Atlantic Economic Corridor to realise the full potential of the Newcastle West.

The economic profile of Newcastle West reflects its strong agricultural hinterland and its strategic location on the National

Primary route and Regional Road network. The largest employers are Sysco and Ballygowan Natural Mineral Water. There are a number of business employing 10-50 including PSE Power Systems, Brian A Flynn, Brian Scully Services and Nolan Products. There are also a significant number of public sector entities that offer employment opportunities in the town.

With the opportunities afforded by digitalisation and e-working the Council promotes Newcastle West as suitable location to support remote working, supporting hubs, culture/creative and Smart tech enterprises. Small entrepreneurial start-up business and innovation is also an important consideration for the towns economy. The possibility of small-scale employment opportunities and start up business incubation units should be explored in the town with a view to re-use of existing buildings. The LAP supports opportunities for employment creation, business and technology development in Newcastle West to facilitate economic in accordance with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the Limerick Development Plan.

Policy EDP1: Strategic Economic Development:

It is a policy of the Council to promote, facilitate and enable economic development and employment generating activities in Newcastle West on lands zoned ‘Enterprise and Employment’ in a sustainable manner in accordance with the Proposed Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, the National Planning Framework

and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

Objective EDO1: Enterprise and Employment Objectives:

It is an objective of Council to:

- (a) Encourage the redevelopment of vacant commercial units, brownfield, derelict, and infill sites for local enterprise development subject to the normal planning criteria and environmental requirements.
- (b) Ensure any proposals for the lands zoned for Enterprise and Employment adjoining national or regional roads include a Traffic and Transport Assessment, to ensure that the local road network and associated junctions have sufficient capacity to facilitate the extent of the development planned. The costs of implementing mitigation measures arising from the assessment shall be borne by the developer.
- (c) Any proposals on lands zoned enterprise and employment shall ensure the provision of a minimum 20m landscaped buffer zones between proposed development and residential developments.
- (d) Promote a diverse range of employment opportunities by facilitating appropriate development on appropriately zoned Enterprise and Employment lands, subject to compliance with all relevant Development Management Standards of the Proposed Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.
- (e) Ensure any proposal for part of the lands zoned Enterprise and Employment does

not preclude the development of the remaining zoned lands. Any proposal submitted on these lands shall include an indicative layout which allows for a coordinated development of the remaining zoned lands.

(f) Retain sufficient lands around the site boundaries where industrial, enterprise or distribution activities are proposed to accommodate landscaping to soften the visual impact and reduce the biodiversity loss of the development.

(g) Early engagement with all utilities providers, including Uisce Eireann is strongly advised.

(h) Promote inter-urban linkages and partnerships across county boundaries, capitalising on collective strengths to attract investment in Newcastle West, the wider West Limerick /North Kerry region and the Atlantic Economic Corridor.

Indicative layouts as per Figure 6.1 and 6.2 below, have been prepared for the Enterprise and Employment zoned lands in Newcastle West. These indicative layouts are intended to inform the comprehensive development of these lands, while protecting the residential amenity of property in the vicinity and ensuring minimal disruption to the existing road network.

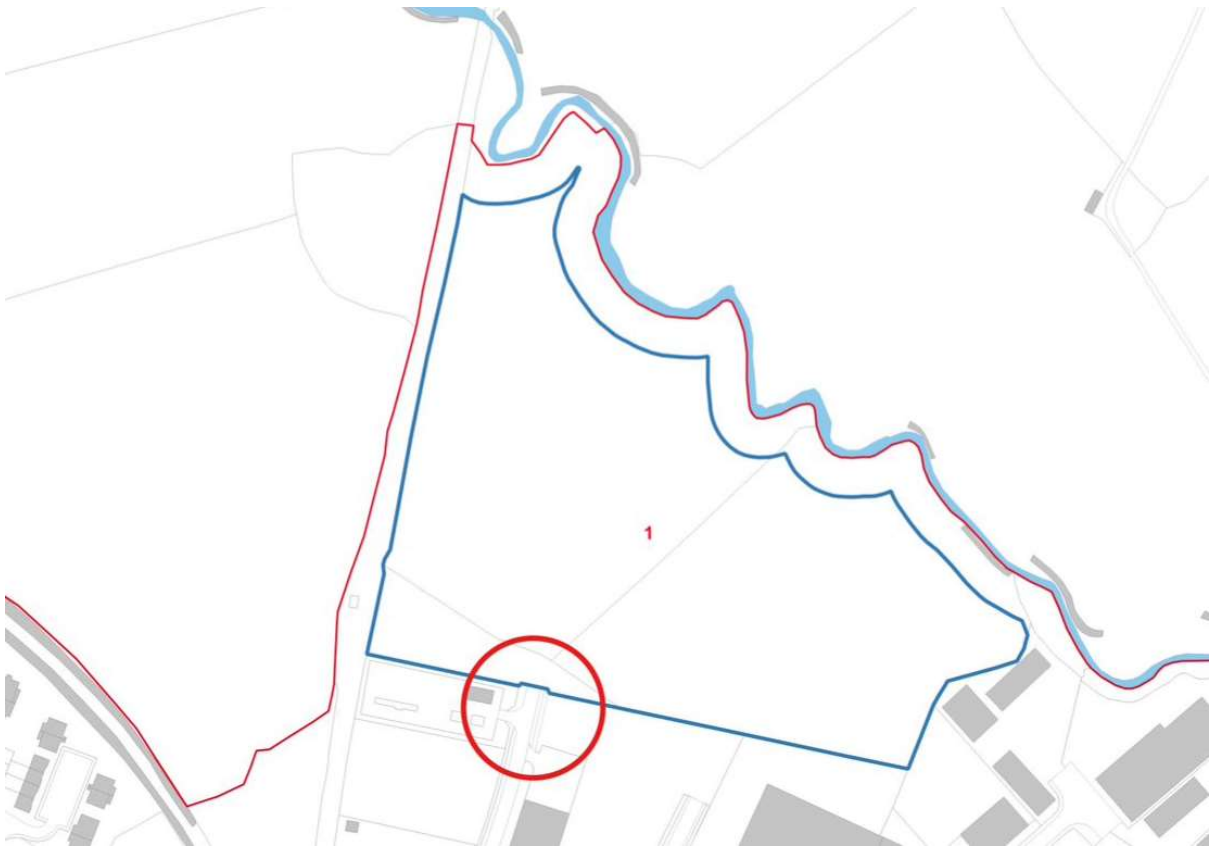


Figure 6.1: Indicative layout and access point for enterprise and employment lands, Site 1

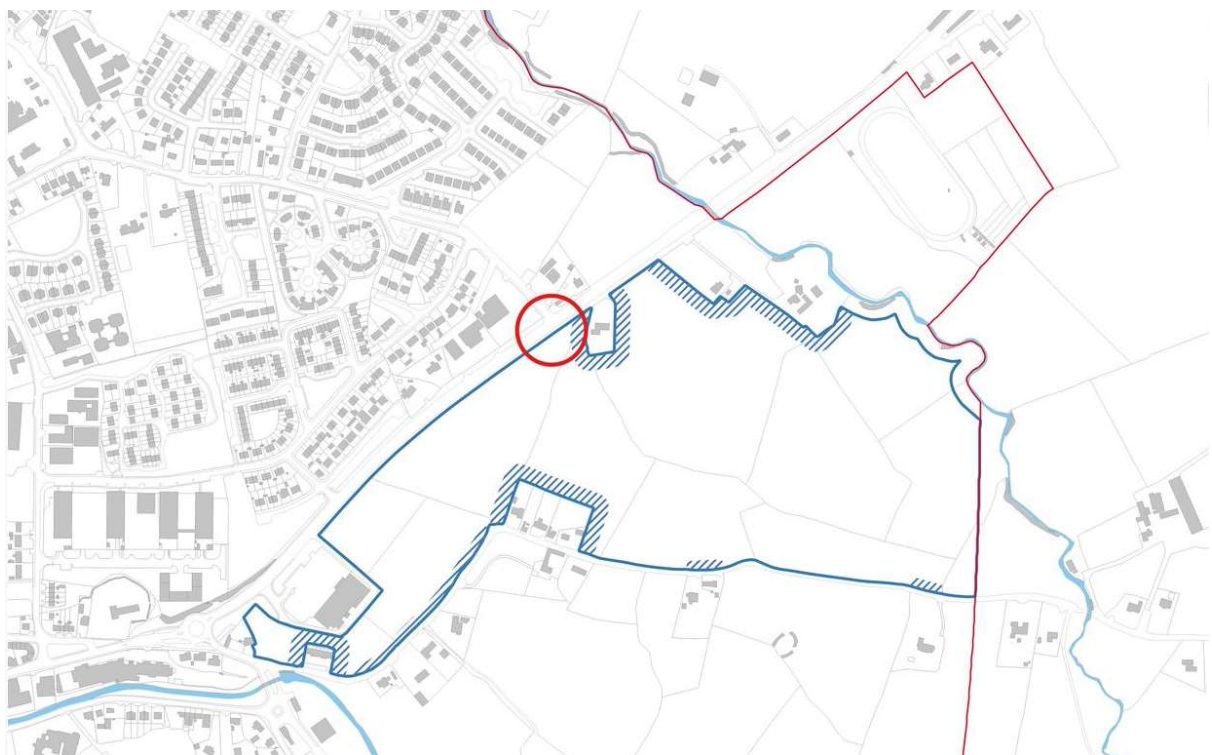


Figure 6.2: Indicative layout and access point for enterprise and employment lands, Site 2

6.2.1 Small-scale Business in Residential Areas or associated with a Residence and 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.

6.3 Tourism Context, Strategy and Objectives

Tourism is a proven economic driver, and can play a significant role in the overall development in Newcastle West sustaining employment and providing opportunities for new business and services. The Local Area Plan has a key role in the protection of tourism assets and landscape whilst enabling appropriate tourism development.

Newcastle West is an attractive town with the Castle Demesne parkland of over 100 acres set in a secluded location within walking distance of the Town Centre. The

Demmesne provides a variety of leisure, play and sporting facilities for all to enjoy. Within the town, is the restored medieval complex known as Desmond Hall (13th century castle).

Additionally, The Limerick Greenway is a popular recreational trail, which is ideal for walking, cycling and hiking. This 44km greenway connects Newcastle West to the settlements of Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale and extends into Kerry. The Limerick Greenway has already stimulated business growth in Newcastle West strengthened by strategic location and accessibility of the town. Blue-way opportunities exist along the River Arra and River Daar.

Other tourism assets in the town include its rich built heritage with a large number of structures on the Record of Protected Structures. The Market Square is an attractive area of public realm, which includes seating, green infrastructure, a freestanding limestone monument and serves as a space for a local market. There is potential to further enhance this area.

The Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019 – 2023 sees Newcastle West 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’.

The Council will seek, through the Town Centre Regeneration Strategy and the principles set out in Fáilte Ireland’s Development Guidelines for Tourism Destination Towns, to further develop the tourism potential of Newcastle West, building on linkages with other towns and identifying ‘tourism-specific’ needs for high quality tourism. The development of a

‘Green and Blue Infrastructure Implementation Strategy’ (outlined at section 8.2.1) will also support initiatives and the development of the tourism industry in the town.

Policy TP1 - Tourism Strategic Policy: It is a policy of Council to:

Support the long-term sustainable growth of appropriate tourism opportunities in Newcastle West, in accordance with Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region and the Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019 – 2023 and any subsequent replacement strategy.



Figure 6.3: The Square

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

(a) Support growth in the tourism sector in Newcastle West ensuring that the economic and societal benefits of tourism are effectively distributed throughout the town by making vital connections between complementary sites and attractions, and ensuring visitors can avail of Newcastle West’s services attracting visitors from the Greenway into the town centre, and enabling them to do so with ease.

- (b) Support the provision of a range of tourist accommodation types and infrastructure including, hostel accommodation, campervan/caravans sites, subject to them being located on suitably zoned lands.
- (c) Support Newcastle West’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 and to mitigate any adverse environmental, biodiversity and ecological impacts.
- (e) Support community engagement in the development of tourism and amenity projects in the town.
- (f) Seek to improve public realm opportunities, to make available spaces to facilitate the tradition of festivals in the town.
- (g) Support development of the Limerick Greenway, ancillary facilities, connectivity between the Greenway and the town centre, Newcastle West as a Greenway hub, with enhanced accessibility to the heritage and cultural assets of the town.
- (h) Require new tourist projects to be located within the town to foster synergy with the services and retail business located in the town.
- (i) Facilitate Tourism development opportunities in Newcastle West in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 as they apply to Newcastle West. All development proposals comply with the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028.
- (j) Develop Newcastle West as ‘Destination Town’ and to seek funding to realise this objective in accordance with Fáilte Ireland’s Destination Town Guidelines.

CHAPTER 7 - Sustainable Mobility and Transport

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 7 Sustainable Mobility and Transport of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out a series of Policies and Objectives which establishes the sustainable transport priorities for Limerick over the lifetime of the plan. A key tenet of the NPF is the delivery of improved sustainable mobility in our cities, towns and villages. This accords with Ireland's Climate Change mitigation plan, whereby a concerted effort is made to move away from polluting and carbon intensive population systems to new cleaner technologies. As a Key Town, the Newcastle West LAP includes a Local Transport Plan (LTP) in Volume 3. The aim of this document is to improve the integration of Land Use and Transport Planning in the preparation of this local area plan. This will be delivered in tandem with sustainable compact growth in the plan area, through appropriate means such as the development of lands in the existing built-up footprint of the town.

The LTP has been prepared in close collaboration with the National Transport Authority (National Transport Authority) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). National and Regional planning policy emphasises the efficient movement of people and goods, through an integrated multi-modal, accessible and affordable transport network that enhances competitiveness, economic progress, balanced regional development, social cohesion and equality for all in terms of accessing opportunities, for business and citizens alike. National Active Travel policy promotes reducing the demand for travel and the reliance on the private car in

favour of public transport, car-pooling, cycling and walking as means to healthier lifestyles, climate change and improved air quality. Active Travel is travelling with a purpose using your own energy, such as walking (including all users of footpaths) or cycling as part of a purposeful journey. A key objective of active travel and its infrastructure is to ensure active travel can be seamlessly built into everyday life as part of normal daily routines including the commute to school, college or work. As Newcastle West is located on the Limerick Greenway, active travel and accessibility from the Greenway to the Town Centre are key requirements of this plan.

Compact settlements are conducive to 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 walking distance, thereby not requiring transport by car. A fundamental role of a local area plan is to guide the location of land uses considering the integration of good land use planning with transportation to unlock significant improvements in the quality of life, including more sustainable modes of movement which also have a role in achieving climate targets including smart vehicles and electrification of the national fleet and private vehicles.

7.1.1 Movement and Accessibility

Newcastle West is a compact town, with most residential properties located within a short distance of services, amenities,

enterprise and employment. The use of the private car is still the predominant form of transport for trips and therefore supporting and facilitating a modal shift to sustainable transport options must be a priority over the Plan period. The Development Strategy supports this modal shift through the appropriate zoning of

land close to the town centre and existing services and employment opportunities. The Plan, prepared in accordance with national guidelines, will also require that at design stage, residential and mixed developments consider pedestrian movement and the provision of cycleways and associated facilities.

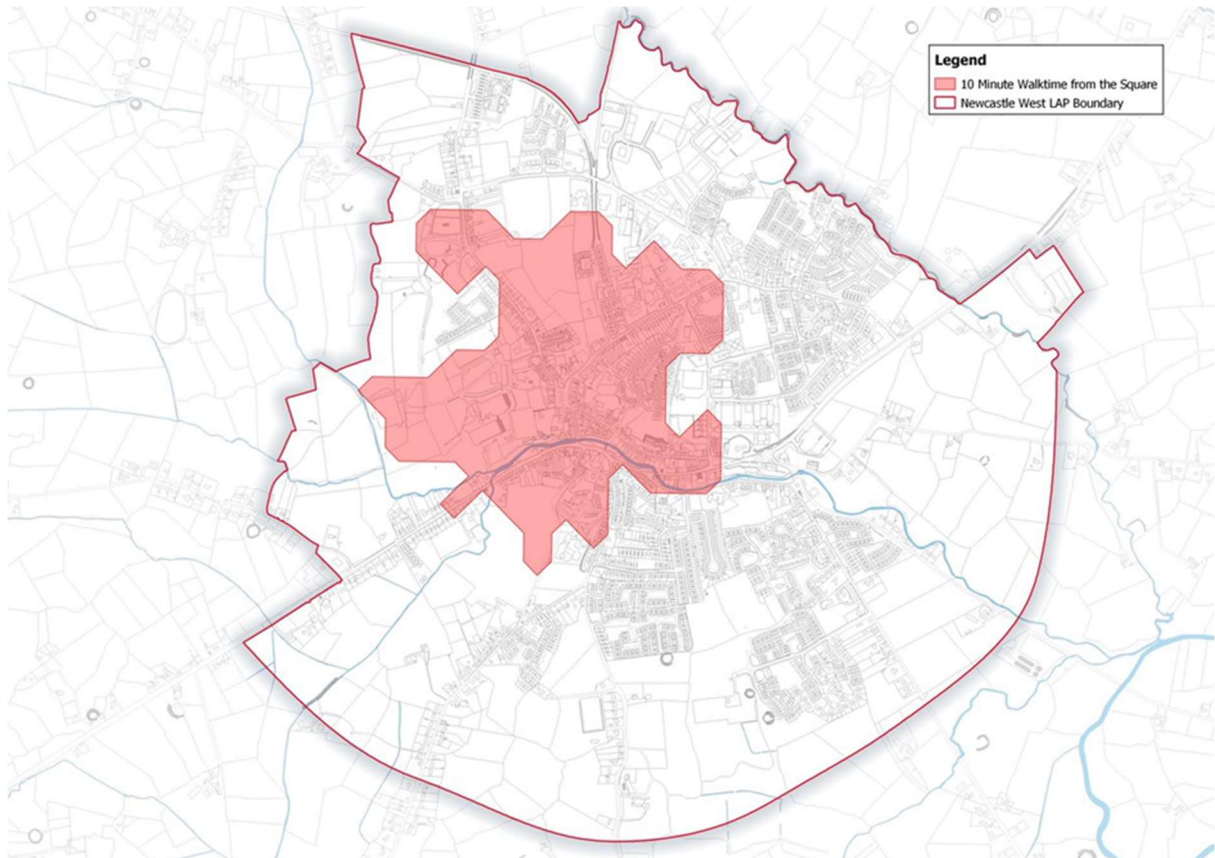


Figure 7.1: Newcastle West Walking Distances

Policy SMTP1 - Integration of Land Use and Transport: It is a policy of the Council to:

Support and facilitate the integration of land use and transportation policies for Newcastle West, as a means of reducing the impact on climate change. The Council will ensure the delivery of a sustainable compact settlement, which can be served

by sustainable modes of transport with a focus on reducing the need to travel.

Policy SMTP2 - Promotion of Sustainable Patterns of Transport: It is a policy of the Council to:

Seek to implement in a positive manner, in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders and agencies, the policies of the NPF, RSES and the Department of

Transport's Active Travel publications, to encourage more sustainable patterns of travel and greater use of sustainable forms of transport in Newcastle West, including public transport, cycling and walking.

7.2 Local Transport Plan

As part of the preparation of the Local Area Plan, Limerick City and Council commissioned the preparation of a Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Newcastle West. The objective of the plan is to provide a long term strategic integrated Local Transport Plan for the town, that incorporates all land transport modes and to inform the preparation of the Newcastle West Local Area Plan (LAP) 2023-2029.

The strategic aim of the LTP is to provide for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services in the town over the period of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, the Draft Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2023-2029, and beyond, which will:

- Co-ordinate transport and land use planning,
- Reduce the demand for travel and the reliance on the private car in favour of more sustainable forms of transport,
- Provide a safe and sustainable transport network,
- Identify strategic walking and cycling infrastructure to prioritise for funding.

The LTP examines all transport modes and how they interact. It has been prepared to make sure that movement and accessibility of all forms, across all modes are considered; The Local Transport Plan incorporates up to date land use zonings for the town and has been carried out in

close collaboration with the preparation of this Plan.

Objective SMT01 - Local Transport Plan: It is an objective of the Council to:

Implement the Local Transport Plan for Newcastle West and all actions/recommendations contained within, in particular Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. (See Volume 2)

7.3 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. Vehicles often dominate the streets and vehicle movement can be detrimental to vibrancy and livability of the town, as well as 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, we also need to support individual citizens to make the switch to active travel through behavioural change projects and support initiatives.

CSO Census 2016 data outlines the number of commuters in individual electoral areas travelling for work, school or college. This information provides an insight into wider travel patterns for a particular location. The dominant mode of travel in Newcastle West is the car. 75% of residents travel to work, school or college, as a car or van driver or passenger. There are some options for public transport, with 0.7% using it as a mode of travel to work. In 2016, 997 commuters who lived in

Newcastle West worked outside of the area, while 1,683 commuters travelled in for work. This resulted in a net flow of 686 commuters into Newcastle West. This is reflected in demand for car parking across the town. 19% of residents travel to school or college by bus, which demonstrates a good uptake of the school travel programme. School and college trips are important trips to consider when planning the movement plan. Similar to work trips, they occur daily during the week, they potentially are four trips to account for drop off and collection and involve a high amount of traffic converging on a small number of locations at the same time. Walking and cycling rates in Newcastle West are low, with 8.25% of trips being made on foot and 0.34% of trips being

made by bicycle. This is compared to 13.5% walking and cycling to work in the southern region. This is despite 40% of trips to work, school or college for the residents of Newcastle West taking less than 15 minutes. The graphic in Figure 7.2 identifies the number of commuters travelling to and from the electoral areas adjoining Newcastle West.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 sets the following targets for the modal shift for Newcastle West. This is shown in Table 7.1 below.

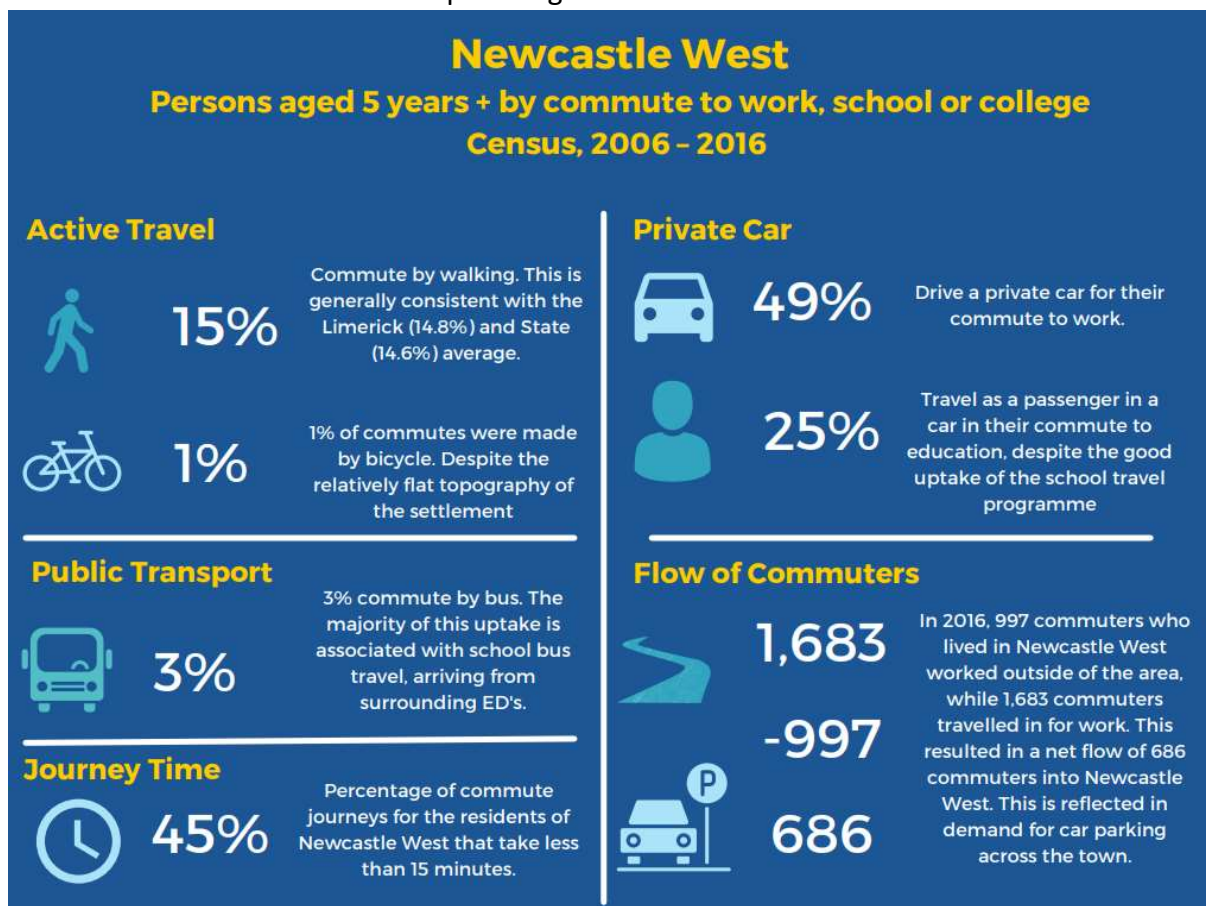


Figure 7.2: Persons aged 5 years + mode of commute to work, school or college in Newcastle West (CSO 2016 Census)

Settlement	Walk	Cycle	Public Transport
Limerick and Environs (All Work/Education Trips)	30%	10%	14%
Newcastle West (All Work/Education Trips)	20%	5%	7%

Table 7.1: Modal Share Targets

Source: Table 9: Mode Shift Targets for commute to work, school or college, by 2028 LDP 2022-2028

With the high levels of car dependency in Newcastle West, there are significant challenges with regard to promoting a modal shift away from the private car usage. However, the Draft Newcastle West Local Area Plan and LTP strives to reduce the reliance on the private car, by promoting and facilitating more sustainable modes of transport, based on the principles of the 10-minute town a compact settlement and the town-centre first approach. The Council will co-operate closely with other relevant agencies and stakeholders, including the NTA and TII to address modal shift targets as above.

the table below. Local Link also provides less frequent services to Adare, Kilfinny, Ballingarry, Feenagh, Ballyhahill and Abbeyfeale to provide local services to the Newcastle West Desmond Complex. Bus stops are provided at two locations on the N21, one east of the town at the Longcourt House Hotel, with a bus stop for east and westbound services. Shelters are provided at these bus stops. The second bus stop location is on the west of Newcastle West on South Quay, also for east and westbound services. Local Link use a car park in the centre of Newcastle West. There are no dedicated bus stop facilities within the town centre.

7.4 Public Transport

7.4.1 Existing Public Transport Provision

Newcastle West is served by regular regional and local bus services, as shown in

	FREQUENCY OF SERVICE PER DAY	
	Monday to Saturday	Sunday and Public Holidays
ROUTE 13 Limerick to Tralee	7	8
ROUTE 13 Tralee to Limerick	8	6
ROUTE 14 Limerick to Killarney	4	5
ROUTE 14 Killarney to Limerick	3	5

Table 7.2: Frequency of Bus Services at Newcastle West

Objective SMT02 - Supporting Modal Split: It is an objective of the council to:

a) Encourage, promote and facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable

forms of transport in Newcastle West, including the Limerick Greenway.

b) Support and facilitate implementation of an integrated, multi-modal and accessible public transport network for Newcastle West and its hinterland.

7.5. Walking and Cycling

7.5.1 Existing Walking/Cycling Infrastructure

Newcastle West has good provision of footpaths throughout the town centre and in the surrounding routes.

The NCWLTP recognises that there are a number of locations throughout Newcastle West where connectivity of the pedestrian network requires improvement. Safe and easy to use crossing locations improve accessibility for pedestrians and increase comfort levels for those walking. These locations include: Station Road and Churchtown Road junction, Bishop Street and Market Place junction and Sheehan's Road.

There are notable pedestrian links within the town centre, including Bridewell Lane, which links the public car park with Bishop Street. Brewery Lane links Market Place with Maiden Street, but is not open to the public at this time. Nash's Lane allows for vehicular traffic, but is predominantly used by pedestrians to access Aldi and the Demense from the town centre. Upgrading of these lanes will improve permeability through the town, increase walking and cycling rates and reduce dependency on the private car.

As well as providing a movement link for vehicular traffic, the N21 also provides an important east-west link for pedestrian movements. Residential, amenity and schools are located south of the N21, with the town centre and many services provided north of the N21. Consequently, crossing the N21 forms a significant link in

the pedestrian network. Controlled crossing points are provided along the route at Sheehan's Road, Bother Bui and Bridge Street. There is a notable lack of cycling infrastructure within the town, which the LTP seeks to address.

Newcastle West benefits from the recent development of the off-road 44km walkway/cycleway known as the Limerick Greenway – a former railway line re-purposed for active mobility and recreation. Part of the Greenway is located within the Draft LAP boundary and provides further opportunities for active mobility by walking and cycling.

Amenity walking in the town is provided for in the Demense and the Limerick Greenway. The Demense is located on the west side of the town centre and can be accessed from The Square, west of Aldi and from Churchtown Road. It provides recreational playing fields, access to sports facilities, green spaces and walking routes. The connections between the Demense and the town centre and the interconnection of the Demense and the Greenway require improvement, the provision of which will be supported in this plan, as per the actions/recommendations shown in Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. (See Volume 2) of the Local Transport Plan (See Volume 2).

Objective SMT03 - Walking and Cycling: It is an objective of the council to:

(a) Enhance the walking and cycling networks through the town within the lifetime of the Plan and seek to improve direct pedestrian linkages, cycle networks and infrastructure throughout the town

and improve connectivity to the town centre and existing services.

(b) Incorporate Sustainable Travel measures in all new developments in the town.

(c) Support the progression of enhancing connectivity between the Limerick Greenway and the town centre by safe walkway/cycleway route, subject to the necessary environmental assessments.

(d) To develop a pedestrian and cycle route between the Greenway to the Demense and improve the linkage to the town centre.

(e) Facilitate school zone measures, including slow zones around the schools, and promote/facilitate active travel options for students to reduce the health and safety risks associated with traffic congestion, pollution and inactive lifestyles.

7.6 Roads

A national road and a number of strategic regional routes converge in Newcastle West, including the N21 National Primary Road, the R521 to Foynes, the R522 to Charleville and the R520 to Kilmallock. The strategic regional routes listed above are identified as strategic regional routes in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

The N21 National Primary Route connects Limerick and Kerry and plays an important role in the regions transport links. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)'s traffic count data provides an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) of in 10,710 2018, with 5.6% of this being HGV traffic. High flows of through traffic have effects on local traffic, with queues forming on the N21 to travel through Newcastle West,

especially during times of high tourist activity, such as bank holidays. This also leads to difficulty for local traffic to travel around Newcastle West, as many journeys require crossing or joining the N21. The N21 is heavily congested particularly at peak periods.

The R521 to Foynes commences at the Square in Newcastle West and travels north to connect with the N69 at Foynes, providing a key north-south link in Limerick.

The R522 and R520 converge at the east of Newcastle West, linked to the N21 by way of a roundabout. The R522 links Charleville with Newcastle West, connecting Cork with east Limerick County. The R520 provides an east/west link between Newcastle West and Kilmallock and Ballygarry. All of these regional routes are also used by residents of Newcastle West's hinterland to access the town centre. They also provide an important industry link between regional towns, carrying high levels of HGV traffic.

The R521 in the north of Newcastle West is connected to the N21 and R522 and R520 by local roads Station Road and Gortboy. With the exception of the roundabout at the N21 and R520, priority Stop controlled junctions are in place along the route.

Newcastle West has an extensive local road network that connects the residential, business, industry, retail, school and social services within the town. The local road network around the town generally accommodates footpaths on both sides. Town centre roads are narrow, particularly reflective of their historic origins.

The Plan will seek to safeguard the development and carrying capacity of the national road infrastructure along the existing N21. Development proposals which may affect national roads within or adjacent to the Plan boundary must have regard to the requirements of the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (DoECLG, 2012), the Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (TII, 2014) and the Road Safety Audit Standards (TII, 2017). New development will be required to accord with policies of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 to 2028, which seeks to safeguard roads from development, which would compromise their safety, integrity or carrying capacity.

Objective SMT04 – National and Regional Roads: It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Protect the capacity of the national and regional road network from inappropriate development, having regard to all relevant Government guidance and Objective TR 041 Strategic Regional Roads of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and ensure development does not compromise the performance of the network or future improvements to the network. Road Safety Audits and Traffic Impact Assessments will be required to demonstrate implications of development proposals on the national and regional road network.
- (b) Restrict advertising signage adjacent to the national road networks, in accordance with Section 3.8 of the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines, 2012 and any subsequent replacement.
- (c) Ensure new development proposals comply with Spatial Planning and

National Roads Guidelines for Local Authorities (DoECLG, 2012), the Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines (TII, 2014), the Road Safety Audit Standards (TII, 2017) and safeguard the integrity, capacity and safety of national roads.

- (d) Ensure new development does not comprise the strategic function of the N21 and ensure that all new development proposals accord with policies of the Limerick Development Plan.
- (e) Adhere to the requirements of S.I. No. 140 of 2006 Environmental Noise Regulations by requesting the implementation of noise mitigation measures when introducing noise sensitive uses in the environs of existing and planned national roads.
- (f) Ensure all developments protect and safeguard the capacity and efficiency of the drainage regimes of the regional and local network.
- (g) Support the provisions set out in the 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response.
- (h) Transport infrastructure projects that are not already permitted or provided for by existing plans/programmes, shall be subject to the undertaking of feasibility assessment, taking into account planning need and the policies and objectives of the Draft Plan relating to sustainable mobility. Where feasibility is established, a Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken, where relevant appropriate, in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection; and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection. New transport

infrastructure will be considered subject to environmental constraints as identified in the SEA Environmental Report, including those related to habitats and potential impacts (e.g. disturbance from lighting). This will include minimising river crossings, avoiding sensitive habitats, not increasing barriers to flood waters and sustainable design and construction techniques.

7.6.1 Road Proposals

7.6.1.1 N21

Limerick City and County Council is working in partnership with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Department of Transport to develop a scheme to relieve congestion on the N21 Limerick to Tralee Road through Newcastle West. This project is called the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme. This is an important project to enhance regional connectivity and to improve road safety.

Subject to funding, the design process will be developed in stages, with opportunities for the public to participate in the decision-making at key stages. The bypass will have a significant impact on alleviating some of

this through-traffic through Newcastle West.

Policy SMTP3 - Sustainable Mobility and Regional Accessibility: It is a policy of the Council to:

(a) Support the progression of the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme (as already provided by the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, including Objective TR O31), and associated linkage into the town centre, to provide improved regional connectivity and ensure future development proposals do not compromise the development of this scheme.

(b) Maintain the strategic function, capacity and safety of the national roads network, including planning for future capacity enhancements.

(c) Support enhanced regional accessibility and to relieve congestion on the N21 Limerick to Tralee Road through Newcastle West in accordance with the National Strategic Outcomes of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

CHAPTER 8 – Climate Action, Environment and Heritage

8.1 Climate Action and the Environment

Climate Change and the transition to a low carbon society has become a critical element of all land use plans. The effects of climate change is quickly becoming the biggest challenge we face today posing a serious threat to quality of life, communities, businesses, the environment and biodiversity. Land use planning is a critical tool to mitigate and adapt to climate change and the protection of our environment.

Limerick City and County Council has a Climate Change Adaption Strategy that concentrates on dealing with the effects of climate change addressing adaption to minimise the effects of climate change such as extreme weather events and greenhouse gas emissions.

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. There are a number of ways in which a Local Area Plan can help reduce carbon footprint and mitigate against negative impacts of climate change, these include:

- The provision of green/blue infrastructure (planting of trees, hedgerows, woodlands, construction of surface water retention features such as ponds, lakes or swales);
- Climate proofing the design of buildings and neighbourhoods;
- Use of indigenous resources and adoption of new building techniques

and designs that minimise energy intensive inputs;

- Improving energy performance ratings on existing and new buildings. All new homes constructed must reach an energy performance rating in accordance with Part L – Conservation of Fuel and Energy 2019, which gives effect to Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) Regulations.

CHP1 - Climate Change Strategic Policy: It is a policy of the council to

Protect and enhance environmental quality and implement the climate action measures through the planning process to help tackle climate change.

Objective CHO1 - Climate Change: It is an objective of the Council to

- (a) Ensure climate-proofing measures are incorporated into the design, planning and construction of all developments, including utilities and their networks. The use of green infrastructure as a mechanism for carbon offsetting and surface water management is encouraged.
- (b) Ensure that all residential and commercial developments are designed to take account of the impacts of climate change, including the installation of rainwater harvesting systems, and that energy efficiency and renewable energy measures are incorporated. In the case 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.

- (c) Support and promote climate smart and the NZEB standard of building or equivalent for all new developments.
- (d) Promote and support development of renewable energy sources, which will achieve low carbon outputs and promote Newcastle West as a low carbon area.
- (e) Support the development of low carbon and green technological businesses and industries.
- (f) Promote responsible development and management of land, drainage systems and natural habitats and encourage development at appropriate locations, which minimise the use of fossil fuels and maximises the use of local or renewable resources.
- (g) Promote the appropriate adaption of built heritage to respond to the effects of climate change.
- (h) Protect and enhance environmental quality and implement current and future climate action measures and guidance that may be published during the life time of the plan through the planning process to help address climate change.

8.2 Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

Newcastle West is located in the lowlands east of the Mullaghareirks of the West Limerick Hills. The River Arra transverses the Plan area, while the River Daar runs to the north of the Plan area and River Mash in the south, all joining the River Deel to the south-east of the Plan area. These watercourses are an important amenity and are valued as a natural habitat. There

are also a number of tree groups and freestanding trees along the Arra River Walk, by the riverside at Desmond Hall, the riverbank along the Daar and in the Demesne. The area surrounding the town centre is predominantly made up of agricultural lands and is generally flat with some local hills and ridges.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 identifies 10 Landscape Character Areas and Views and Prospects within the Council's administrative area. Newcastle West is located within the 'Agricultural Lowlands' Landscape Character Area (LCA 1). This landscape is defined as farming landscape type with a series of regular filed boundaries and well-developed hedgerow system.

The SEA Environmental Report includes information on the landscape designations of the Plan area.

There are also a number of impressive tree groups and freestanding trees that exist particularly along the Arra River Walk, by the riverside at Desmond Hall, the riverbank along the Daar and in the Demesne

There are no nature designations in the town. The Arra, Dooally and Daar rivers are perhaps the most important natural features of the town. The Deel is a tributary of the River Shannon and therefore feeds the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) adding to its importance. Nonetheless, no part of the Arra or Daar is designated as part of this SAC.

In complying with SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 to 2011, an

Environmental Report has been prepared and accompanies the Draft Plan.

In accordance with the requirements of Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, a Natura Impact Statement has been prepared and accompanies the Draft Plan.



Figure 8.1: Limerick Greenway

8.2.1 Blue/Green Infrastructure

The benefits of well-planned and well-managed Blue Green Infrastructure are manifold. Blue Green Infrastructure provides the benefits and services that we as human beings require to thrive and maintain a quality of life. It is therefore an important consideration in planning for development and meeting the needs of the population as well as protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

BGI has been proven to be a sound investment with returns far higher than the initial investment. BGI should be considered as multifunctional including making space, protecting wildlife, access to nature, recreation and social interaction, reducing flood risk, improving despoiled landscapes and reducing the negative effects of climate change among others.

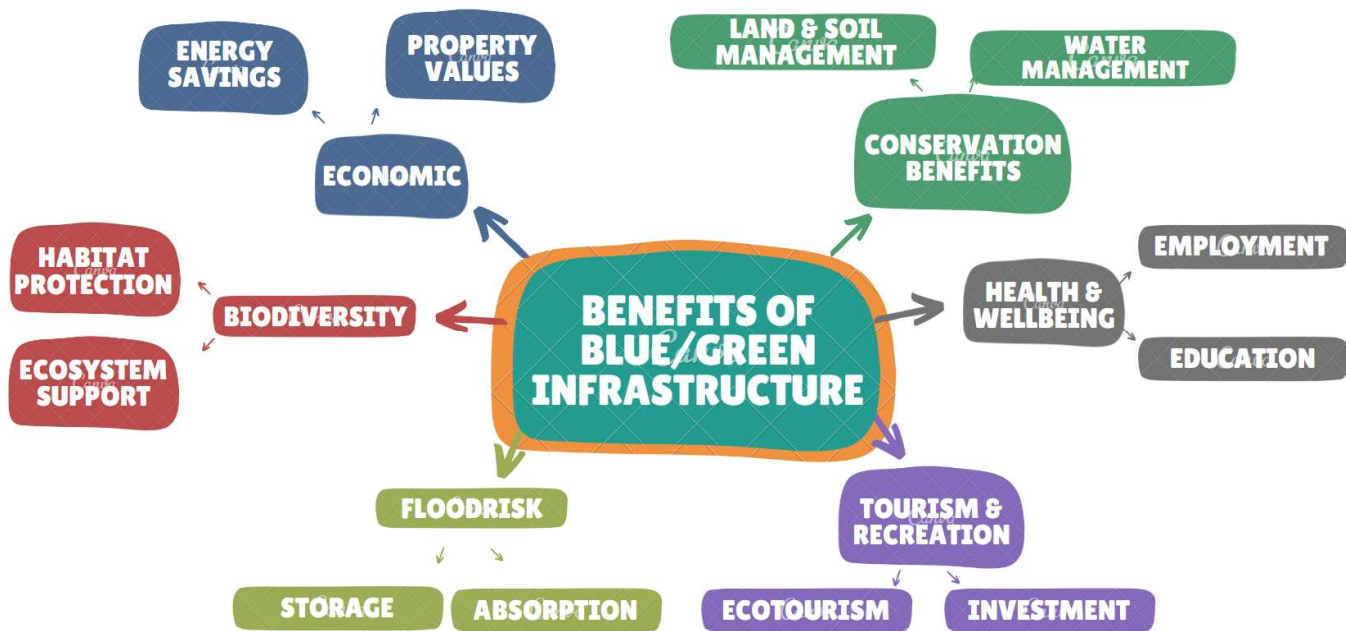


Figure 8.2: Benefits of Blue Green Infrastructure

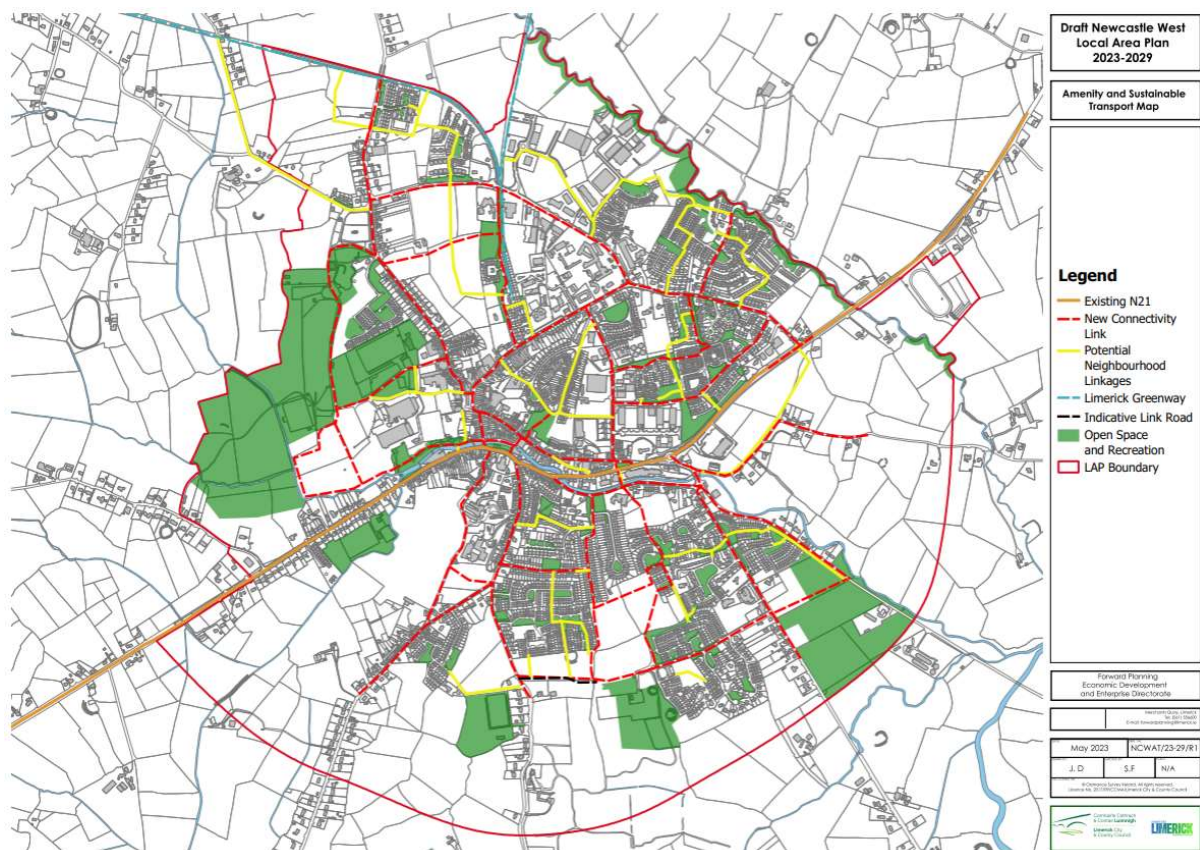


Figure 8.3: Newcastle West Amenity Map

The designation of a riparian buffer does not preclude amenity use of the towns watercourses provided that walkways and cycleways are constructed sensitively and with minimal impact on the riparian environment. There is potential for linear green paths and cycleways along the Daar linking to the Great Southern Trail to the north of the town. Similarly, there is potential for greenways to serve the residentially zoned lands to the southeast of the town along the Dooaly and Arra.

The range of ecosystem services deriving

from BGI can be extensive. Table 8.1 below sets out BGI enhancement opportunities in Newcastle West interlinked by a number of key overlapping themes;

- Recreation and Health
- Economic Development
- Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation
- Biodiversity and Natural Resources
- Sense of Place
- Water Resource and Flood Management

Enhancements Opportunities	Theme
<p>The Demense - already functions very successfully as a Park, providing opportunities for both active and passive recreation. Enhanced utilisation expected, and alternative recreational destinations can be accessed from the GI corridors and linkage to the Greenway.</p>	<p>Recreation and Health</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the benefits of the River Arra connection and creation of a Linear Park, which utilises the River Arra and River Daar through further connection and access. 	<p>Recreation and Health</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to develop recreational tourism utilising the recreational sites in the Demense, the Greenway and the River Arra, River Dooaly and River Daar. 	<p>Economic Development</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form links throughout the town by creating and implementing Green Street’s and street tree planting. Tree cover in parks, open spaces, along streets will absorb many atmospheric pollutants, filter out those pollutants, reduce water run-off, improve water quality, reduce noise and provide shading to help reduce urban heat island effects. 	<p>Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to open long sections of culverted rivers to improve ecology and geomorphology of the Arra. • Enhance river corridors in the town to attract target species to enhance the ecological corridor. • Ensure connections across any infrastructure projects for biodiversity. 	<p>Biodiversity and Natural Resources</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and extend established pedestrian and cycle connections improving visual amenity, sense of place and safety. • Utilise natural features such as the River Arra, Dooally and River Daar to develop a distinct character for the corridor. • The Demense Parks provides great opportunities for community engagement through recreation and informal education in addition to developing community ownership of the environment. 	<p>Sense of Place</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create flood storage opportunities, develop wetlands and manage bankside vegetation to reduce flood risk. 	<p>Water Resource and Flood Management</p>

Table 8.1: Blue Green Infrastructure Enhancements/Opportunities

GBI Corridor	Short-term Priorities	Possible short term funding	Long term Priorities	Potential Funding Sources
River Arra , Demesne, Limerick Greenway	Connections and access routes using Greenways, Cycle Routes and Green Streets to complete route including improvements to “hard” crossings of trafficked carriageways to create a continuous GI corridor	Active Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological corridor along cycle route to develop multifunctional benefits along the corridor • Provide looped route through Churchtown zoned lands (opportunity site 1) connecting the water tower, through the Demesne lands and trailhead 	External
River Daar			Creation of linear Park along River Daar to the east of the town connecting to the Limerick Greenway	Greenway funding through Smarter Travel
Intra Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance urban green spaces for multifunctional benefits – habitat action plan linked to enhanced flood risk management (SUDs) • Improve connection from greenway through bishops court and into TC 	Smarter Travel Initiative Green Streets External Climate	Green Streets	External – Climate Change Adaption measure

Table 8.2: BGI Implementation Strategy

Objective CHO2 - Blue Green Infrastructure: It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Develop and enhance blue and green infrastructure opportunities in accordance with Our Green Region – a Blue Green Infrastructure and Nature-based Solutions Framework for the Southern Region and The Best Practice Interim Guidance Document ‘Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas’ – Inclusion of SuDS and green infrastructure, throughout Newcastle West and in line with the detail set out in Tables 8.1 and 8.2.
- (b) Promote connecting corridors for the movement of species and encourage the retention and creation of features of biodiversity value, ecological corridors and networks that connect areas of high conservation value, such as woodlands, hedgerows, earth banks, watercourses, wetlands and designated sites where possible. In this regard, new infrastructural projects and linear developments in particular, will have to demonstrate at design stage, sufficient measures to assist in the conservation of and dispersal of species.
- (c) Protect existing ecosystems and biodiversity assets, such as natural woodland, natural watercourses and riparian habitats, layered ecosystems supporting flora, fauna, pollinators, invertebrates, micro-organisms and mycelium, where possible.
- (d) Protect Watercourses in Newcastle West by ensuring the provision of adequate riparian buffer zones.



Figure 8.4: River Arra Walkway

8.2.2 Water Framework Directive

The European Union Water Framework Directive (WFD) was signed into law in October 2000. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) brings an integrated approach to managing water quality on a river basin (catchment) basis, in order to protect and enhance both ecological and chemical quality of rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters.

The WFD is implemented through River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) in three six-year cycles. Each cycle providing an opportunity to assess water conditions at different stages and set out actions to achieve water quality objectives. The third cycle runs from 2022-2027.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage is responsible for implementation of the WFD in Ireland. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage leads on the development and implementation of national river basin management plans. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) leads on the technical expertise and science. Local authorities are responsible for the development and implementation of RBMPs at a local level. LAWPRO is coordinating a nationwide response on behalf of the 31 local authorities. A Key part of the Water Framework Directive is Article 14, which requires all member

states to engage with the people who live work and play in a catchment. Therefore, it is critical that local communities are involved in management and decision making related to protecting and, where necessary, improving their water resources and to help communities to protect and improve a beautiful and diverse landscape with accessible healthy waterways that support local livelihoods, healthy habitats and rich wildlife.

Policy CHP2 Water Framework Directive:

Policy: It is a policy of the Council to:

Implement changes to the management of water bodies, taking account of all aspects of the Water Cycle in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and the principal objective of the Water Framework Directive to achieve at least good status in all waters and to ensure that status does not deteriorate in any water.

8.3 Archaeological Heritage

The core of the town of Newcastle West, situated in the townlands of Castle Demesne, Churchtown, Gortboy, Rathnaneane and Knockane, is a Recorded Monument, LI 036-067001, classified as a historic town. There are 20 Recorded Monuments contained within the LAP area. There are eleven ring forts in the immediate environs of the town. There is also a medieval church and graveyard (LI036-024001/002) north of the town in the townland of Churchtown. For further details refer to Appendix 1 Map 5 (Recorded Monuments).

The location of each archaeological monument is provided in the Record of Monuments and Places which is maintained and up-dated by the

Archaeological Survey of Ireland, a branch of the National Monuments Service. The 1994 Amendment to the National Monuments Act established the Record of Monuments and Places on a statutory basis with a set of maps and a catalogue of sites.

The structures/monuments include earthwork, a water mill, church, castle, graveyard, road/trackway, mill, memorial stone, enclosure and the historic town. 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. Appendix 1 Map 5 provides a list of structures in the Sites and Monuments Records for Newcastle West.

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 8.5: The ruins of Saint David's Church surrounded by the graveyard in Churchtown, north of Newcastle West, Co Limerick (Photograph: Patrick Comerford, 2018)

Objective CH03 Archaeological Heritage:

It is an objective of Council to:

- (a) Seek the preservation of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest. This includes all the sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places 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.
- (e) 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

(f) 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.

(g) 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, Heritage 2030, and Limerick Climate Adaption Strategy 2019 – 2024 and higher level spatial plans.

8.4 Architectural Heritage

8.4.1 Record of Protected Structures (RPS)

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. The complete list for Limerick City and County is available as Volume 3 of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. Appendix 1 Map 4 of this document provides the Record of Protected Structures located within the settlement of Newcastle West. There are 66 Protected Structures in Newcastle West, 37 of which are also listed on the NIAH.

When considering works, including minor works to a Protected Structure,

owners/occupiers 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. Useful resources when undertaking works on Protected Structures and within their curtilage can be found in the planning leaflets series available online 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 heritagecouncil.ie

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) was established under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record and evaluate post-1700 architectural heritage. The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is responsible for carrying out surveys of the architectural heritage on a county-by-county basis. The NIAH survey is available online at 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.

Objective CHO4 - Architectural Heritage: It is an objective of the Council to:

Preserve, protect and enhance the character of Newcastle West including all Protected Structures and attendant grounds in accordance with the best conservation practice and relevant heritage legislation.

Objective CHO5 - Built Heritage: It is an objective of the Council to:

Promote the protection and improvement of built heritage in accordance with NPO 11 of the Project Ireland 2040, RSES, Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, Section 28 Guidelines, including the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Objective CHO6 - Protected Structures: It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) 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.
- (b) Protect Protected Structures and attendant grounds in accordance with the best conservation practice and relevant heritage legislation
- (c) 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.
- (d) 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. Proposed works shall be 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.

- (e) 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. The Council have regard to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government’s publication on Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings (2010) and the Irish Standard IS EN 16883:2017 Conservation of Cultural Heritage – Guidelines for Improving the Energy Performance of Historic Buildings (2017) and any future advisory documents in assessing proposed works on Protected Structures.

Objective CHO8 – Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA’s): It is an objective of Council to:

- (a) Protect, conserve and where appropriate, enhance the ACA’s as identified in Map 4. The design of any development proposed 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.
- (b) Proposals for development within the ACA’s shall;

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

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) was established under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record and evaluate post-1700 architectural heritage. The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is responsible for carrying out surveys of the architectural heritage on a county-by-county basis. The NIAH survey is available online at 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.

8.5 Cultural Heritage

UNESCO defines Cultural Heritage as including artefacts, monuments, a group of buildings and sites, museums that have a diversity of values including symbolic, historic, artistic, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological, scientific and social significance. It includes tangible heritage (movable, immobile and underwater), intangible cultural heritage (ICH) embedded into cultural, and natural heritage artefacts, sites or monuments. The definition excludes ICH related to other cultural domains such as festivals, celebration etc. It covers industrial heritage and cave paintings.

Newcastle West is synonymous with Literary and the Arts. The famous Irish poet Michael Hartnett is from the town and grew up in the Maiden Street area. A Literary & Arts Festival, commemorating the late poet takes place annually. Over four days and nights of the festival, the town that was home to and helped shape the late poet Michael Hartnett, plays host to a wide range of talented poets, writers, musicians, singers and artists in a packed programme of exciting and engaging events.

CHAPTER 9 – Infrastructure and Utilities

9.1 Infrastructure and Utilities

The sustainable social and economic growth of Newcastle West is dependent on the satisfactory provision of high quality infrastructure associated with the provision of services for new residential and commercial developments. Key infrastructural provision, undertaken in a plan led manner will support the economic development of the town and ensure the development of good quality place making, where health and wellbeing is safeguarded while also protecting the environment. The provision of high quality infrastructure networks and environmental services is fundamental to ensuring the long-term physical, environmental, social and economic development of the town.

9.2 Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

Collaborating with national, regional and local bodies is crucial to safeguard the protection of existing water and wastewater infrastructure assets in the town. The responsibility for water service provision now rests with Irish Water.

The Water Services Policy Statement (WSPS) identifies high level objectives and priorities for the delivery of water and wastewater services over the period to 2025. It has been prepared in line with the Water Services Acts to give clear direction to strategic planning and decision making on water and wastewater services in Ireland.

The Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP) published in 2015 by Irish Water sets out

strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over a 25-year period and a context for investment and implementation plans.

It should also be noted that The RSES for the Southern Region (Section 8) sets out requirements for water and energy utility infrastructure to serve the targeted growth of the Region in a sustainable manner and specifically, to service and underpin infrastructure-led delivery of the settlement strategy.

Water

Newcastle West is served by the South-West Regional Water Resource Zone (WRZ). Spare capacity within the WRZ is very limited at present.

The regional water resources plan for the Eastern and Midlands region was recently adopted and identifies plan-level approaches to address the identified needs in Newcastle West in a sustainable manner. The current preferred longer-term option under the Eastern and Midlands Regional Water Resources Plan is interconnection with Limerick City WRZ however, further assessment is required and further options may be explored before this is confirmed.

Interim measures to increase the supply are being progressed, including increasing groundwater supply at Tobergal Springs and upgrading Castlemahon Water Treatment Plant, which is expected to be completed in 2025. In addition, groundwater investigations and trunk main upgrades are being progressed at Kilcolman Springs and are expected to be completed within lifetime of the Limerick Development Plan. It is envisaged that with these works, there will

be adequate capacity available to cater for the projected growth over the Development Plan period, although supply may be constrained during drought periods.

Wastewater

The 2021 wastewater treatment capacity register indicates there is spare capacity (ca. 600 population equivalent) to cater for a portion, but not all, of the projected population growth of 1,988 identified in the LDP. An upgrade of Newcastle West WWTP is included in the 2020-2024 Investment Plan and is at concept design stage. The project will provide sufficient spare capacity to cater for the targeted growth. It is anticipated it will be post 2025, but within the lifetime of the 2022-2028 Limerick Development Plan, before the WWTP project is completed. This will be subject to funding and other approvals. In order to ensure the adequate protection and management of the environment, the requirements of this Local Area Plan, including those detailed under “Objective IU 02” below, must be demonstrated as being complied with in order for permission to be granted.

Surface Water

A combined system is in place for foul and storm water within the town. This has implications for the capacity of the existing sewerage network, particularly during periods of high rainfall where overflow of untreated wastewater into waterways can occur when storm water dominates the system. Within the Churchtown area, the development of a surface water sewer will form a critical part of any proposed development.

Policy IUP1 - Infrastructure and Utilities: It is the policy of the Council to:

Ensure the provision of adequate infrastructure capacity to accommodate future development and the timely provision of infrastructure needed for the sustainable growth of Newcastle West.

Objective IUO1 – Water Supply Infrastructure: It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Ensure compliance for infrastructure led-growth in accordance with the DHPLG Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities.
- (b) Facilitate improvements to the existing water supply system to cater for the needs of an expanding population.
- (c) Ensure that development proposals provide adequate water infrastructure to facilitate proposed developments. Evidence of consultation by developers with Uisce Eireann prior to submitting planning applications will be required.
- (d) Ensure future development protects existing wayleave and buffer zones around public water services infrastructure.
- (e) Promote water conservation and demand management measures among all water users, and to support Uisce Eireann in implementing water conservation measures such as leakage reduction and network improvements, including innovative solutions in specific situations.
- (f) Proposals for abstractions of water will be subject to the appropriate environmental assessments and demonstrate compliance with the requirements of Article 6 of the Habitats

Directive and the Water Framework Directive.

Objective IUO2 – Wastewater Infrastructure: It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Support the implementation of the Uisce Eireann Investment Plans, in accordance with the settlement strategy.
- (b) Ensure adequate wastewater infrastructure is available to cater for existing and proposed development, in collaboration with Uisce Eireann, avoiding any deterioration in the quality of receiving waters and ensuring discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. This includes the separation of foul and surface water through the provision of separate networks and nature-based rainwater management measures. Applications for development under the Draft Plan must demonstrate that the proposal for development would not adversely affect a water body’s ability to meet its objectives under the Water Framework Directive, individually as a result of the proposed development or cumulatively, in combination with other developments – evidence to this effect may include correspondence from Uisce Eireann.

9.3 Surface Water Management and SuDs

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 in

Newcastle West, 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 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 managing 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.

Objective IUO3 – Surface Water and SuDs: It is an objective of the Council to:

- (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 Draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 (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.

(d) Require applicants to investigate the potential for the provision of porous surfaces, where car parking and hard landscaping is proposed.

(e) Protect the surface water resources of the plan area and in individual planning applications request the provision of sediment and grease traps, and pollution control measures, where deemed necessary.

9.4 Flood Risk Management

To comply with the EU Floods Directive and to align with National Guidance ‘The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines’, 2009, the Draft Newcastle West LAP has taken flood risk into consideration when determining land use zoning and objectives. The Draft Plan is also informed by the Office of Public Works (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 within the planning system to safeguard the future sustainable development of Newcastle West. The land use zoning of the Draft LAP has been determined by applying the principles of the 2009 Guidelines 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.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) accompanies the Draft Plan.

OPW CFRAM Study flood risk indicative maps are available for Newcastle West. These maps indicate that a significant area of land, including lands to the west and south east of the plan area is in Flood Zone A. In response to flood risk identified in the SFRA, the Draft LAP has removed a large section of the land northeast of the town from the Local Area Plan.

In addition, the Draft Plan designates the undeveloped land considered at risk from flooding, as open space and recreation, and will also require a riparian Buffer along the river.

9.4.1 Newcastle West Flood Relief Scheme

The OPW is progressing the development of a further Flood Relief Scheme for Newcastle West to augment the existing Scheme. Currently the OPW area progressing the project-level development and assessment of a further Flood Relief Scheme for Newcastle West to augment the existing Scheme, including environmental assessment as necessary and further public consultation, for refinement and preparation for planning / exhibition and, if and as appropriate, implementation. The proposed further measure for Newcastle West that may be implemented after project-level assessment, planning or Exhibition and confirmation may include: Construction of 851m of new flood walls and 284m of new flood defence embankments. It should also be noted that the existing regime is to be maintained.

Objective IUO4 - Flood Risk Management Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to

(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) Ensure development proposals within the areas outlined as being at risk of flooding are subject to Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment as outlined in “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines”, DECLG and OPW (2009). These Flood Risk Assessments shall consider climate change impacts and adaptation measures including details of structural and non-structural flood risk management measures, such as those relating to floor levels, internal layout, flood-resistant construction, flood-resilient construction, emergency response planning and access and egress during flood events.

(c) Ensure that future developments in flood prone areas is generally limited to minor developments in line with the Circular PL 02/2014 and the Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities and ensure future development of lands within Flood Risk Zone A/B is in accordance with the plan-making Justification Tests in the SFRA.

(d) Developments on lands benefitting from Arterial Drainage Schemes shall ensure that adequate lands are preserved to allow for maintenance and access to these drainage channels. Land identified as benefitting from these systems may be prone to flooding, as such site-specific flood risk assessments will be required as appropriate, at planning application stage.

(e) Ensure the protection of a 20m riparian buffer free from development, on greenfield lands, in particular the lands zoned Enterprise and Employment and Residential Serviced Sites by the River Daar south east of the Limerick Greenway and north west and south east of the N21.

(f) Ensure that zoning or development proposals allow for the protection, and the need for maintenance of the existing flood relief scheme and do not impede or prevent the progression of the proposed development flood relief scheme in Newcastle West.

h) Prepare a register of key flood relief infrastructure in Newcastle West.

9.5 Energy Generation

Newcastle West is served by the ESB Network and Gas Network. There are overhead 110kV transmission lines and a number of substations located within the town and environs. 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. 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.

One such low carbon technology is District Heating. District Heating Network (DH) is a means of transporting heat as hot water through a network of highly insulated pipelines, delivering heat (rather than fuel) directly to buildings. This type of system can service multiple buildings on a local network with heat exchangers installed in each structure to distribute the heat internally. DH systems have been mainly powered by fossil fuels in the past, but renewable networks are now common throughout Europe. DH networks have the potential to decarbonise the heat sector where the heat demand is high enough.

It is considered that due regard is had to District Heating is supported in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 through Objective CAF O15 (Local Energy Production), which seeks to *support localised renewable and carbon friendly means of heating and energy provision, including district heating systems. New technologies such as air to water and geo thermal may have a role to play in this regard.*

Objective IUO5 - Energy Generation, Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructure Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to

(a) Support the providers of national gas, electricity, telecommunication and digital 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 and proper planning and sustainable development

(d) Seek the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone and television cables.

(e) Facilitate delivery of E-Charge Points for electric vehicles at suitable locations and in new developments in line with the Limerick Development Plan.

(f) Promote and encourage the use of renewable energy sources, technologies, including district heating schemes and alternative energy retrofitting in existing and proposed developments, subject to consideration of environmental, conservation, residential and visual amenity. In the event of grid connection to the national road network proposals should demonstrate an assessment of all alternative grid connection route options have been undertaken by the developer as part of planning application process.

(g) 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.

(h) Support and promote the NZEB standard of building or equivalent for all new developments.

9.6 Smart Technology

As indicated in the Census 2016 data, 1,678 or 66% of households have broadband internet services in the Newcastle West. There are six main broadband providers in Newcastle West and improving this network will give significant economic and social advantage to Newcastle West, as a place to set up internet-based business, facilitate working from home and the creation of smart homes and smart buildings. Public WiFi hotspots are available at six locations as part of the [WiFi4EU](#) initiative and the Department of Rural and Community Development, National Broadband Ireland and the Vodaphone BCP initiative.

- iFi4EU - Sheehy's Unisex Hair Salon (V42 T659)
- WiFi4EU - Gatsby for Men (V42 CK82)
- WiFi4EU - The Silver Room (V42 RX72)
- WiFi4EU - Perozzi Family Restaurant (V42 CK68)
- WiFi4EU - The Red Door Business Incubation Centre (V42 X244)
- WiFi4EU - Marguerite's Home Bakery (V42 PP96)

Last year the Government published a new national digital strategy, Harnessing Digital – The Digital Ireland Framework, to drive and enable the digital transition across the Irish economy and society. Dimension 2 of the framework places importance on supporting 5G rollout across all populated areas of Ireland by 2030.

Objective IUO6 - Smart Technology Objectives: It is an objective of the Council to

- (a) Support the rollout of the National Broadband Plan.
- (b) Support the provision of 5G infrastructure at appropriate locations in Newcastle West.
- (c) Support the provision of a smart programme/initiative for Newcastle West.

9.7 Waste Management and the Circular Economy

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.

Refuse collection is carried out by a number of private contractors in the Newcastle West area. The town also benefits from a Civic Amenity Recycling facility. The Limerick Civic Amenity Centres have been provided primarily for the householders of County Limerick to recycle their waste. The Centres accept a wide range of household material which is suitable for recycling.

Objective IUO7 – Waste Management: It is an objective of the Council to

- (a) Support the Regional Waste Management Office in implementation of the Regional Waste Management Plan and the EU Action Plan for the Circular

Economy – Closing the Loop, to ensure sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

(b) Require all commercial and residential development to provide an adequate internal and external space for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials.

CHAPTER 10 – Land Use Framework, Zoning Matrix and Services Capacity Audit

10.1 Land Use Zoning and Implementation

This Local Area Plan outlines specific policies and objectives for the development of Newcastle West. The overarching policies and objectives of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028 and any replacement thereof also apply. All development requiring planning permission must adhere to the Policies, Objectives, Development Management Standards and other requirements of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028, or any replacement thereof.

The purpose of zoning is to indicate to property owners and the public the types of development, which the Planning Authority considers most appropriate in each land use category. Zoning is designed to reduce conflicting uses within areas, to protect resources and ensure that land suitable for development is used in the interest of sustainable settlements. The Land Use Zoning Map should be read in conjunction with the Land Use Zoning Objectives below, and the Land Use Zoning Matrix set out under Appendix I.

Land Use Zone	2023 Area - ha	2014 Area - ha
Agriculture	160.541	45.6
Education and Community	27.39	21.15
Enterprise and Employment	63.172	71.32
Existing Residential	131.632	124.48
Local Centre	4.32	N/A
Mixed Use	2.062	12.63
Open Space and Recreation	82.864	80.37
Residential Serviced Sites	7.286	39.917*
Tourism Related Development	2.122	0
Town Centre	15.207	10.46
Utilities	0.942	1.4
New Residential	36.528	104.43**
Total	534.066	512.08

Table 10.1: Total Zoned Land

* Included Residential Serviced Sites Phase 1 and 2

** Includes New Residential Phase 1 and 2

Table 10.2: Land Use Zoning Objectives and Purposes

Land Use Zoning	Objective and Purpose
<p>Town Centre</p>	<p>Objective: To protect, consolidate and facilitate the development of Newcastle West’s commercial, retail, educational, leisure, residential, social and community uses and facilities.</p> <p>Purpose: To consolidate Newcastle West’s Town Centre through densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring an appropriate 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 zoning will strengthen retail provision in accordance with the Retail Strategy for Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 –2028, 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>
<p>Existing Residential</p>	<p>Objective: To provide for residential development, protect and improve existing residential amenity.</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>
<p>New Residential</p>	<p>Objective: To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of social and physical infrastructure.</p> <p>Purpose: This zoning is intended primarily for new high quality housing development. 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). This</p>

Land Use Zoning	Objective and Purpose
	zoning 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 opportunities for those seeking to design and build their own home on serviced lands within the town, including water services, road, footpaths and lighting and within walking distance of the town centre. Each individual plot shall not exceed 0.1ha and the overall density of the scheme shall be 10 units per hectare.</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: To protect existing and allow for expansion of a wide range of educational facilities, services and related development. To facilitate sustainable development of community infrastructure and create an inclusive high quality of life. This land use will provide for community facilities, healthcare services, childcare, religious, social and civic infrastructure, ancillary purpose-built accommodation, such as residential care or institutions to support the main use only, and other facilities.</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 zoning 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. 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>

Land Use Zoning	Objective and Purpose
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 the Limerick Greenway. 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 waste water 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 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.</p>
Local Centre	<p>Objective: To protect and provide local centre facilities to serve the needs of new/existing neighbourhoods and residential areas.</p> <p>Purpose: To provide a mix of community and commercial neighbourhood facilities to primarily serve the immediate needs of the local working and residential population and complement, rather than compete with the Town Centre. A mix of appropriate convenience retail, commercial, community, childcare and medical facilities, residential and recreational development of a local scale will be considered. The retail scale and type will be controlled to prevent negative impacts on the retail function of Newcastle West Town Centre. Any proposal for retail development shall comply with the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 -2028.</p>

Land Use Zoning	Objective and Purpose
<p>Mixed Use</p>	<p>Objective: To provide for a mixture of residential and compatible commercial uses</p> <p>Purpose: To recognise the mixed use nature of the site and facilitate the use of land for a mix of uses, having regard to and being sympathetic towards the existing established uses on site, such as a hotel and petrol station. Any commercial proposals on these lands should not undermine the viability or vitality of the town centre.</p> <p>A diversity of uses for both day and evening are encouraged. These areas require high levels of accessibility, including pedestrian, cyclists and public transport (where feasible).</p> <p>Compatible uses include residential, retail (where it does not undermine the town centre), community, civic, hotel, leisure and recreation, offices, professional services, etc.</p>
<p>Tourism Related Development</p>	<p>Objective: To provide for tourist facilities, which would improve the tourism opportunities associated with the Limerick Greenway and its connection to the town.</p> <p>Purpose: To recognise the tourism potential of the Newcastle West Greenway and it's physical connection with the town and architectural and cultural heritage.</p>

Table 10.2: Purpose and objective of each land use zoning type

The approach of Limerick City and County Council to various types of developments is determined by the zoning objective for the area in which the site is located. This approach is set out in the following Land Use Zoning Matrix, and should be read in tandem with the Land Use Zoning Map. The Land Use Zoning Matrix outlines the types of developments considered appropriate or otherwise in each land use zone and are indicated as below.

Table 10.3: Land Use Compatibility

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.

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.

Transitional Zoning Areas should be considered in the design of developments in order to avoid abrupt transitions in scale, density and use in the boundary areas of adjoining land use zones. In particular, developments which would be detrimental to the amenities of residential properties should be avoided in order to protect the amenities of such properties.

10.2 Advice when submitting a Planning Application

The Planning Authority encourages applicants to avail of pre-planning meetings to discuss policy issues regarding their proposal prior to submitting a planning application. Such meetings are of particular value if specific assessments are required given the sensitivity, type of development and location of the site in Newcastle West. Applications are advised to avail of pre-connection enquiries with Uisce Eireann to ascertain if connection to the public mains and sewer is feasible prior to submitting a planning application.

10.3: Land Use Zoning Matrix

Table 10.4: Land Use Zoning Matrix

Land Use Zone	Town Centre	Local Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Tourism related	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Mixed Use	Semi- Natural Open Space	Utilities	Agriculture
Abattoir	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O
Advertising and Advertising Structures	/	X	X	X	X	O ¹	/ ¹	/ ¹	/ ¹	O	X	O	X
Aerodrome / Airfield	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	O
Agricultural Buildings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	/
Agricultural Supplies/ Machinery Sales	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Allotments	X	X	/	/	/	/	X	X	O	O	O	X	O
Amusement Arcade/ Casino	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Bank/ Credit Union	/	/	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bed and Breakfast/ Guesthouse	/	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	/ ²
Betting Office	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	/ ²
Bring Banks/ Bring Centres	/	/	/	/	/	/	O	O	X	/	X	/	X
Builders Providers/ Yard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X

¹ Ancillary to the primary use only

² Where the use is ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a main residence

Land Use Zone	Town Centre	Local Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Tourism related	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Mixed Use	Semi- Natural Open Space	Utilities	Agriculture
Burial Grounds	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	O	X	X	/
Campsite/ Caravan Park - Holiday Use	X	X	O	O	O	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X
Car Park	/	O	X	X	X	/ ¹	/ ¹	/ ¹	/ ¹	O	X	/	X
Childcare Facilities	/	/	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Civic Recycling/ Waste Facility	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	/	X	/	X
Community / Cultural/ Tourism Facility*	/	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	/	O	X	X	X
Conference Centre	/	/	X	X	X	O ¹	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Dancehall/ Nightclub	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Education/ Training Facility	/	/	/	/	/	/	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Enterprise Centre	/	X	X	X	X	O ¹	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Extractive Industry/ Quarry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
Fast Food Outlet/ Take-Away	/	/	X	X	X	X	/ ¹	X	X	O	X	X	X
Food Drink Processing/ Manufacturing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	/ ¹
Fuel Depot/ Storage	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X

Land Use Zone	Town Centre	Local Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Tourism related	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Mixed Use	Semi- Natural Open Space	Utilities	Agriculture
Funeral Home	/	/	O	O	O	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Garden Centre	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	O
General Public Administration	/	O	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Hair & Beauty Salons	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Halting Site	X	X	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
Health Centre	/	/	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Health Practitioner	/	/	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
High Technology Manufacturing	X	x	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Hospital	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Hotel/Hostel	/	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	X
Industry - Heavy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Industry - Light	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X
Leisure/ Recreation Facility*	/	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
Logistics	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Nursing Home/ Residential Care or Institution/ Retirement Town	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	X

Land Use Zone	Town Centre	Local Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Tourism related	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Mixed Use	Semi- Natural Open Space	Utilities	Agriculture
Offices	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Petrol Station ³	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Place of Worship	/	/	O	O	O	/	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Plant Storage/Hire	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Professional Services*	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Public House	/	/	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	O	X	X	X
Renewable Energy Installation	O ¹	O ¹	O ¹	O ¹	O ¹	O ¹	/ ¹	/	X	O	X	/	O
Research and Dev./ Science & Technology	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	/
Residential	/	/	/	/	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	/ ³
Restaurant/Café	/	/	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	O	X	X	X
Retail	/	O ⁴	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Retail - Warehouse	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Scrap Yard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Sports Facility	O	O	/	/	/	/	X	O	/	O	X	X	X
Telecommunications Structures	/	/	X	X	X	/	X	/	O	O	X	/	/
Vehicle Sales Outlet	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X

³ Subject to the Retail Strategy, Limerick Development Plan 2023 – 2029. Petrol stations shall not exceed 100sqm net as per Retail Planning Guidelines

Land Use Zone	Town Centre	Local Centre	Existing Residential	New Residential	Serviced Sites	Education and Community	Tourism related	Enterprise and Employment	Open Space and Recreation	Mixed Use	Semi- Natural Open Space	Utilities	Agriculture
Vehicle Servicing/ Maintenance/ Repairs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Veterinary Clinic	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	/ ⁵
Warehousing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X
Waste Disposal & Recover Facility	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	/	X
Wholesale - Cash and Carry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X

***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.

⁵ Only where the need to locate in a rural environment has been demonstrated because of the nature of the clinic required

10.4 Settlement Capacity Audit

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, public transport routes 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 be 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.

Table 10.5: Residential Settlement Capacity Audit

Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road	
Town Centre, New Residential and Residential Serviced Sites												
1	Lands to rear of Church Street and Bishop's Street	C. 0.5ha.	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	Opportunity Site 2. See Section 4.5.3. Mix of uses encouraged, with an emphasis on residential. Surface water upgrade required.
2	Market Place	C. 0.4ha	Town Centre	1	X	X	√	X	X	X	√	Opportunity Site 5. See Section 4.5.3. Site is located to the south west of Assumpta Park. Town Centre zoning where a mix of uses will be encouraged with an emphasis on residential.
3	Nash back lands, the square and Castle Demesne	C. 1.2ha	Town Centre	1	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	Opportunity Site 6. See Section 4.5.3. Site is located to the east of Ballygowan. Town Centre zoning where a mix of uses will be encouraged with an emphasis on residential.

Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road	
4	Assumpta Park	C. 0.8ha	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Zoned New Residential. A critical site to enhance overlooking and to provide connectivity.
5	Rathnaneane	C. 4.3ha.	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Zoned New Residential, proximate to the town centre and existing residential zoned lands to the north. Close proximity to the school and within 5 min walk of town centre. This site can avail of services and utilities from the developed lands to the north.
6	Churchtown	C. 12.5 ha.	New Residential	1	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	Opportunity site 1. Within 500m of town centre. Important lands in terms of delivering connectivity to schools and greenway.
7	Carrig Desmond	C. 1.5 ha.	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Zoned New Residential, proximate to the town centre and adjacent to existing residential zoned lands to the south. This site can avail of services and utilities from

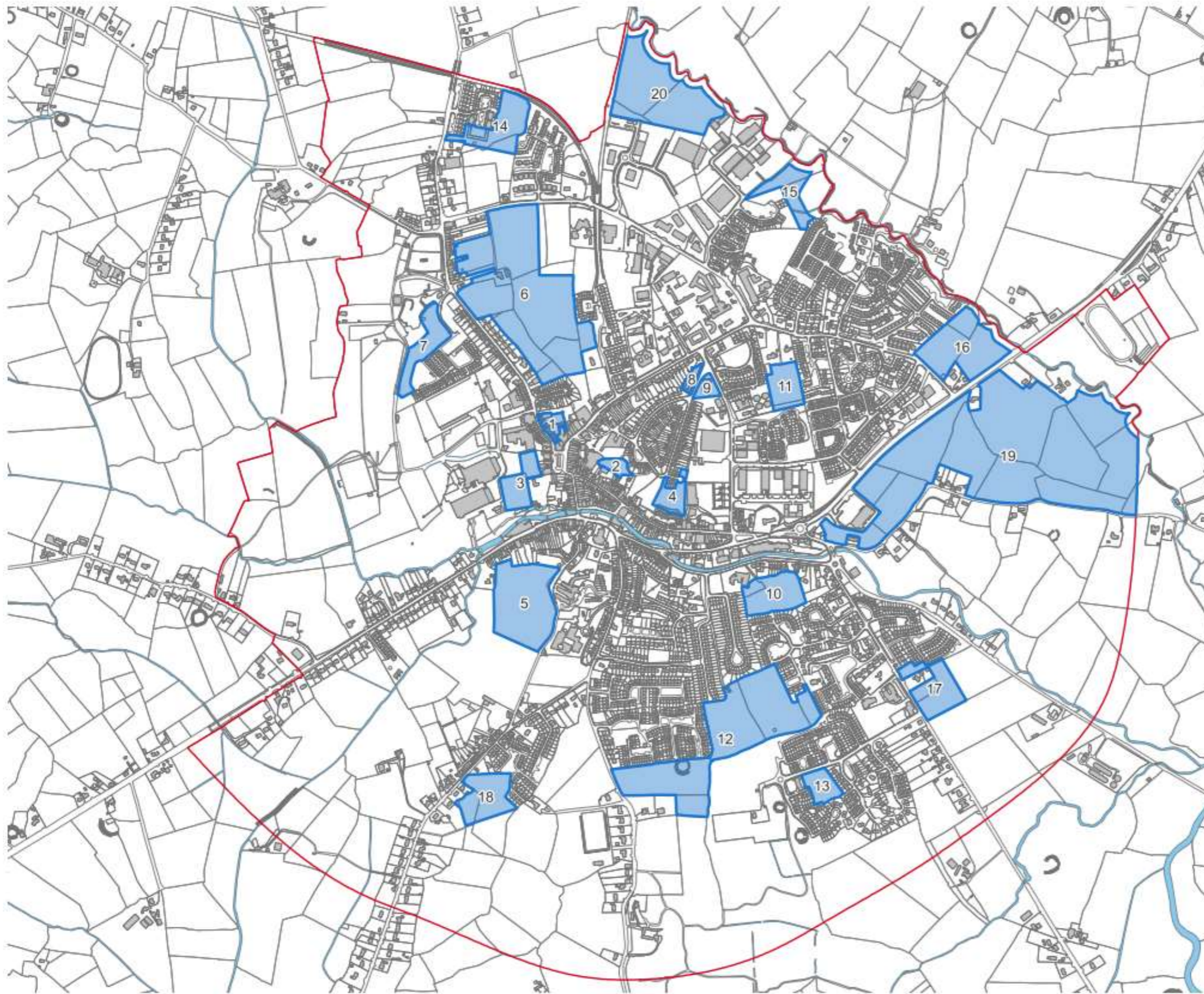
Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road	
												the developed lands to the south. Important lands in terms of delivering connectivity to schools and greenway.
8/9	Olympic Ballroom Site and Eircom site	9: C. 0.3 ha 10: C. 0.4ha	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Opportunity site 7. Walking distance of the town centre. Existing vacant buildings in prominent location Potential for the redevelopment of these sites either separately or together, allowing for the creation of a streetscape which will define the road boundary and allow for improved public realm.
10	Rathina Road, to the rear of Beechwood House Nursing Home.	C. 1.9 ha	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√X	√X	New residentially zoned site, 5 min walk from town centre and surrounded on all four sides by existing residential zoned lands. This site can avail of services and utilities from the developed lands surrounding it. Access is limited and will require enhancements.

Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road	
11	Gortboy (between Liosan and Oakpark)	C. 1.2ha.	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Infill site approximately 5 min walk from town centre. New residentially zoned site, in walking distance of the town centre and adjacent to existing residential zoned lands to the north, east and west.
12	Rathnaneane, between Arra View and the Paddocks	C. 9.4ha.	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	New residentially zoned site, close to the town centre and surrounded by predominantly existing residential zoned lands. This site can avail of services and utilities from the developed lands surrounding it.
13	Woodfield	C. 0.8ha.	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	New residentially zoned site, 1km from the town centre and surrounded by predominantly existing residential zoned lands.
14	Churchtown	C. 2.1ha.	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	New residentially zoned site, 900m from the town centre and adjacent to existing residential zoned lands to the east and west.

Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road	
15	Dungeeha	C. 1.3ha.	New Residential	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	New residentially zoned site, close to the town centre and adjacent to existing residential zoned lands to the south and west. The site is close to existing primary and secondary schools.
16	Gortboy	C. 3ha.	Residential Serviced Sites	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Serviced sites, close to the N21 and the existing residential estates of Daarwood Crescent and Portland Drive.
17	Clounsrehane	C. 2.1ha.	Residential Serviced Sites	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Serviced sites, proximate to the existing residential estate of Ferndale and the Killeline Leisure-West Limerick Sports Complex.
18	Knockane	C. 1.9ha.	Residential Serviced Sites	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Serviced sites, close to the existing residential estate of Dúnquin, and road frontage onto Knockane Road.

Table 10.6: Enterprise and Employment Settlement Capacity Audit

Site No.	Location	Area - Hectare	Zoning	Tier	Services							Comment
					Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Water	Foul Sewer	Surface Water	Road	
Enterprise and Employment												
19	Dromindeel	C. 24.5ha.	Enterprise and Employment		X	X	√	√	√	√	√	Large site located to the south of the N21, in proximity to the existing Tesco store. Located approximately 900m from the town centre, applicants will have to provide walking/cycling infrastructure to connect to the town centre. Access subject to traffic transport assessment and road safety audit. Footpath and lighting to be provided by developer.
21	Churchtown	C. 4.5ha.	Enterprise and Employment		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	Located to the north of the settlement, in proximity to the existing Desmond Business Park and the River Daar. Access subject to traffic transport assessment and road safety audit. Applicants will have to provide walking/cycling infrastructure to connect to with the town centre.



**Draft Newcastle West
Local Area Plan
2023-2029**

**Settlement Capacity
Audit**

- Legend**
- Settlement Capacity Audit Sites
 - LAP Boundary

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May 2023 NCW/23-29/R3

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CHAPTER 11 – Monitoring and Evaluation

11.1 Implementation of the Local Area Plan

The Draft Plan sets out the Council’s vision and strategy for Newcastle West, including specific policy and objectives to provide a framework for the sustainable development of the town over the period 2023-2029. Regular monitoring of the progress made in relation to ensuring the effective delivery of the objectives set out in the Draft Plan will take place. This will include a review of identified actions to be implemented within the timeframe of the plan. Coordination between other key departments in the Local Authority will be critical in ensuring that those objectives relating to issues such as roads, housing and community development are achieved.

11.2 Identified Local Area Plan Actions

The implementation of the Draft Local Area Plan requires the cooperation and participation of all stakeholders. The Council will continue their leadership role in progressing and securing the policies and objectives of the Draft Plan. The Council will also continue to foster a collaborative approach with citizens, communities, stakeholders, sectoral interests, government and non-government agencies to achieve collective support and successful implementation of the Draft Plan. Table 11.1 below outlines the identified actions and associated lead responsibility, in implementing identified actions within the plan timeframe. Some of these actions are outside the control of the Local Authority and will be dependent on private bodies (such as developer’s/landowner’s) to be delivered.

Time Frame	Years
Short Term	1-2
Medium Term	2-4
Long Term	5+

Action		Stakeholders	Timeframe
1	Deliver the recommendations of the Local Transport Plan and associated public realm upgrades	LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate/ Planning, Environment and Placemaking, NTA and TII	Short – medium
2	Deliver public realm proposals as set out in the Draft Plan	LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate/ Planning, Environment and Placemaking, NTA and TII	Medium
2	Deliver improved cycleway/walkway connectivity between the Limerick Greenway and Newcastle West town centre	LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate and the NTA	Medium
3	Expand existing Calvary Cemetery	LCCC Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate	Short – medium
4	Progress the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme to planning stage	Mid – West National Road Design Office and TII	Medium
5	Development of a Greenway Hub in Newcastle West	LCCC Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate	Medium
6	Investigate/Support the provision of a cultural/arts facility in Newcastle West	LCCC Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate	Medium
7	Prepare a Masterplan for the Castle Demense to maximise its recreational and amenity value	LCCC Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate	Short
8	Carry out Public Real upgrades to the Opportunity Sites as identified in Chapter 4	LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate and the NTA	Medium
9	Investigate the potential of providing a sports and recreational hub adjacent to the Athletics Hub in order to develop synergies with the existing facility	LCCC Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate	Medium

Table 11.1: Identified Local Area Plan Actions

APPENDIX I – 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

**Draft Newcastle West
Local Area Plan
2023-2029**

Zoning Map

Legend

- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Residential
- Local Centre
- Mixed Use
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Tourism Related Development
- Town Centre
- Utilities
- Indicative Link Road
- LAP Boundary

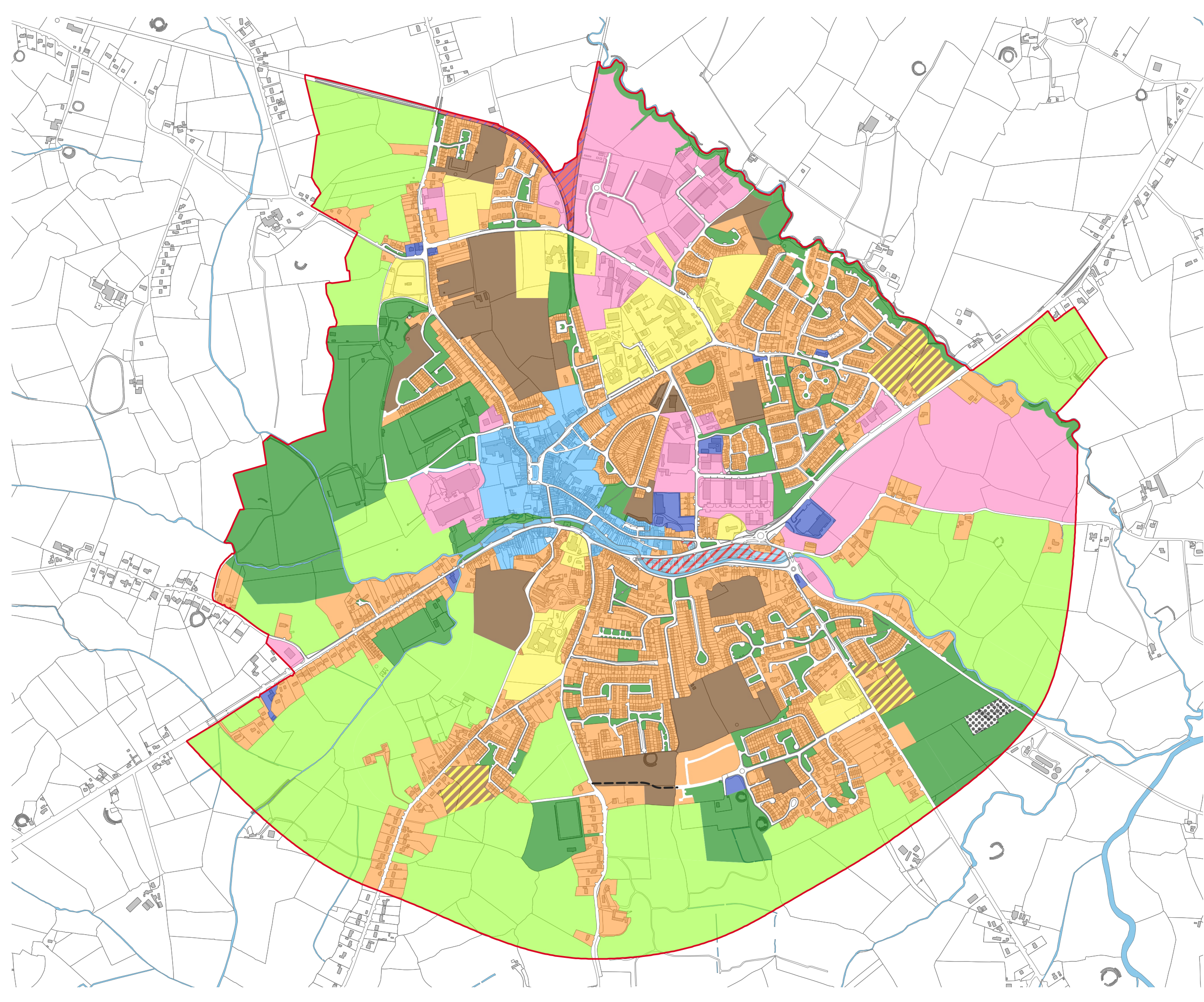
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**Draft Newcastle West
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2023-2029**

Flood Map

Legend

- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Residential
- Local Centre
- Mixed Use
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Tourism Related Development
- Town Centre
- Utilities
- Flood Zone A
- Flood Zone B
- LAP Boundary

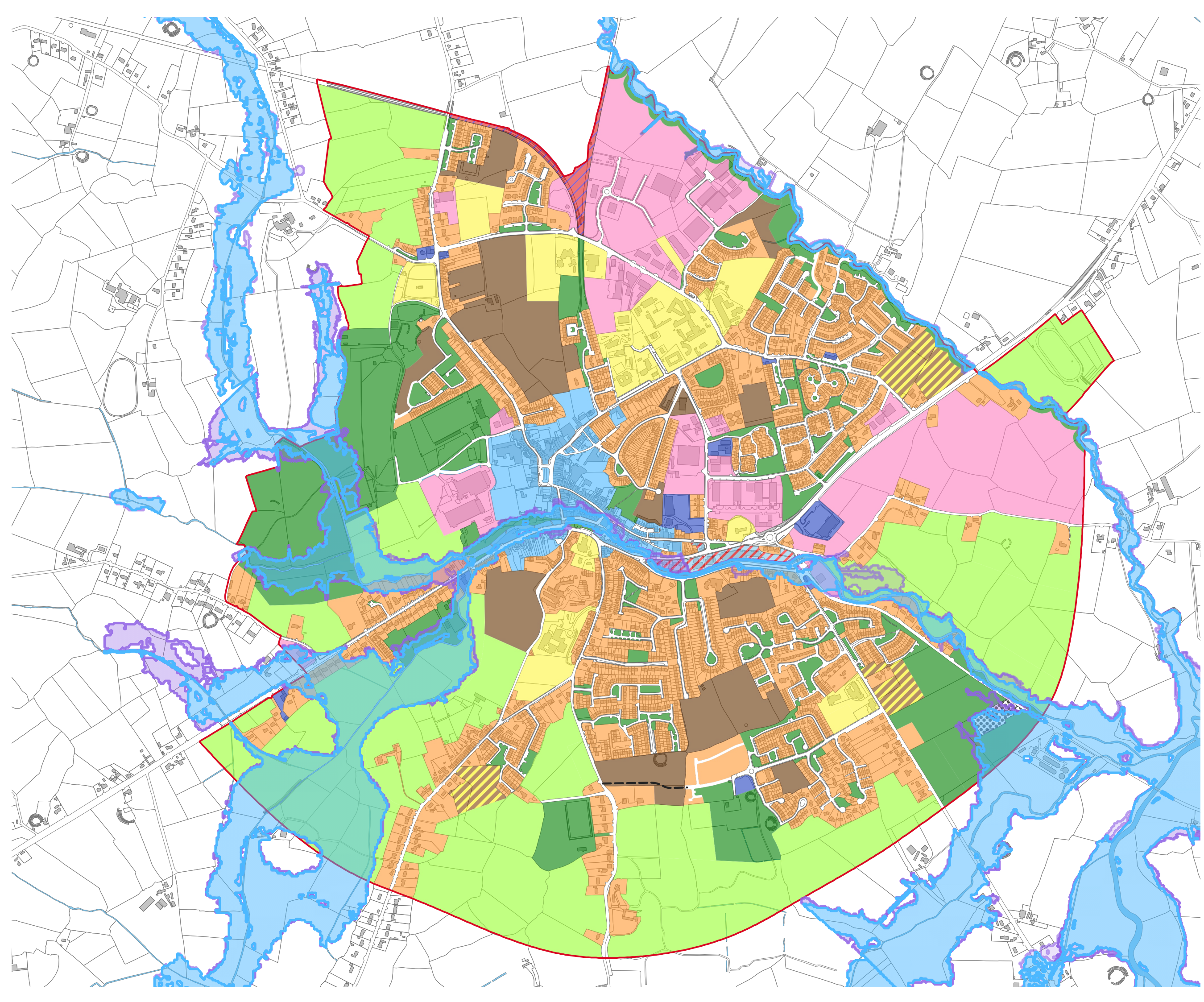
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2023-2029**

**Amenity and Sustainable
Transport Map**

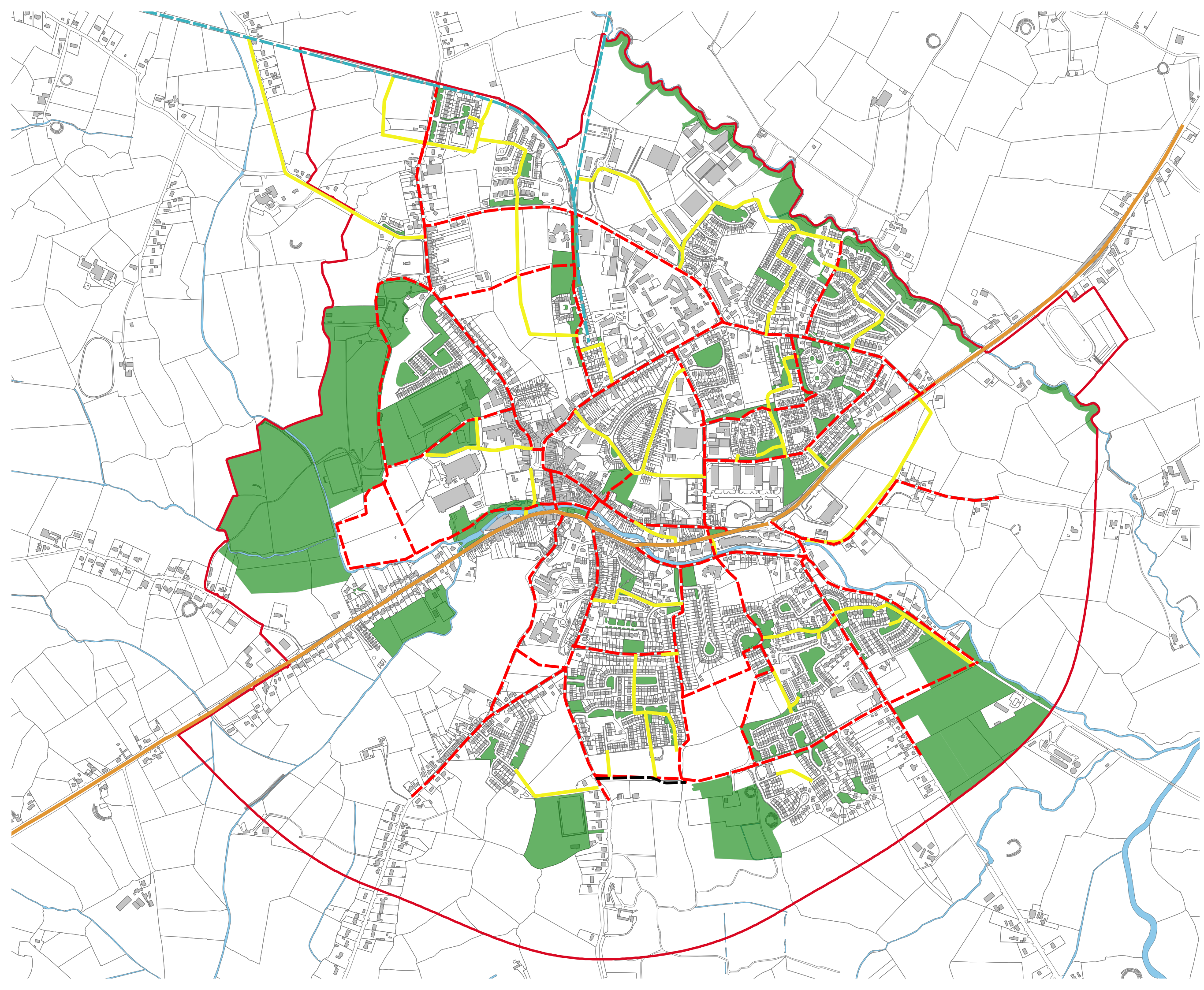
Legend

-  Existing N21
-  New Connectivity Link
-  Potential Neighbourhood Linkages
-  Limerick Greenway
-  Indicative Link Road
-  Open Space and Recreation
-  LAP Boundary

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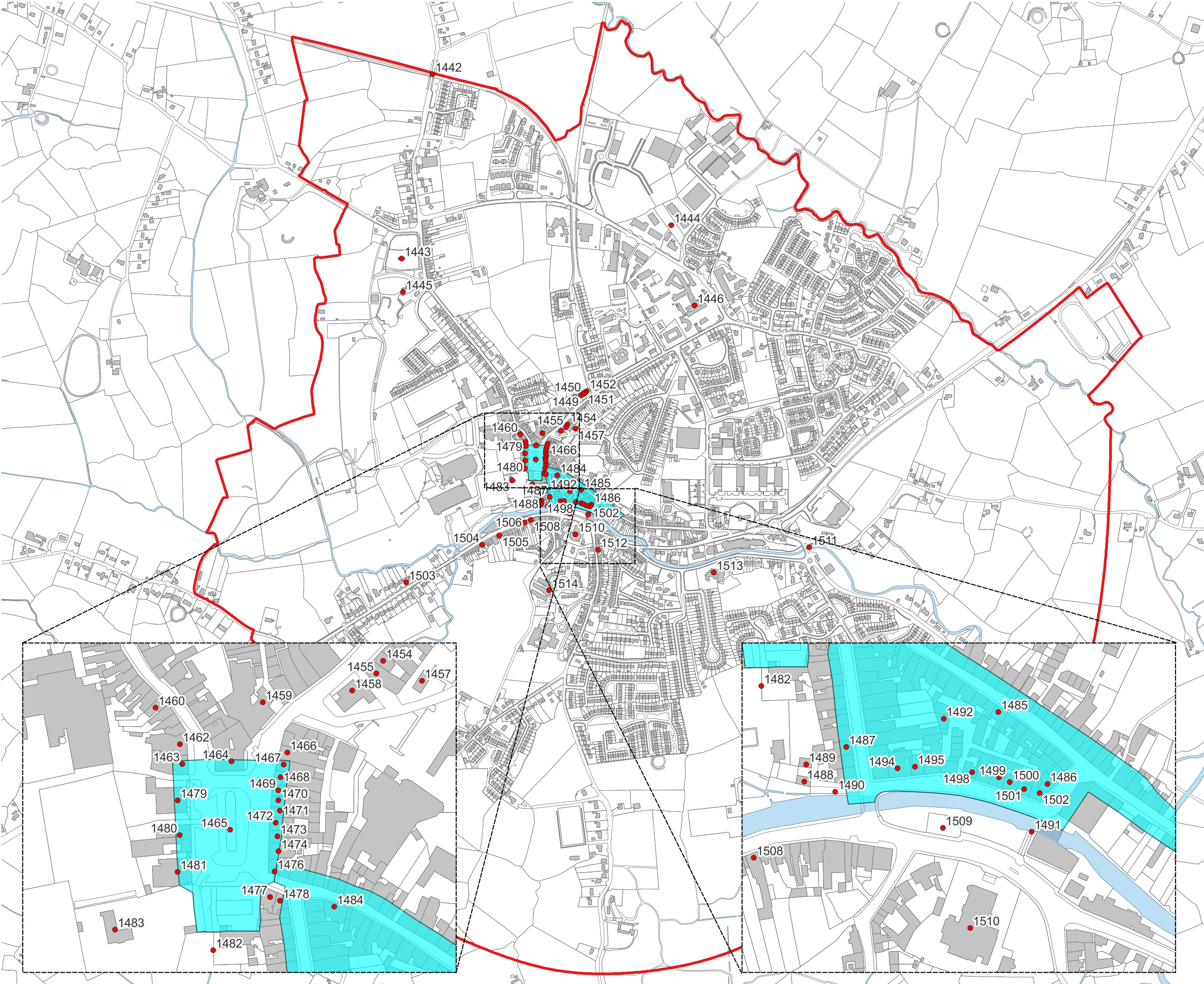
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Legend

- Protected Structures
- Architectural Conservation Area
- LAP Boundary



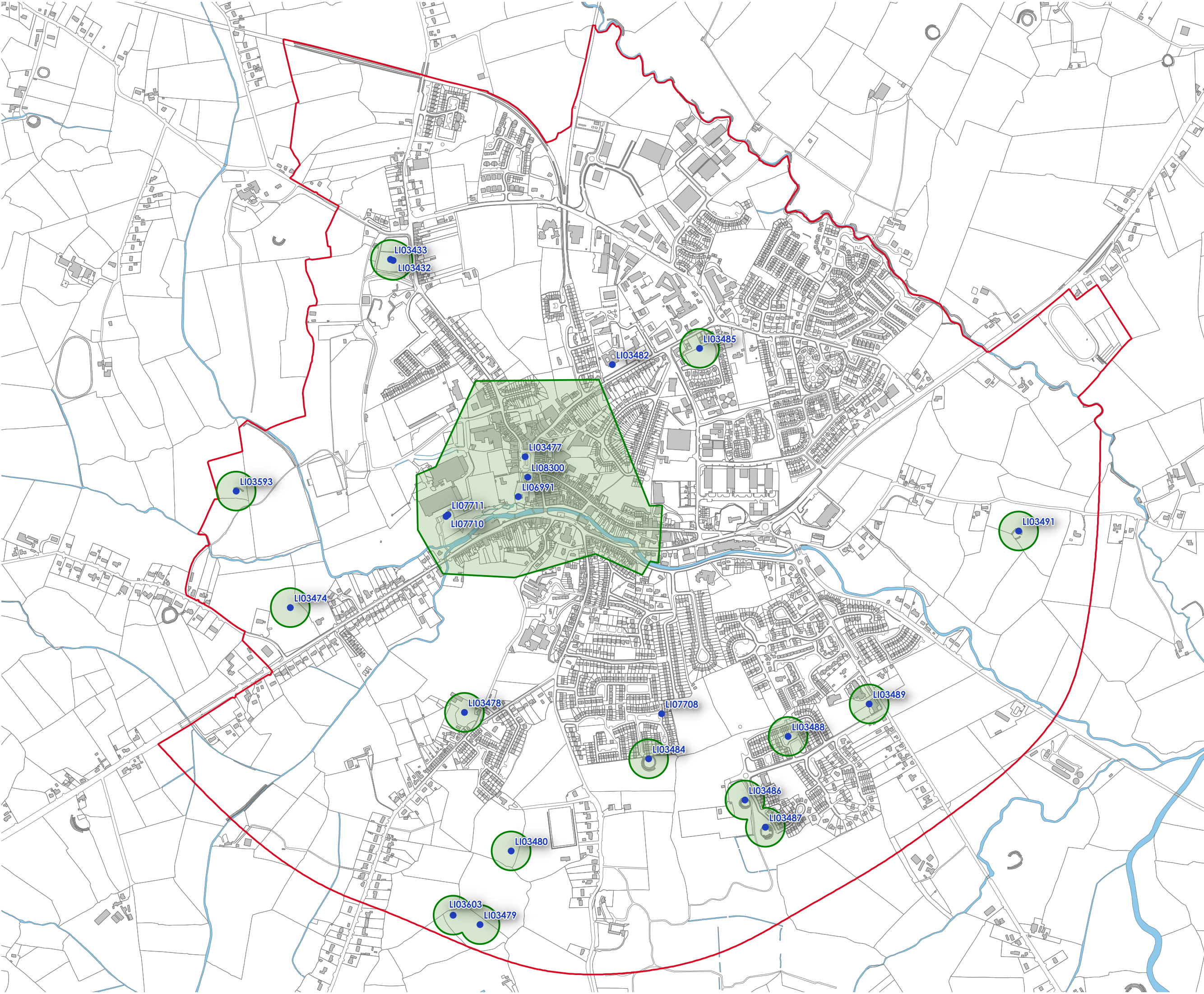
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Legend

- Record of Monuments and Places
- Zones of Notification
- LAP Boundary

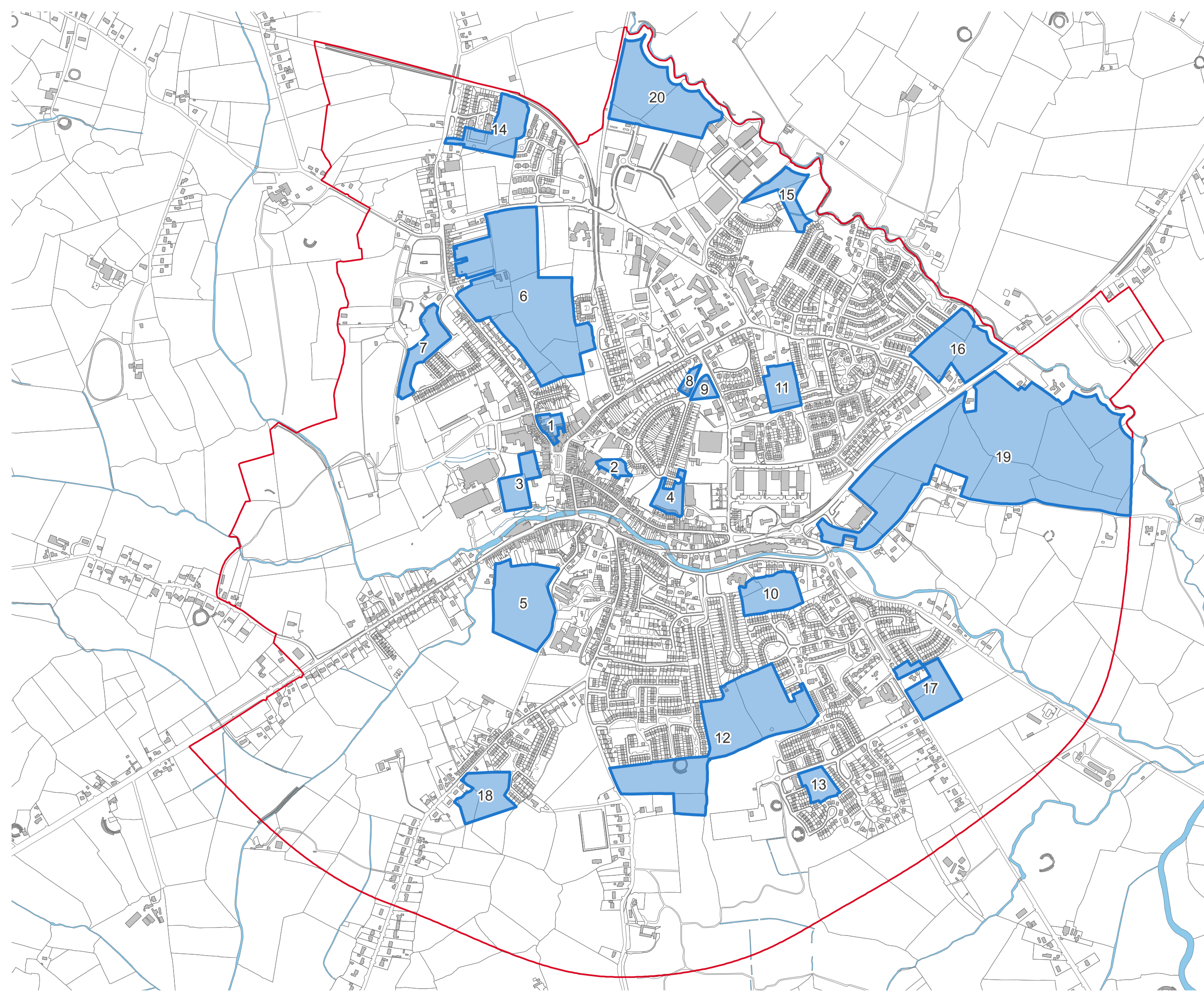


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Settlement Capacity
Audit



- Legend**
- Settlement Capacity Audit Sites
 - LAP Boundary

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APPENDIX 2 – Record of Protected Structures and Record of Monuments and Places


A2.1 Record of Protected Structures





Volume 3B of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028, sets out the Record of Protected Structures for the Newcastle West Municipal District. 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 Newcastle West as per the Limerick Development Plan 2022.




Table A2.1: Record of Protected Structures





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1442	21903603	Unknown	Churchtown, Newcastle West	Single-arch road bridge, built c. 1865	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1443	None	Church	Churchtown, Newcastle West	Medieval site - Church (in Ruins)	
1444	None	Graveyard	Gortboy, Newcastle West	Famine Cemetery	
1445	None	Castle Demesne	Castle Demesne, Newcastle West	Lime kilns	
1446	21837019	Newcastle Union Workhouse (part of St. Ita's Hospital)	Gortboy, Newcastle West	Former workhouse built in 1841	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1449	21837015	Almshouse A	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Terraced dwelling, built in 1872	
1450	21837016	Almshouse B	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Former estate worker's house, dated 1872, terraced	
1451	21837017	Almshouse C	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Terraced dwelling dated 1872	
1452	21837018	Almshouse D	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Terraced dwelling, built in 1872	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1453	21837014	Courthouse	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Civic building dated 1841	
1454	21837012	Former Bank	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Commercial premises	
1455	None	O'Riordan's Hardware	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Commercial premises	
1456	None	Attached to Dooley Supervalu	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Two-storey former house, built c. 1840, having render shopfront	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1457	21837020	Unknown	Market Place, Newcastle West	Former market house, dated 1873	
1458	21837021	Former Carnegie Library	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Five-bay two-storey former Carnegie library, dated 1916	
1459	21837012	Unknown	Bishop Street, Newcastle West	Former bank, built c. 1880	
1460	21837003	Unknown	Church Street, Newcastle West	Urban structure - commercial	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1462	21837004	Crowley Brothers	Church Street, Newcastle West	Three-storey former shop, built c. 1900	
1463	21837005	Nash's	Church Street, Newcastle West	Three-storey office, built c. 1900, having render shopfront	
1464	21837011	Ela Marie's	The Square, Newcastle West	Corner-sited three-bay three-storey U-plan former military barracks, built c. 1840	
1465	None	The Square	The Square, Newcastle West	Civic space	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1466	21837022	Unknown	The Square, Newcastle West	Terraced three-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1830, having render shopfront to front (west)	
1467	21837023	Unknown	The Square, Newcastle West	Built 1830s	
1468	21837024	Unknown	The Square, Newcastle West	Terraced four-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1830	
1469	21837025	Unknown	The Square, Newcastle West	Four-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1830	


RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1470	21837026	Unknown	The Square, Newcastle West	Terraced three-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1830	
1471	21837027	Unknown	The Square, Newcastle West	Three-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1830, having recent shopfront	
1472	21837022	Unknown	The Square, Newcastle West	Former house, built c. 1830, having render shopfront	
1473	21837029	Cronin's Bar and Lounge	The Square, Newcastle West	Commercial premises, built c. 1830	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1474	21837030	The Knights Inn	The Square, Newcastle West	Commercial premises, built c. 1830	
1476	None	Unknown	The Square, Newcastle West	Commercial premises	
1477	None	Ed Lynch's Bar	The Square, Newcastle West	Commercial premises	
1478	None	Rashers O'Flaherty's	The Square, Newcastle West	Commercial premises	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1479	21837006	Bank of Ireland	The Square, Newcastle West	Three-storey bank, dated 1864	
1480	21837007	A.C.C.	The Square, Newcastle West	Three-storey former bank, built c. 1870	
1481	21837008	A.I.B.	The Square, Newcastle West	Three-storey bank, built in 1924, having ashlar limestone shopfront	
1482	None	Templar's Castle	The Square, Newcastle West	Medieval site - castle	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1483	None	Castle House	The Square, Newcastle West	Residence	
1484	None	Unknown	Maiden Street [2], Newcastle West	Commercial premises	
1485	None	Cobbler's	Maiden Street [5], Newcastle West	Commercial premises	
1486	21837037	Bridge House	Maiden Street/ North Quay, Newcastle West	Corner-sited four-bay three- storey former house, built c. 1840	





RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1487	21837034	Moone's	Bridge Street, Newcastle West	Dwelling and former commercial building c. 1840	
1488	None	Fuller's Folly	Bridge Street [1], Newcastle West	Folly - now in commercial use	
1489	None	Unknown	Bridge Street [2], Newcastle West	Ancillary buildings and structures to Fuller's Folly	
1490	None	Unknown	Bridge Street [3], Newcastle West	Medieval structure	


RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1491	21837040	Curling's Bridge	North Quay, Newcastle West	Foot bridge dated 1866	
1492	None	Unknown	Off North Quay, Newcastle West	Commercial building features	
1494	None	Unknown	North Quay, Newcastle West	House with ground floor commercial built c. 1840	
1495	None	Unknown	North Quay, Newcastle West	House with ground floor commercial built c. 1840	

RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1497	21837038	Cussen	North Quay, Newcastle West	End-of-terrace two-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1840	
1498	21837039	Cussen	North Quay, Newcastle West	Terraced two-bay three storey former house, built c. 1840	
1499	None	Unknown	North Quay, Newcastle West	House with ground floor commercial, built c. 1840	
1500	None	Unknown	North Quay, Newcastle West	House with ground floor commercial	

RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1501	None	Unknown	North Quay, Newcastle West	House built c. 1840	
1502	None	The Mallard Restaurant	North Quay, Newcastle West	End of terrace house with ground floor commercial, built c. 1840	
1503	None	Clancarthy House	Cullenagh	Country house	
1504	None	No. 31 South Quay	No. 31 South Quay, Newcastle West	Terraced house	

RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1505	None	No. 28 South Quay	No. 28 South Quay, Newcastle West	Terraced structure	
1506	None	No. 13 South Quay	No. 13 South Quay, Newcastle West	Terraced house	
1508	None	No. 11 South Quay	No. 11 South Quay, Newcastle West	Terraced house	
1509	21837045	War of Independence Memorial	South Quay, Newcastle West	Monument, erected in 1955, commemorating volunteers killed	

RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1510	21837042	St. Mary's Church	Knockane	Catholic Church built in 1828	
1511	21903613	Cork Bridge	Gortboy, Cloonyschehane	Bridge - dated 1855	
1512	None	Unknown	Boherbuoy	Two-storey three-bay building with timber shopfront	
1513	21837044	St. Ita's Presbytery	Rathnaneane	Former fever hospital, built in 1843	

RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
1514	21837043	St. Catherine's	Knockane, Newcastle West	Former Sisters of Mercy convent and chapel, built c. 1850	

A2.2 Record of Monuments and Places

Archaeological sites are included in the Sites and Monuments Record under the provisions of Section 12(1) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994. Section 12(3) of the Act states “When the owner or occupier...of a monument or place which has been recorded under subsection (1) or any person proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such monument or place, he shall give notice in writing of his proposal to carry out the work to the [Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government] and shall not, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the [Minister] commence the work for a period of two months after having given the notice.”

Section 16 of the Act prohibits the use or possession of detection devices “in, or at the site of, a monument recorded under Section 12.” The following table lists the Recorded Monuments and Places located in Newcastle West:

Table A2.2: Record of Monuments and Places:

RMP Number	Classification	Townland	Location
LI036-069	Ringfort	Ballymackesy	527756/632389
LI036-193	Ringfort	Ballymackesy	527673/632418
LI036-067001	Historic town	Castle Demesne, Churchtown, Gortboy, Rathnaneane, Knockane	527895/633831
LI036-067002	Castle	Castle Demesne	527874/633708
LI036-024001	Church	Churchtown	527479/634438
LI036-024002	Graveyard	Churchtown	527480/634439
LI036-064	Ringfort	Cyllenagh	527169/633371
LI036-180	Ringfort	Cullenagh	527004/633725
LI036-211001	Country House	Cullenagh	527651/633647
LI036-211002	Well	Cullenagh	527657/633652
LI036-081	Ringfort	Dromin	529417/633602
LI036-072 School			528164/634115
LI036-075	Ringfort	Gortboy	528433/634165
LI036-074	Ringfort	Killeline	528276/632900
LI036-076	Ringfort	Killeline	528573/632773
LI036-077	Ringfort	Killeline	528636/632689
LI036-078	Designed landscape	Killeline	528706/632969
LI036-079	Ringfort	Killeline	528956/633069
LI036-068	Ringfort	Knockane	527708/633043
LI036-070	Ringfort	Knockane	527852/632616

LI036-210	Excavation	Rathnaneane	528316/633039
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Figure A2.1: Record of Monuments and Places Map

