



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae **Luimnigh**

Limerick City
& County Council

Comhairle Cathrach agus Contae Luimnigh,
Ceannteathrú Chorpáraideach,
Cé na gCeannaithe,
Luimneach

Planning, Environment & Place-Making Directorate,
Limerick City and County Council,
Corporate Headquarters,
Merchants Quay,
Limerick

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9th November 2023

To the Cathaoirleach and each Member of the Metropolitan District of Limerick

Re: Part VIII Planning Report for the removal of 45 existing pedestrian wayfinding & information signs and the installation of 70 new pedestrian wayfinding and orientation signs comprising 18 Map Totems, 19 Route Markers and 33 Finger Posts and all associated site works. The development will take place at numerous locations throughout Limerick City.

A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

I enclose herewith the Chief Executive's report prepared in accordance with Section 179(3) (a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

In accordance with Section 179 (3) (a) of the above Act, it is proposed to proceed as indicated in this report.

Mise le meas,

VINCENT MURRAY

DIRECTOR OF SERVICES

PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT & PLACE-MAKING DIRECTORATE

Encl

Memo

To: Pat Daly, Chief Executive

From: Vincent Murray, Director of Services, Planning, Environment and Place Making

Date: 02/11/2023

Re: Part 8 proposal, Reference 23/8009 – The proposed development is for the removal of 45 existing pedestrian wayfinding & information signs and the installation of 70 new pedestrian wayfinding and orientation signs comprising 18 Map Totems, 19 Route Markers and 33 Finger Posts and all associated site works. The development will take place at numerous locations throughout Limerick City.

Dear Chief Executive,

Please find attached for your consideration report prepared in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in respect of a proposal for the removal of 45 existing pedestrian wayfinding & information signs and the installation of 70 new pedestrian wayfinding and orientation signs throughout Limerick City.

The proposal prepared by the Planning, Environment & Place-Making Directorate has been evaluated taking into consideration all submissions received. It is concluded that the proposed development is in accordance with the objectives of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

It is recommended that the proposed development be recommended to the Elected Members of Limerick City & County Council for their approval.


Signed: _____
Jennifer Mc Nulty, Executive Planner


Signed: _____
Donogh O'Donoghue, Senior Executive Planner


Signed: _____
Vincent Murray, Director of Services, Planning, Environment and Place Making

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT & RECOMMENDATION IN ACCORDANCE
WITH SECTION 179 3(a) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
ACT 2000 (AS AMENDED)**

Re: Proposed Development:

The proposed development is for the removal of 45 existing pedestrian wayfinding & information signs and the installation of 70 new pedestrian wayfinding and orientation signs comprising 18 Map Totems, 19 Route Markers and 33 Finger Posts and all associated site works.

At: Limerick City

Reference Number 23/8009

1.0 Introduction

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

2.0 Description of the nature and extent of the proposed development

The proposed development is located at 70 individual locations spread across the metropolitan area of Limerick City. The overall site boundary encompasses an area measuring approximately 115 hectares. The specific site context of each of the 70 signs differs individually however all signs are proposed to be installed into existing pavements, hard paved areas and a few grass verges which are all identified as being within public ownership of Limerick City and County Council.

Site location



2.1 Public Consultation:

The plans and particulars were placed on public display from the 4th of September, 2023 up to and including 03rd of October, 2023. Submissions and observations were invited up to the 17th of October, 2023.

3.0 Submissions with respect to the proposed development

A total of 3 x No. written submissions/observations were received and are listed below:

No.	Name
1	Brian Hodkinson
2	Sean Mc Ilfatrick
3	Sile Ginnane on behalf of An Taisce

SUB (1) Brian Hodkinson

Submission Summary:

1. Concerns raised regarding why is the whole of the Medieval City not in this scheme, specifically the medieval parts of Irish Town around the Old City wall.
Request to extend the area to include the city walls of Irishtown and mark the 1690 siege.

Chief Executive's Response:

1. The Signage & Wayfinding proposal was developed to respond to the existing and established tourist, cultural and heritage offers in Limerick City. During the design process the medieval sections of Irishtown were considered for inclusion and while their historical significance was acknowledged, it was noted that they currently lack a well-developed tourist / visitor infrastructure with current issues including limited access and universal accessibility persisting.
Limerick City and County Council notes that the section of the city walls stretching from Old Clare street to the New Road are currently undergoing a number of works in the short and medium term to consolidate the wall, improve access and provide temporary interpretative signage. As this work progresses into the medium term and the accessibility and visitor infrastructure around the walls are improved, a proposal for the expansion of the city signage and wayfinding to include this area will be progressed in parallel.

SUB (2) Sean Mc Ilfatrick

Submission Summary:

1. Concerns raised that in relation to the announcement of a program to remove obsolete signs from the city centre; only 45 obsolete signs have been identified for removal in this application and that the full scope of obsolete signage throughout the city which could potentially be removed has not been captured.

Chief Executive's Response:

1. A 'decluttering' project which is identifying and removing obsolete signage of all kinds throughout the city is currently in progress and is a separate project to the Wayfinding & Orientation Signage Project. The 'Proposed Signage Removals Schedule' submitted in this application only consists of the existing pedestrian wayfinding and orientation signage to be removed under this project.

SUB (3) Sile Ginnane on behalf of An Taisce

Submission Summary:

1. That the wayfinding project is done within the context of the overall Public Realm Strategy for Limerick currently out for Public Consultation
2. That the wayfinding and signage should not take priority or detract from the medieval and Georgian streetscapes of Limerick.
3. That a consistent palette used across wayfinding and signage that is sensitive to the built heritage of Limerick. The limited and consistent palette and materials used should be extended to style guide across street furniture, lighting, litter bins, bollards.
4. That any wayfinding implementations has as a priority accessibility of our streets to enable people with mobility and visual impairments to have full access to our streets
5. That the wayfinding elements ensure that the DMURS Road User Hierarchy is followed, whereby the highest priority is given to vulnerable road users, pedestrians and cyclists.
6. That removal and decluttering could be progressed further with a view to the removal of more signage and street clutter.
7. That an approach of minimal signage be take throughout the city
8. That the introduction of Bus-Connects should be considered as a way of reducing street clutter while still providing the opportunity to provide signage and wayfinding – either on poles with timetables or on bus shelter screens themselves.
9. That current bike and e-bike share stations may provide opportunities for provision of information without additional street clutter being required
10. That the installation work must be carried out to a high standard and that paving slabs in particular must be re-instated at the base of the new signs to ensure a flush and seamless integration with the existing paving. No poured concrete finishes should be permitted.

Chief Executive's Response:

1. The Signage & Wayfinding proposal has been developed in parallel with the currently in progress Public Realm Strategy.
2. The wayfinding and orientation signage has been designed in form and materiality to blend in with their surroundings and read as a continuation of the existing suite of street furniture across the city.
3. A palette of natural material finishes including aged copper and stainless steel has been selected for the signage to respond to the varied context across the city including the sensitive and historic built heritage. The palette of materials of further street furniture will be covered in the public realm strategy.
4. Signs will be placed where possible close to the building line, close to the footpath edge or in line with existing street furniture in order to maintain clear lines of passage for pedestrians and accessibility for all.
5. The sign placement shall be in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets guidelines and not pose any obstruction to mobility.
6. The 'Proposed Signage Removals Schedule' submitted in this application includes the signage to be removed under the Limerick Orientation and Wayfinding proposal only.
7. A key purpose of the project is to replace the existing wide variety of wayfinding signs with a signage family of a unified and consistent design language in order to minimise visual impact.
8. While Bus Connects is still in progress, the council endeavours to take a coordinated approach and the interaction between the two projects will be taken into consideration as bus connects is developed further.
9. The potential for interaction between wayfinding and orientation signage and bike and e-bike stations will be considered going forward.
10. All existing ground finishes around the signs are to be reinstated to their original condition and the base plate of all signs will be flush with the surrounding finish level.

4.0 Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken by Limerick City & County Council's Heritage Officer for the proposed development. Their report concluded 'that proposed development either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European Site'. Overall, the executive is satisfied that having regard to the scale of the development and the distance of the development from any SAC and SPA, the development as proposed should not exercise a significant effect on the conservation status of any SAC or SPA either alone or in combination with other plans or projects and therefore a Stage 2 NIS is not necessary.

5.0 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

An EIAR screening report has been undertaken by Limerick City & County Council's Heritage Officer for the proposed development. The proposed development is for the removal and replacement of way marking signage for the city. The development does not fall within any of the threshold requirements for a mandatory EIA as specified in Section 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Having regard to the size of the development, located within a modified environment, the development as proposed does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

6.0 Key Policy Provisions

Limerick Development Plan, 2022-2028:

The Development Plan sets out the following policies and objectives with respect to acceptable development at the location in question:

Policies and Objectives

Objective CGR O2 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure that all developments are designed to the highest quality with respect to the principles of placemaking, universal design and public realm including the guidance set out under the Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide (2009) and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013) the Whole of Government National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022 and the 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid 19 Pandemic Response.
- b) Prepare and facilitate implementation of Public Realm Plans for settlements including Limerick City, Adare and Rathkeale.
- c) Ensure the construction of the highest quality and innovative designed buildings, in particular on the approaches to Limerick City, along the Riverfront/Quays, on important street corners or junctions, corner sites, the end of vistas and gateways, Town Centres and the edges of public squares or open space.

Objective TR O52 Directional Signage

It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of directional signage for amenities, tourist attractions and local attractions and along cycle and pedestrian routes, at appropriate locations throughout Limerick, in accordance with planning and traffic regulations

7.0 Appraisal

The proposed development will provide for the removal of 45 existing pedestrian wayfinding & information signs and the installation of 70 new pedestrian wayfinding and orientation signs comprising 18 Map Totems, 19 Route Markers and 33 Finger Posts and all associated site works. The proposed development is located at 70 individual locations spread across the metropolitan area of Limerick City. The specific site context of each of the 70 signs differs individually however all signs are proposed

to be installed into existing pavements, hard paved areas and a few grass verges which are all identified as being within the ownership of Limerick City and County Council.

Given the number of proposed signs and their dispersal across the city, the built heritage context of the project is expansive and varies across the individual locations. The signs are to be located through the archaeologically sensitive medieval core of the city, incorporating Englishtown & Irishtown, and close to a range of Protected Structures in the Georgian Quarter. The sensitive nature of the areas in question have been considered as part of the project brief and it is considered that the proposed scheme will not impact on any protected sites or protected monuments.

A detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to include a traffic management plan, which will take account of the site location, access issues, hydrocarbons, earth works, run-offs and location of services, will be prepared before any development is carried out and will include input from the design team, all specialist consultants and Limerick City & County Council.

The proposed development will have a positive effect on wayfinding in the city centre. The removal of the existing outdated pedestrian orientation and wayfinding signage throughout the city centre and the installation of a new unified signage suite will facilitate clearer and easier pedestrian navigation throughout the city centre. The proposal as set out is considered to be in compliance with Objective CGR O2 Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm and Objective TR O52 Directional Signage in the Limerick Development Plan, 2022-2028.

8.0 Conclusion

Having regard to the foregoing evaluation and the reason and considerations as set out, the Chief Executive is satisfied that the proposal is in accordance with the objectives of the Limerick Development Plan, 2022 - 2028 and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Pursuant to Section 179(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) the proposed development is recommended to the Elected Members of Limerick City & County Council for their approval.



Dr. Pat Daly
Chief Executive,
Limerick City & County Council

Date: 8.11.2023