

# Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023 - 2029

## Written Statement



ABBEEFEALE

ATLANTIC EDGE

**LIMERICK**

EUROPEAN EMBRACE

Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae Luimnigh

Limerick City  
& County Council

In accordance with the provisions of Section 20 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan came into effect on the 15th of November 2023, six weeks after the adoption of the Local Area Plan by the Elected Members of the Municipal District of Newcastle West on the 4th of October 2023.



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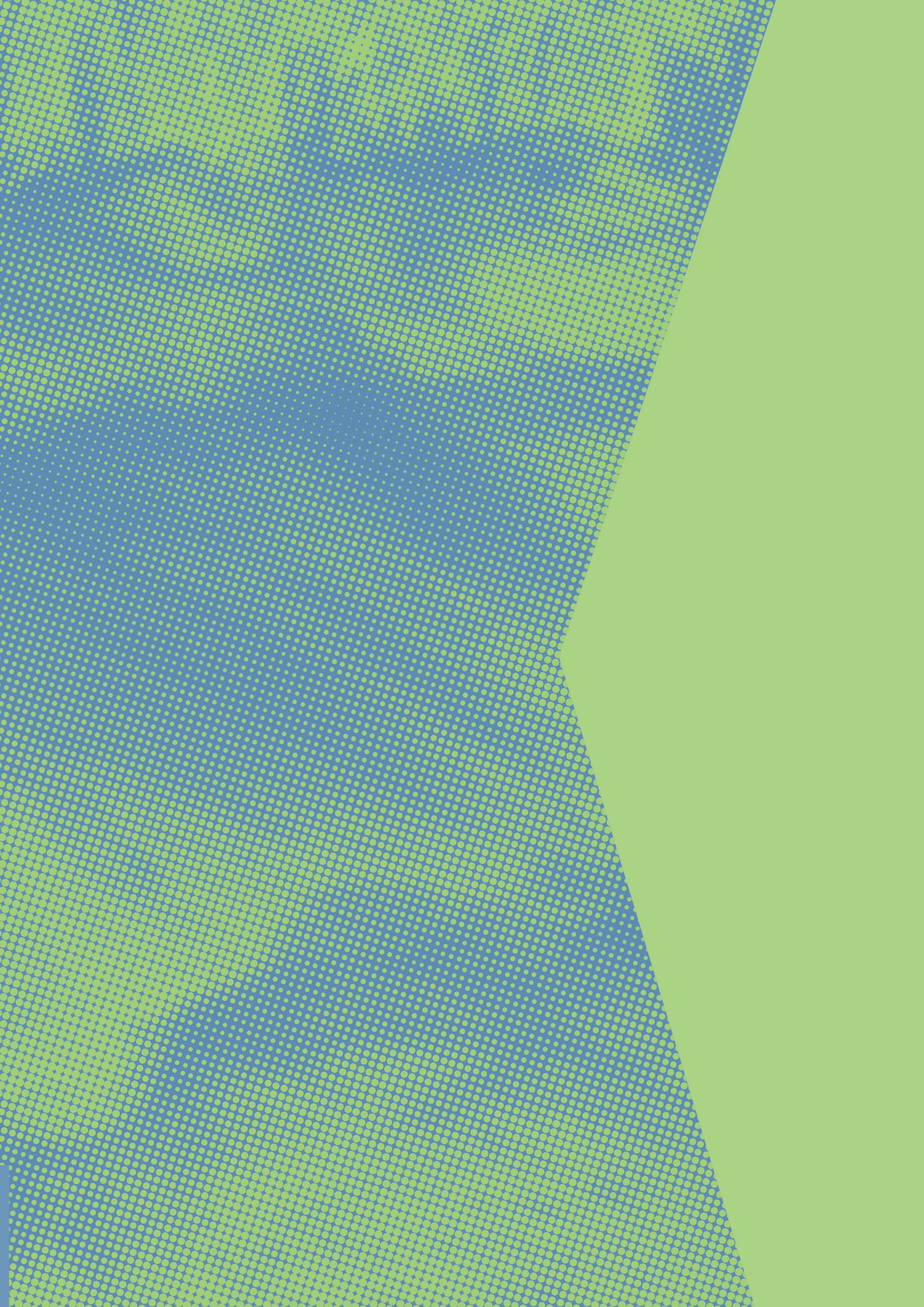
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# CHAPTER 1

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## 1.1 What is a Local Area Plan

The Local Area Plan (LAP) is a statutory document prepared by the Planning Authority, in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), thereafter referred to as “the Act”. The Abbeyfeale LAP 2014 - 2020 was extended until April 2024 under Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

This LAP sets out a land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town of Abbeyfeale, while complying with the provisions of higher-level spatial plans.

The LAP consists of a written statement and maps indicating objectives for zoning of land, development of residential and economic development and community infrastructure, safeguarding built and natural heritage, and potential opportunities for open space and recreation, active travel and transport, while outlining measures for environmental protection and climate action. The Core Strategy as set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028 sets out the quantum of lands identified for growth in Abbeyfeale, this in turn informs the land use zoning map of this Plan. The written statement generally takes precedence over maps should any discrepancy arise.

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

Preparation of this LAP has also been informed by Ministerial Guidelines issued pursuant to Section 28 of the Act, together with EU requirements, regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

When interpreting the objectives for the town of Abbeyfeale, it is essential that both the Limerick Development Plan 2022 - 2028 and the LAP are read together.

## 1.2 Review Process

### 1.2.1 First Issues Stage

Given the expiration of the extended lifetime of the existing Abbeyfeale 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 below. The formal process, for the preparation of this Local Area Plan commenced on 22nd October 2022, 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 Abbeyfeale, 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 St. Mary's Boys National School and the post-primary school, Coláiste Íde agus Iosef, a public consultation evening held on the 24th November 2022 in Abbeyfeale and an online social media campaign. The transition year students of Coláiste Íde agus Iosef 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.

During the public consultation period for the pre-draft stage, 17 no. written submissions were received and the students' submitted maps, artwork 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 4th and 5th Classes Mary's National School Abbeyfeale identifying issues in Abbeyfeale

### 1.2.2 Draft Plan

The publication of the Draft 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 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 toward the end of 2023.

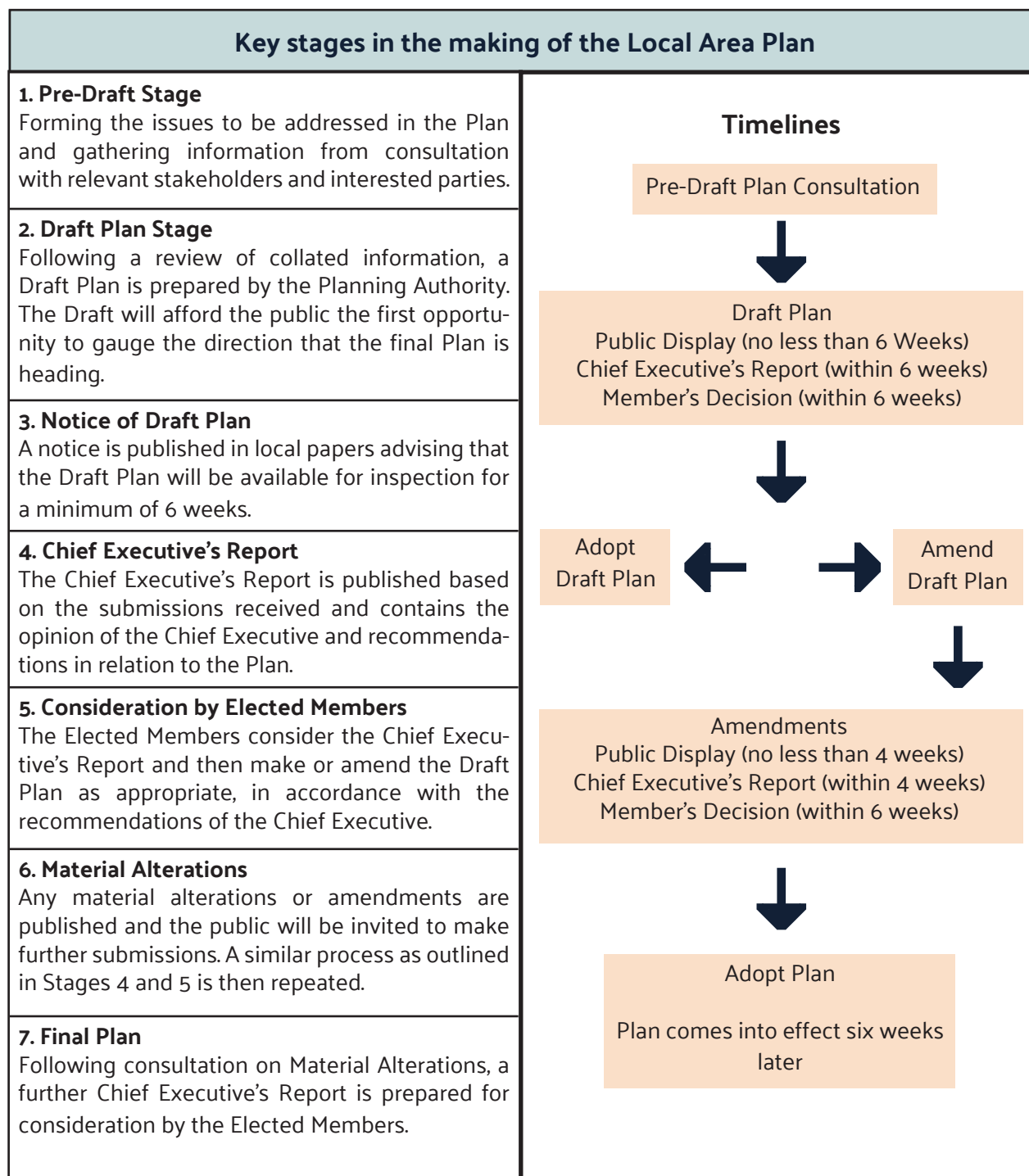


Figure 1.2: Key Stages – LAP Process

### 1.3 Planning 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

#### Spatial Planning Objective 01:

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that provisions of the Abbeyfeale 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

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the LAP is subject to the following environmental assessments:

#### 1.4.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required in accordance with the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). SEA is a formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan, policy or programme. Following a screening exercise, it was determined that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment

was required and an SEA Environmental Report accompanies this Plan.

#### 1.4.2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared in accordance with “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities” and Circular PL2/2014 Flooding Guidelines and informs the preparation of the Local Area Plan

#### 1.4.3 Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required in accordance with Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of the plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. Following a screening exercise, it was determined that having regard to, inter alia, the proximity of the Natura 2000 sites to the town of Abbeyfeale, Stage 2 AA is required and to this effect, a Natura Impact Report accompanies this Plan.



## 1.5 Plan Area

The Abbeyfeale LAP covers approximately 215.4 hectares in area and falls within the Abbeyfeale Electoral Division (ED). It contains parts of the townlands of Abbeyfeale East, Abbeyfeale West and Knockbrack. In order to ensure compliance with high-level plans, the settlement boundary for Abbeyfeale is defined by the principle of a compact settlement, prioritising the development potential of the town centre, sequential development from the town centre out and maximising under-used/vacant brownfield infill sites and reuse of existing buildings. This is in line with the NPF requirement whereby 30% of all new homes shall be developed within the built footprint of the town. This built-up footprint relates to the CSO boundary for Abbeyfeale, which is marginally smaller than the settlement boundary of the LAP. (See figure 1.4)

the only robust, credible, systematic source of data available to analyse at a local level. This includes population, socio-economic trends and mobility/transport patterns available to support the policies and objectives of the LAP, which are necessary to determine the requirements of the LAP. The 2014 – 2020 (as extended) Abbeyfeale LAP contained 275 ha of zoned lands. The Abbeyfeale LAP is informed by national policy in relation to compact spatial development within all settlements. Consequently, in rationalising the zoning of the town, the settlement boundary has been amended, and the quantum of lands zoned within the LAP has been reduced to 215ha, which results in a reduction of over 22% total quantum of lands zoned in Abbeyfeale.

The Census data available for the settlement is a crucial element of plan preparation as it provides

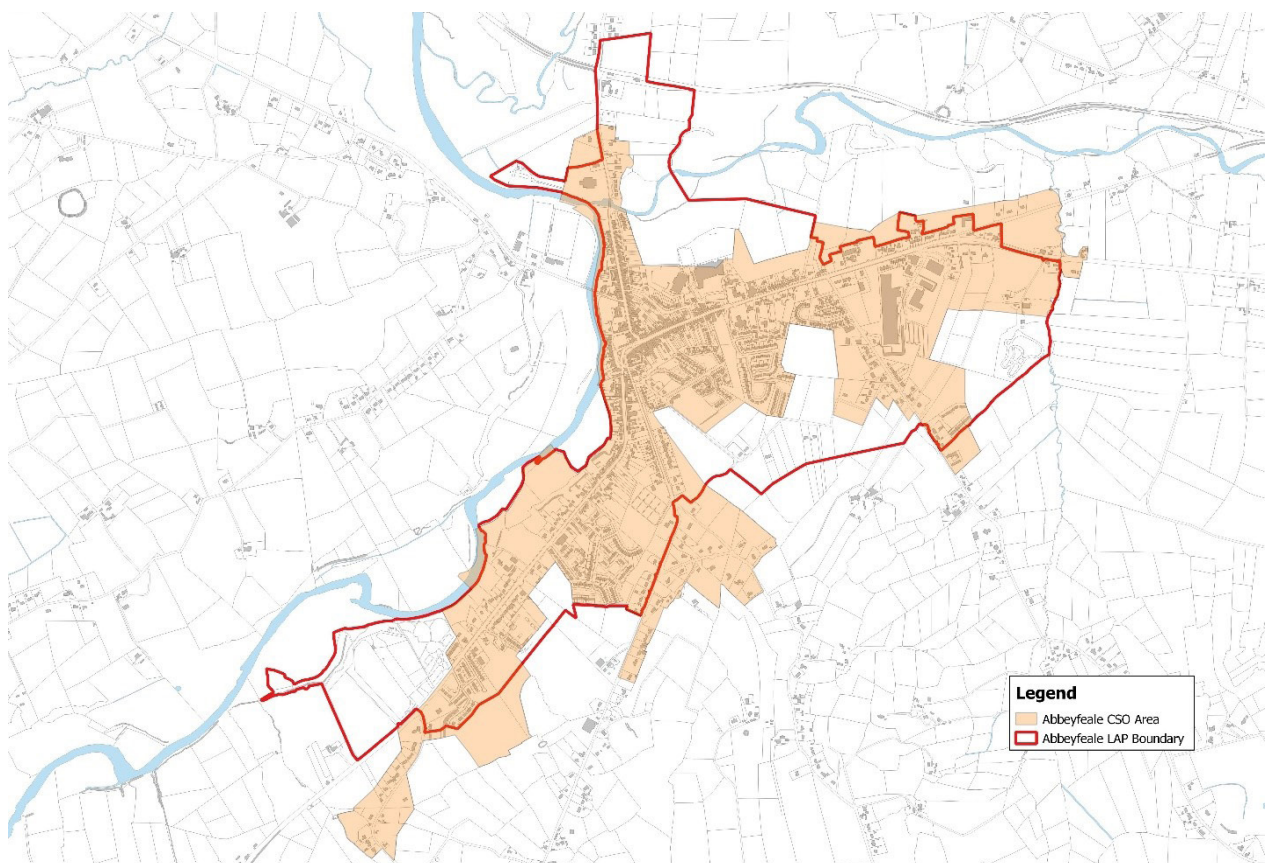


Figure 1.4: Abbeyfeale Census boundary and LAP boundary

# CHAPTER 2

## ABBEYFEALE IN CONTEXT

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## 2.1 Settlement Location

Abbeyfeale is located on the Limerick – Kerry border, on the N21 National Route, south of the Mullaghareirk Mountains, approximately 65km south-west of Limerick City and 25km south-west of Newcastle West. The river basins of the River Feale and River Allaughan converge in the town. To the north of town, the topography rises with the slopes of the Mullaghareirks. The N21 Limer-

ick to Tralee national primary route – a key access route in the South West transverses the town centre along Main Street, and the R524 north of Main Street connects Abbeyfeale to Glin on the Shannon Estuary, and Listowel in North Kerry. The urban form of the town has developed in a linear nature extending along the N21 and R524.



Figure 2.1: Locational Context of Abbeyfeale

## 2.2 Settlement Socio-Economic Profile

The principal demographic trends for Abbeyfeale as set out in Census data 2016 are outlined below. This data is significant in terms of determining demand for service provision, such as schools and childcare facilities, housing, health-care, employment opportunities, as well as availability of labour force, standards of education/training attained, deprivation index and disposable income. Some of the key issues identified include; only a marginal increase in population between 2011 and 2016 in Abbeyfeale, an increase in the number of young and older people and a high dependency on the manufacturing sector. Key details are outlined in Figure 2.2.

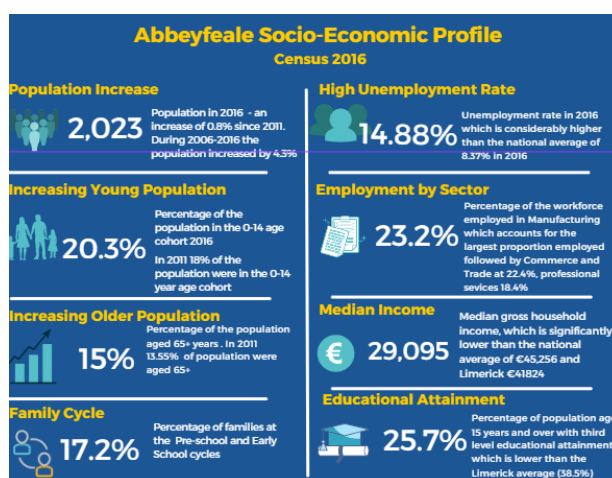


Figure 2.2 – Socio-economic profile of Abbeyfeale, Census 2016



## 2.3 Historic Settlement Context

Abbeyfeale owes its name to a Cistercian Abbey founded in Abbeyfeale in 1188 and the adjoining River Feale. The Abbey, located north of the present-day town square, founded by Donal O'Brien, King of Limerick, King of Thomond and King of Munster, has since all but disappeared, and the only identifiable remnants is that of the lower section of the Gable end of an 18th – 19th Century Thatched Chapel which is just inside the Entrance Gates to the Old Abbey Site.

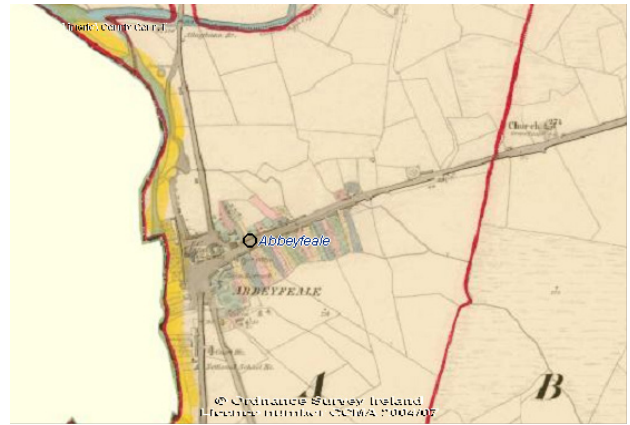


Figure 2.3: Map of Abbeyfeale, Ordnance Survey edition, 1840

This settlement subsequently developed as an important market town, administrative civic centre and logistics centre for stage coaches and rail transport in the 1800's in West Limerick. The urban form of the settlement developed in a linear pattern along the present day N21 and the R524, built circa 1787 and 1836 respectively. The railway line opened in 1880 and associated business and trade, such as pubs, a hotel, financial services and agri-business and trades operated in the town serving its agricultural hinterland. This vibrant economy contributed to the unique Stucco architectural detail by Pat McAuliffe found on many of Abbeyfeale's buildings, in the town centre.

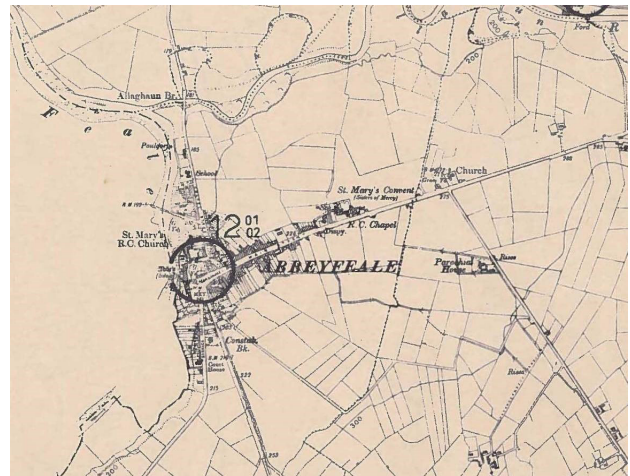


Figure 2.4: Map of Abbeyfeale, from Ordnance Survey, 6 inch Map, 1923

By the 20th century, the town continued to expand, with low density housing on the Hill Road, Clash Road and Killarney Road and businesses, such as the Mart and Kostal locating on the edge of the town. By the mid to late 20th century housing estates developed in the town to accommodate a growing population. The local community developed a substantial community park on the edge of the town on the Killarney Road by the early 21st century. The development of the Limerick Greenway to the north of Abbeyfeale, in recent years offers many opportunities for the town to grow a tourism base, in West Limerick.



Figure 2.5: Aerial Images Abbeyfeale, ISO 2006 and 2017

Abbeyfeale has a sprawling linear urban form along its approach roads. The town has retained its 18th and 19th century character with traditional façades and streetscapes. Abbeyfeale continues to perform an important civic, trade/market, healthcare, education and service function for the resident population and for the surrounding hinterlands.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 identifies Abbeyfeale as a Level 3 settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy for Limerick and recognises the importance of Abbeyfeale, having regard to its location on the Limerick – Kerry border, with good quality national and regional road connectivity and the array of high quality services available in the town, which serve its inhabitants and the wider hinterland of Counties Limerick and Kerry.

To fulfil Abbeyfeale’s role as a Level 3 settlement, the town requires consolidation of existing land uses, investment in services, infrastructure, sustainable transport opportunities, amenities and further development of local employment opportunities, which support the existing community in the area, while also providing for additional housing growth and attraction of inward migration.

The map below identifies existing housing schemes currently in Abbeyfeale categorised by those taken in charge by the Local Authority and those not in charge.

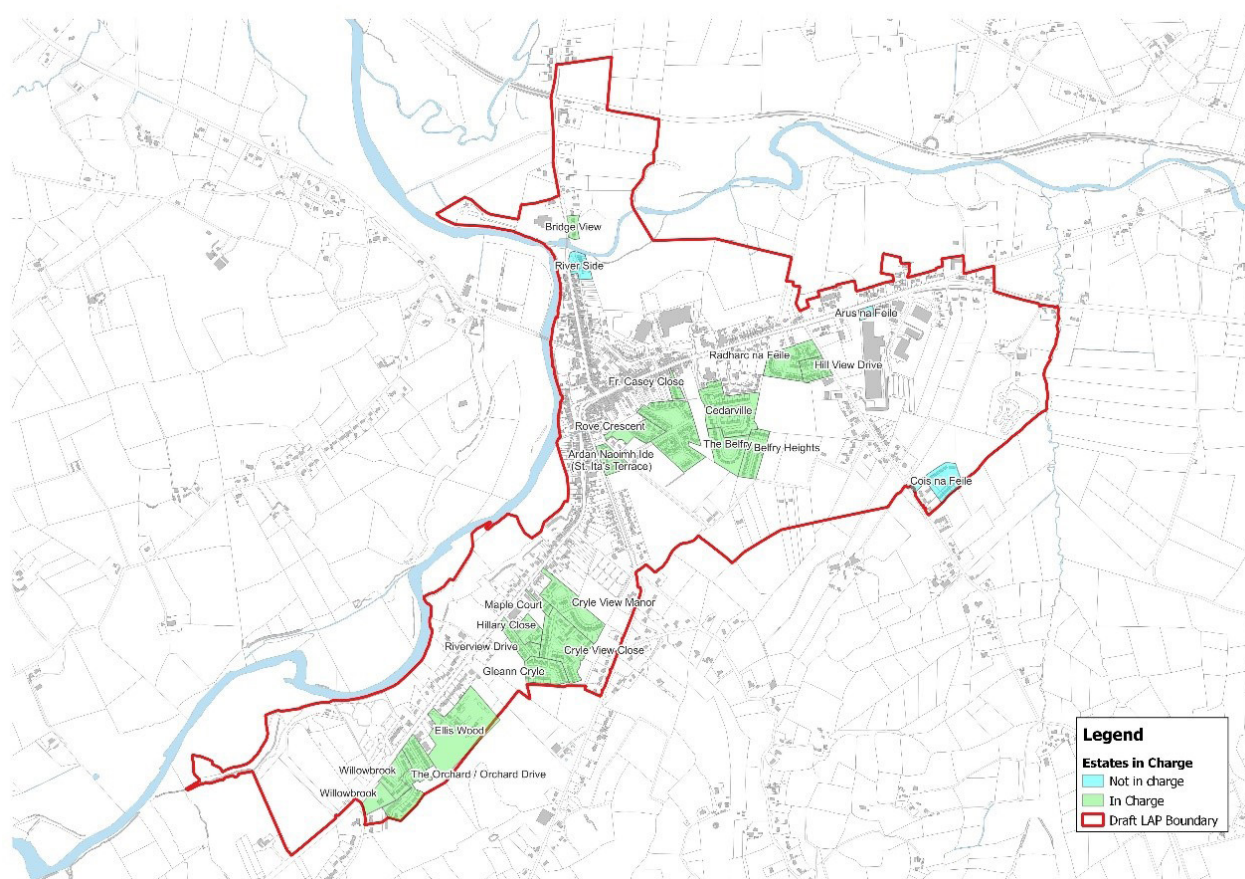


Figure 2.6: Abbeyfeale Housing Schemes

## 2.4 Strengths/Challenges/Opportunities/Threats

The SCOT Analysis is an analysis of the Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats that exist within Abbeyfeale. This assessment identifies the key issues in Abbeyfeale and the opportunities that exist to address these issues. The SCOT Analysis has helped inform the overall development strategy for the Plan Area.

<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Location on the River Feale and River Allaughan.</li> <li>•Location on N21 and R524 with good connectivity to Limerick City, Newcastle West, Listowel, Castleisland, Killarney, Glin and the Shannon Estuary.</li> <li>•High quality educational facilities – primary, post-primary, post-leaving cert/vocational/technical training.</li> <li>•Range of retail services, including community services, healthcare and professional services in the town.</li> <li>•Proximity of the town to the Limerick Greenway.</li> <li>•Rich historical built fabric and traditional streetscape.</li> <li>•Strong cultural and sporting traditions, including established festivals and community theatre space.</li> <li>•High proportion of residents who live and work in the town (51%).</li> </ul>	<b>Challenges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Limited availability of enterprise workshops space.</li> <li>•Presence of the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation designation.</li> <li>•Lack of connected open space.</li> <li>•High Unemployment rate.</li> <li>•High vacancy rate in town centre, both residential and commercial.</li> <li>•Traffic congestion and heavy traffic through the town centre.</li> <li>•Poor public realm and low quality civic open space in the town centre.</li> <li>•Limited capacity in water services infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Potential of the Limerick Greenway for tourism and economic opportunities, as well as health, active lifestyle, biodiversity.</li> <li>•Access to a range of good quality community facilities.</li> <li>•Enhanced amenities at the Abbeyfeale Town Park and better connectivity.</li> <li>•Digital, remote work opportunities and the potential of the Workbase E-Hub in the town centre.</li> <li>•Reduced congestion in the town as a result of the proposed by-pass.</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Comparatively low disposable income levels of residents living in the town.</li> <li>•Flood Risk.</li> <li>•Comparatively high unemployment rates, and low third level education attainment rate.</li> <li>•Negligible population increase 2011 – 2016.</li> </ul>

Figure 2.7: SCOT analysis of Abbeyfeale

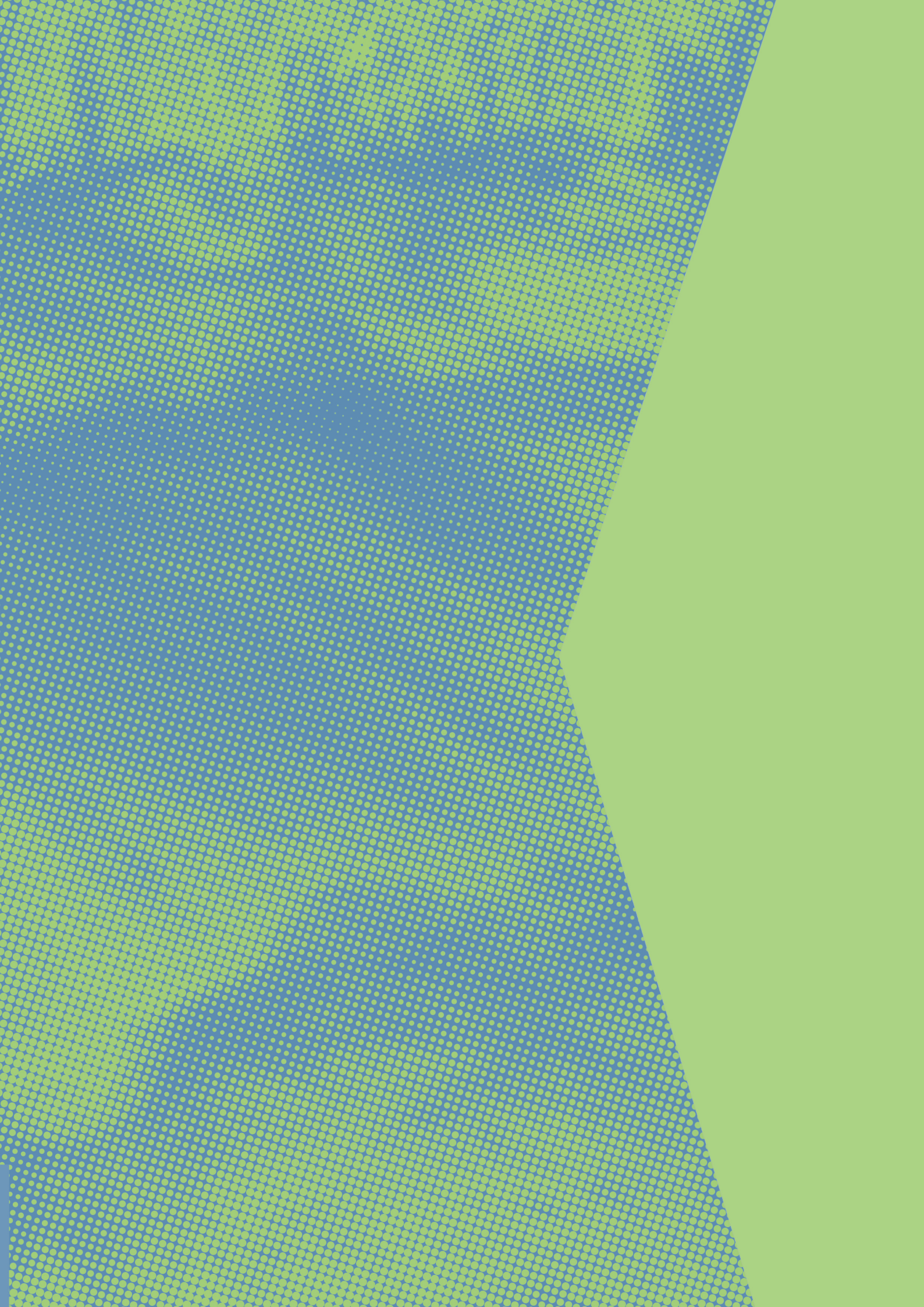


# CHAPTER 3

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### 3.1 Strategic Vision

The purpose of the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan is to set out the policies and objectives that will guide the sustainable future growth of the town to 2029 and beyond and to ensure alignment with the provisions of higher-level planning policy. The vision of the plan is to improve the local environment focusing on the 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 manner.

The strategic vision for Abbeyfeale is to fulfil the role of a Level 3 settlement as identified in the Limerick Development Plan. This will include the provision for growth in population, through a mix of high-quality residential development (choice and tenure), education and employment opportunities, sustainable mobility opportunities, a strengthened retail/commercial core for the town centre, enhanced community infrastructure, improved active lifestyles and recreational choices, while sustaining Abbeyfeale's unique heritage assets. The future development of Abbeyfeale will provide for low carbon, sustainable and consolidated growth in a coherent spatial manner.

In December 2021, Abbeyfeale was selected nationally and awarded funding to formulate a Town Centre First Plan, the initiative aims to create town centres that function as viable, vibrant and attractive locations for people to live, work and visit, while also functioning as the service, social, cultural and recreational hub for the local community. This new strategy seeks to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction and breathe new life into town centres. It provides a suite of supports and tools to help businesses and local communities deliver on their unique vision for their area. Limerick City and County Council are working with the local community to formulate a Town Centre First Plan, which will seek to revitalize Abbeyfeale and this will be incorporated into the Local Area Plan and will be at the heart of the overall development strategy for the town over the lifetime of the Local Area Plan.

### 3.2 Spatial Development Strategy

The overall development strategy for Abbeyfeale is to meet the population targets as set out in the Limerick Development Plan, by focusing growth within the settlement boundary and in doing so, assisting in the regeneration, repopulation and development of the town. The future of Abbeyfeale is one where the quality of life and wellbeing of its inhabitants are enhanced, building a resilient and sustainable compact town, that supports improved local employment and economy, protects its local culture and heritage, while supporting the town's transition to a low carbon society.

#### Overall Strategic Development Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

1. Seek the sustainable intensification and consolidation of the existing built environment, in accordance with the objectives for compact growth in higher-level spatial plans, through appropriate infill and brownfield development, supported by the necessary physical and community infrastructure.
2. Promote sustainable economic development, including enterprise and employment opportunities, while, prioritising the town centre, as the primary location for retail and services.
3. Promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport, whilst protecting and improving existing road infrastructure.
4. Protect, conserve and enhance the built environment, through promoting awareness, utilising relevant heritage legislation and ensuring high quality urban design principles are applied to all new developments, respecting the historic and architectural heritage.
5. Protect, enhance and connect areas of natural heritage, incorporate blue green infrastructure measures into developments and protect open space, while, seeking to improve the quality of life and biodiversity of the town, capitalising on climate action and flood risk measures.
6. Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles apply to all new developments.

7. Have cognisance of the Limerick Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 - 2024, and any forthcoming Climate Action Plan, that may emerge during the lifetime of this plan.

8. Guide the future development of Abbeyfeale, in accordance with the Town Centre First policy approach seeking to bring people and appropriate business/services back into the heart of Abbeyfeale through place-making, good quality urban design, and sustainable mobility as promoted by the Department of Housing, Local Government and the Heritage and the Department of Rural and Community Development.

9. Ensure the future development of Abbeyfeale supports the 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.

10. Seek opportunities with relevant stakeholders for inward investment to the town, including national funding schemes and other initiatives, as they arise.

place-making, good quality urban design and sustainable mobility options.

Abbeyfeale is identified as a Level 3 settlement in the Limerick Development Plan, with projected population growth of 566 additional persons to 2028, representing a 27.9% 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, Abbeyfeale had a population of 2,023 persons in 2016, representing a 0.8% increase on the 2011 population. Despite this negligible increase, the Planning Authority through the Core Strategy, as established by the Limerick Development Plan envisages that Abbeyfeale is capable of achieving 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, Newcastle West, Killarney/ Tralee, Listowel, Glin and the Shannon Estuary, supporting economic opportunities and the potential synergies that may develop. Abbeyfeale'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 makes assumptions with respect to population projections and allocation of population throughout Limerick. These assumptions include the additional residential units and zoned land requirements for each settlement in accordance with the NPF, the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF and the RSES. The assumed Abbeyfeale population growth allocation is an additional 566 persons to 2028 (+27.9% on the 2016 Census figure) which equates to an additional 211 residential units. For the purposes of this Local Area Plan, the projected requirement for population growth is 246 units to 2029. The provision of 246 units is determined by taking the proposed population growth per annum (35.16 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

### **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 Abbeyfeale 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 Abbeyfeale 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

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 2022 and the estimated housing unit yield of the opportunity areas identified in Chapter 4, which prioritises the town centre for redevelopment and re-use of underused lands for a mix of uses including residential.

Limerick Development Plan Additional Projected Population and Households Forecasted 2022-2028 for Abbeyfeale	+ 566 persons  + 211 residential units
Forecasted households per year	35.16 units
Forecasted households for years 2022-2029 for Abbeyfeale	246 units (35.16 x 7 year period from 2022-2029)
Vacancy - residential vacancy Town Centre Health Check 2022	21 units
Town Centre Consolidation Sites estimated unit yield (Refer to Settle- ment Capacity Matrix	62 units
Forecasted housing units required - vacancy - Town Centre Consolida- tion Sites	$246 - 83 = 163$ units
No. of new units required 2022-2029	85% as New Residential = 139 units + 25% * = 173 units 15% of 163 units as Serviced Sites = 24 units
Total Hectares Required	New Residential - 173 units @ 22uph = 7.8 ha Serviced Sites - 24 units @ 10 uph = 2.4 ha
Total Hectares	New Residential: 7.8 ha Serviced Sites: 2.4ha  <b>Total: 10.2 ha required to accommodate population growth to 2029 as New Residential and Serviced Sites</b>

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 to deliver 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 revital-

ise 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 serviced lands, which 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 Plan outlines an allocation of 85% of units to New Residential and 15% 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 permissions for residential development permitted in Abbeyfeale town, these units are outlined in Table 3.2 below. Live permissions are in place for 85 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
21/594 and ABP 31313822	St. Ita's Road Abbeyfeale West	68	44 no. houses and 24 no. apartments, all two storey in height – a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom units.	Not commenced
20/830 and 17/561	Abbeyfeale West	10	10 Serviced Sites	Not commenced
18/8013 – Part 8	Colbert Terrace	7	7 no. two storey two-bedroom units	Not commenced
Total Units Extant		85		

Table 3.2: Permission for housing development granted, but not commenced



A Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) in Chapter 10 outlines availability of key infrastructure in each of the individual sites zoned for the provision of residential development and serviced sites. The SCA identifies the infrastructure necessary to support future development along with an indicative time-frame for the delivery of critical infrastructure i.e. short, medium or long term and the costing to provide necessary infrastructure to support development.

**Policy DS 1: Core Strategy:** It is policy of the Council to:

Ensure compliance with the population projections of the Core Strategy (or any revision thereof). The Planning Authority will monitor the type of developments permitted in Abbeyfeale, including the number of residential units constructed on an annual basis.

### 3.4 Housing and Residential Development Strategy

Central to the implementation of the NPF, RSES and the Limerick Development Plan, is a focus on sustainable development across Limerick,

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, which supports the regeneration, repopulation and development of rural towns. The primary focus behind the Town Centre First Approach is to create the conditions for individuals and families to move back into the heart of the towns through place-making, high quality urban design and sustainable mobility.

This LAP seeks to balance the provision of good quality housing that meets the needs of a diverse population, in a way that makes Abbeyfeale an attractive and inviting place to live in. In this regard, 8.83 ha of lands have been zoned New Residential and 2.95ha Serviced Sites, and the development of infill opportunity sites, zoned Town Centre will also contribute to the sustainable growth of Abbeyfeale. Adequate housing provision is also essential for the creation of an environment to attract business and enterprise to Abbeyfeale.

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
3	2023	163	10.2*	3.03	7.94
			Total	10.97	

\*Refer to Table 3.1 Core Strategy Units Allocated

Table 3.3: Residential units and land quantum required in Abbeyfeale in line with the Core Strategy projections of Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 including Additional Provision Lands in line with The Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities June 2022

**Policy DS 2: Development Strategy:** It is policy of the Council to:

Deliver new residential development, in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, supporting a choice of quality housing, mixed tenure and unit size/type designed for ease of adaption to the lifecycle and universally accessible.

### **Objective H 01: Residential Development:**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Require the use of Design Briefs, Masterplans, Sustainability Statements, Social Infrastructure Assessments and any other supporting documents deemed necessary to ensure the coherent planning of residential development. Early engagement with all utility providers, including Uisce Eireann is strongly advised.
- b) No one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 10 – 15% within the lifetime of the Plan, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the settlement has adequate capacity, in terms of both physical and social infrastructure to support additional growth.
- c) Ensure all new residential layouts prioritise walking and cycling and are fully permeable for pedestrians and cyclists to access a range of local 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 and public realm.

### **Objective H 02: Residential Compact Growth:**

It is an objective of the 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, including infill, brownfield and greenfield sites.
- c) Consolidate existing development and increase existing residential density, through a range of measures, including re-use of existing buildings and infill development schemes.
- d) Ensure that in any proposed alterations to the streetscape of the town centre, 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.

## **3.4.1 Density, Housing Type and Mix**

This LAP places a strong emphasis on providing high quality residential developments with mixed type and tenure provided on brownfield, infill, vacant sites and greenfield sites. Changing demographic trends such as changing household size and formation have consequences for housing type demands and this sees an increased demand for 1 and 2 bedroomed units, and smaller units to facilitate downsizing for an increasing older population. According, to the Limerick Housing Deliv-

ery Action Plan 2022 – 2026, 77% of first choice demand requests for Local Authority accommodation in Abbeyfeale are for single or two bedroomed units. These are important considerations for future housing delivery in the town. A statement demonstrating an appropriate mix of units shall be submitted as a requirement of a planning application to demonstrate that consideration has been given by the developer to meeting this requirement in all residential applications.

The following minimum densities shall apply to residentially zoned lands in Abbeyfeale.

Zoning	Minimum Densities
New and Existing Residential	22 uph
Residential Serviced Sites	10 uph

Table 3.4: Density Standards

**Objective H 03: Density and New Residential Development:** It is an objective of the Council to:

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 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).

### 3.4.2 Serviced Low-density Sites

Ten serviced sites have been granted planning permission in Abbeyfeale West as a low-density serviced alternative to the unserviced one-off rural house in the open countryside. These individual residential plots will have access to services, such as utility connections, water and sewerage, footpaths, lighting and are within walking distance of the town centre, which demonstrates a demand for this type of development in Abbeyfeale. The LAP zones lands specifically for serviced sites, where the density shall generally be 10 housing units per hectare. Whilst individual house design on serviced sites is encouraged, the overall design of the scheme must be consistent in terms of boundary treatments and landscaping.

**Objective H 04: Serviced Sites:** It is an objective of the Council to:

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

### 3.4.3 Specialised Housing

The need for older persons' dwellings, sheltered housing, nursing homes, modular homes and residential care homes in Abbeyfeale is anticipated to grow into the future, by reason of a general aging of the population, the need to cater for those wishing to downsize and reside in proximity to services and amenities, and those in need of refugee in times of war and unrest. These facilities shall be

integrated into the established or planned residential areas, well served by appropriate levels of infrastructure, and within walking distance of shopping and other community services, public transport and open space. They should be designed based on the principles of universal design and accessibility for all. St. Ita's Voluntary Housing provides 23 residential units in Abbeyfeale, beside The Glórach Theatre, off Convent Street for independent living for elderly and vulnerable adults.

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. The current Traveller Accommodation Plan does not identify a need for specialised traveller accommodation in Abbeyfeale, at present. Objective HO O15 of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 outlines an 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 updates.

### 3.4.4 Social Housing 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. The Housing Delivery Plan for Limerick 2022 – 2026 identifies Abbeyfeale as having a social housing requirement of 48 units to be delivered by 2026. 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. According to the Housing Delivery Plan, the focus is on refurbishing vacant dwellings through the Buy and Renew Scheme, or leasing through the Repair and Release Scheme and the activation of the unfinished units at Cois na Feile. The Council works in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Approved Housing Bodies to deliver and manage social housing requirements. The Council will continue to seek residential units in Abbeyfeale for affordable housing through advance purchase arrangements with developers and other means, as opportunities arise.



**Objective H 05: Social and Affordable Housing:** It is an objective of the Council to:

Promote the provision of social and affordable housing in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended), Objective HO13 of the Limerick Development Plan 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.

# CHAPTER 4

## TOWN CENTRE FIRST

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## 4.1 Introduction

The Limerick Development Plan acknowledges the challenges facing rural communities and the important role that rural towns play as economic and social centres for their hinterlands. Recent government policy publications, such as Town Centre First 2022, Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland 2021, Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025 and Vacant Homes Action Plan 2023 recognise the debilitating impact of vacancy on a town's prosperity, economic performance, public realm, while also stifling inward investment and general depletion of the attractiveness of a town to live in, work in, invest in or visit. Government policy and the higher-level spatial plans seek to create vibrant communities in urban settlements, including smaller towns, such as Abbeyfeale to encourage families back into living in the heart of towns and the town centre functions as the location to do business in and visit.

This Plan aligns with higher-level spatial plans seeking future development in settlements on the principle of the '10 Minute' Town concept. This urban development theory promotes a balanced, compact settlement form, with efficient transport links (including public transport, walking and cycling) between employment, education, services, business and residential locations, facilitating easier circulation and convenient mobility within the town. Spin-off positive impacts include active lifestyles, improved environmental quality and public safety, opportunities for improved public realm and social interaction. It can bring new life and footfall, contribute to the viability of services, shops and public transport. It is about creating connected communities where a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking, cycle or public transport timeframes from their homes to destinations that meet their daily needs.

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. Abbeyfeale was one of the 26 towns selected nationally to develop its unique Town Centre First Plan.

The Town Centre First policy recognises that every town is unique. It lays the foundation for each town to develop, at a local level, taking account of their own opportunities and challenges. The Town Centre First Plan will be driven by the local community and businesses as part of a Town Team who will be supported by the Council, in the implementation of the Plan. Funding will be available through a number of existing funding mechanisms, such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Town and Village Renewal Schemes and other funds as they arise.

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/ village through the development of a Town Centre First Plan with the support of their Local Authority. A Town Team comprising of representatives of local residents, business people, community/voluntary groups and other stakeholders with the support of the Local Authority has been formulated and have been informing the formulation of this Local Area Plan and will follow through with the all-important actions to make their area a better place to live, work and visit.

In this regard, the Council have already been working on securing funding to enhance towns and villages throughout Limerick. The Council has a proactive regime in place, which aims to tackle the issues of dereliction and vacancy throughout Limerick. A dedicated team within the Council work on a continuous basis seeking to reduce vacancy and dereliction, through the various tools available, including the Derelict Sites Act 1990 to tackle derelict, vacant and underutilised properties. The Council were successful in securing Rural Regeneration and Development Funding under Call 2 in 2019/2020, receiving grant approval of €2.5 million, which sought to address the serious issue of dereliction and vacancy in town and village cores, in 12

no. settlements across Co. Limerick. Abbeyfeale was one of the towns selected in this application process.

The aim of the project is to bring derelict properties in the settlements, back into use, with the main emphasis on the delivery of housing. The funding received included financing the purchase

or compulsory acquisition of derelict properties or brownfield lands that can be repurposed for housing or repurposed for an alternative use, where housing cannot be accommodated. The benefits of this scheme in Abbeyfeale are evident and the Team continue to work through the various mechanisms that are available to tackle dereliction.



Figure 4.1: An example of a property acquired and redeveloped on Convent Street in Abbeyfeale

Abbeyfeale has also benefitted from funding secured under funding schemes, including:

- The acquisition of the former Provisional Bank and its redevelopment as a e-work hub WorkBase on Main Street;
- The formulation and progression of the Traffic Management Scheme for the town;
- The acquisition of the former Bank of Ireland in the Square.

Furthermore, the Council are currently progressing a number of other projects that will be delivered, subject to funding, which will enhance the town of Abbeyfeale, such as the further enhancement of the Greenway facilities and connection of the Greenway to the town centre.

**Policy TCF P1: Town Centre:** It is policy of the Council to:

- a) Support the implementation of the Town Centre First Plan for Abbeyfeale, in collaboration with the local community and the Town Team, in accordance with the Town Centre First Programme, aligned to the commitments of the Programme for Government, national policies and higher-level spatial plans.
- 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 Abbeyfeale 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 developments are sensitive to the town's rich architectural heritage and apply the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied in the town centre, and the opportunity areas identified in this Plan.

e) Ensure development proposals give proper consideration to the urban design criteria of site context, built heritage, climate resilience, connectivity, inclusivity, variety, efficiency, distinctiveness, layout, public realm, adaptability, privacy and amenity, parking and detailed design.

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

This Plan promotes the 'Town Centre First' approach with a focus on creating a 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, small local shops or creative workspaces, the Plan seeks to consolidate the town rather than

encourage sprawl. In addition, the Plan supports investment in high quality pedestrian/cyclist's friendly public realm and attractive public spaces, where people can gather socially. The provisions of the Traffic Management Scheme will support improved connectivity in the town in particular on Main Street with a new pedestrian link to the public car park and Collins Park.

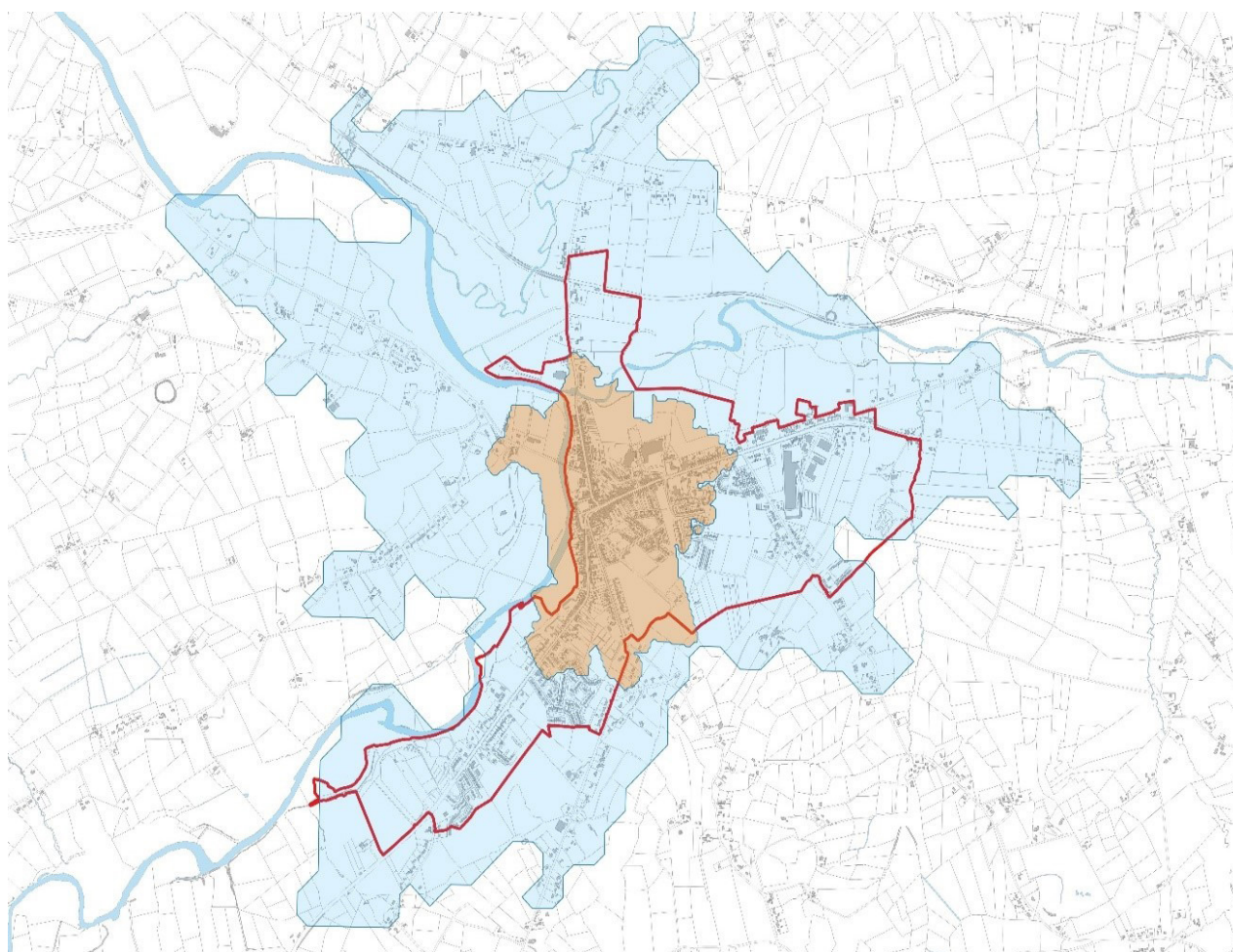


Figure 4.2: 10-minute walking and cycling network from Abbeyfeale town centre

**Policy TCF P2: Town Centre First and '10 Minute' Town Concept** - It is policy of the Council to:

a) Implement the 10 Minute Town Concept in Abbeyfeale 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 assessment 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 Abbeyfeale's town centre, over a long period. Comparative figures are outlined below, which show some progress made between 2013 and 2022, however both residential and commercial vacancy remain very high in Abbeyfeale. A preliminary building survey of the Town Centre in 2013 for the purposes of the Abbeyfeale Business and Retail Incentive Scheme highlighted high vacancy rates for commercial/ retail units and residences. In 2023, Limerick City and County Council carried out a more detailed Town Centre Health Check in Abbeyfeale in August 2022 as a useful tool to establish a baseline, to monitor

and inform the vacancy in the town. The Health Check establishes the use of each building and takes account of vacancy and dereliction. The challenges to address vacancy are varied and complex and there are a number of sources of data, in this regard, including the Census and Geodirectory to analyse vacancy. However, these can suggest different estimates due to different definitions of vacancy, data collection methodologies and different geographic boundaries. Nevertheless, the Census and Geodirectory reflect the same trends as the Council baseline data of very high vacancy on residential and the commercial/retail vacancy in Abbeyfeale town centre.

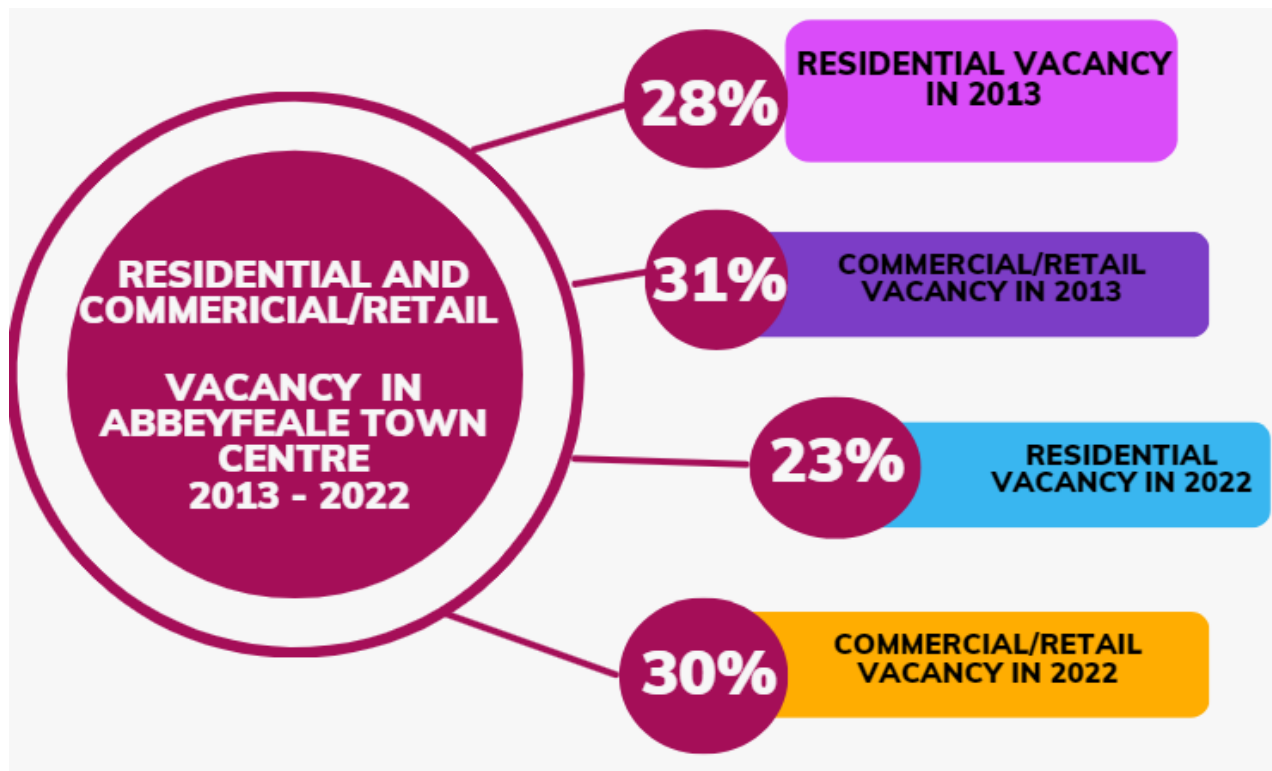


Figure 4.3: Comparative Analysis of Residential and Commercial/Retail Vacancy, Abbeyfeale Town Centre 2013 - 2022

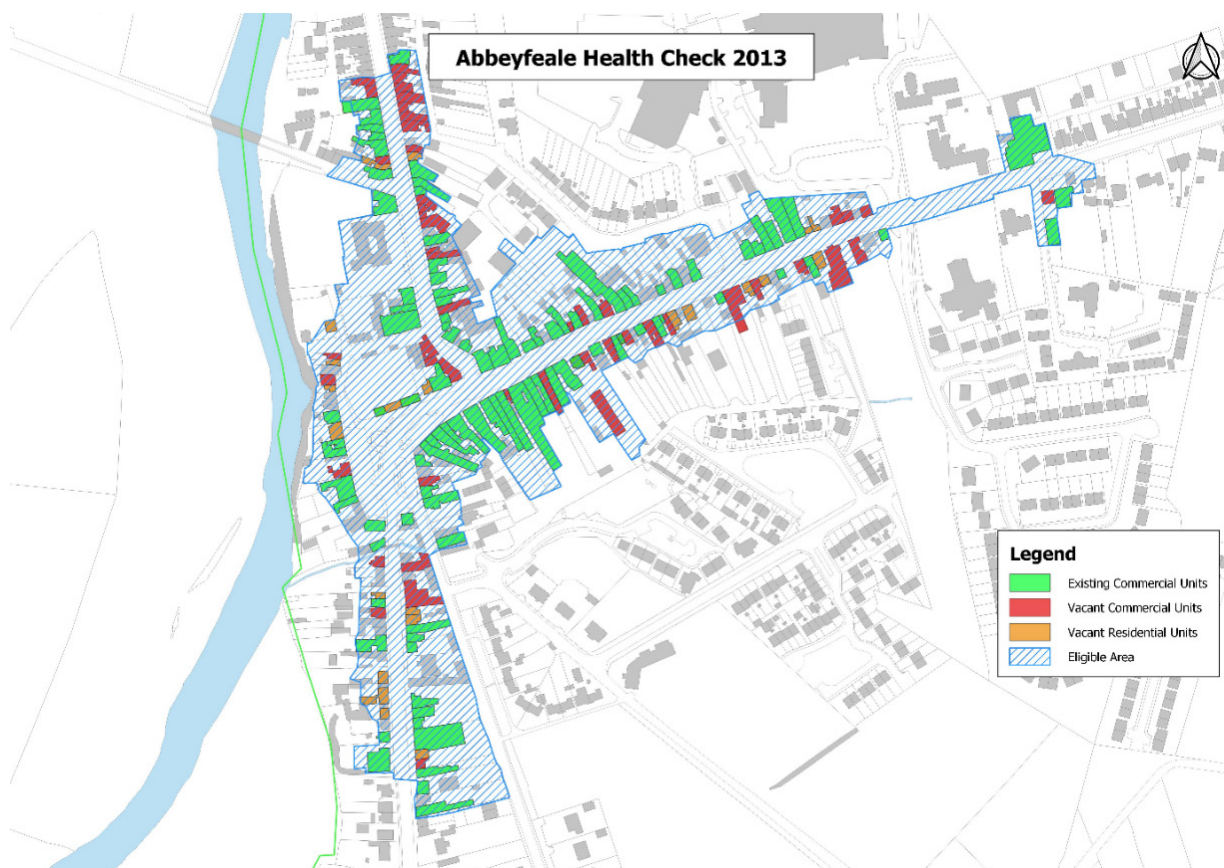


Figure 4.4: Business and Retail Incentive Vacancy Survey 2013

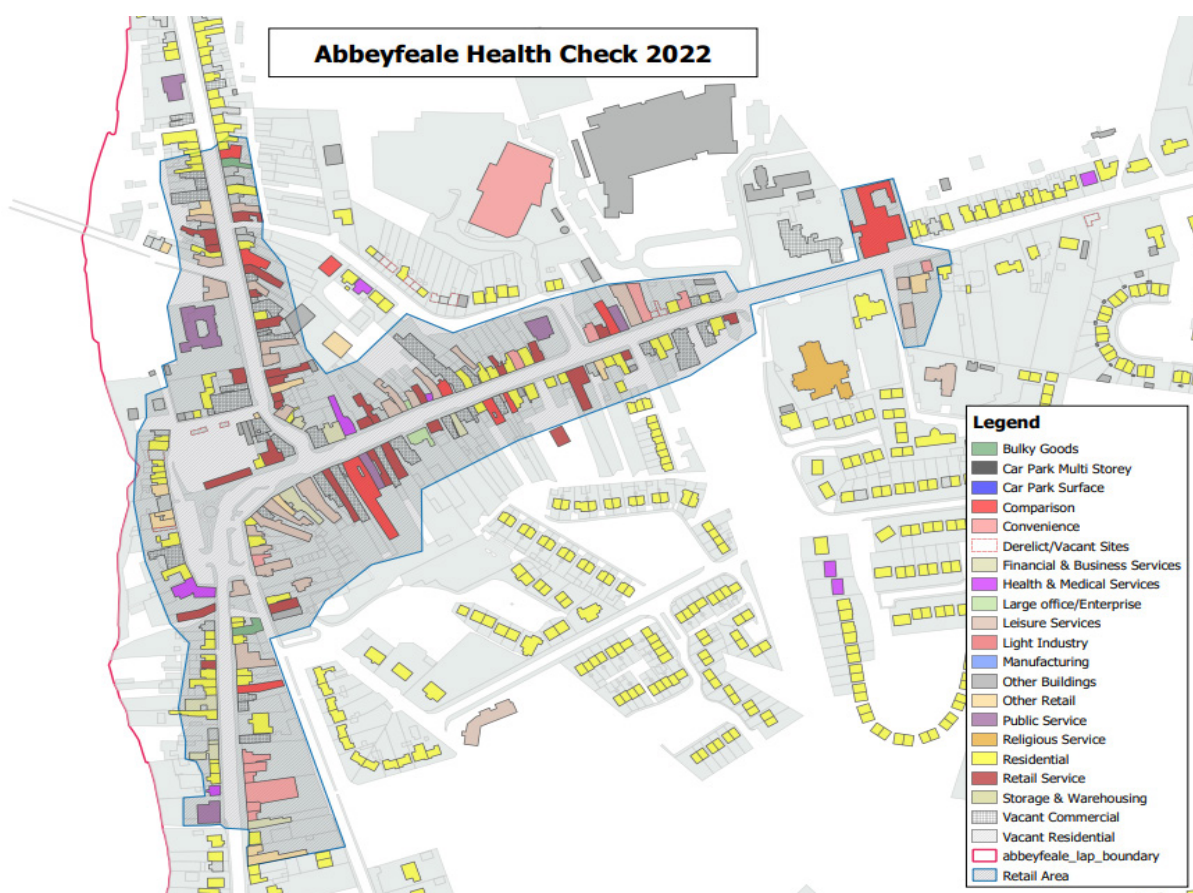


Figure 4.5: Town Centre Health Check August 2022

**Policy TCF P3: Vacancy-** It is policy of the Council to:

a) Promote and facilitate the re-use of under-utilised or vacant lands/buildings in Abbeyfeale through the active land management mechanisms, under the Derelict Sites Act, 1990 (as amended), the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (for vacant sites), Residential Zoned Land Tax and also guided by key Government policies, such as Town Centre First, Our Rural Future, and Housing for All and any replacements

thereof. The Council will engage with property owners to advise on remedial measures and give guidance on schemes and supports available to 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 Abbeyfeale's town centre.

## 4.4 Retail and Commercial

According, to the 2022 Town Centre Health Check undertaken by the Council, there are 82 businesses operating in the town centre, but 30% of commercial/residential units are vacant. Retail services account for the highest percentage of business (24%).

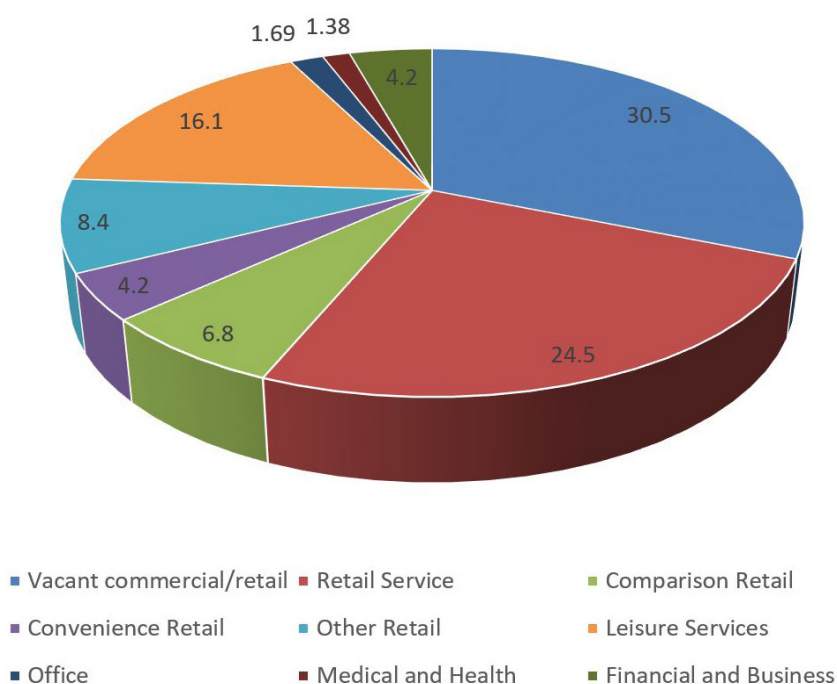


Figure 4.6: Percentage breakdown of Business in Abbeyfeale Town Centre, August 2022

Unfortunately, according to GeoDirectory, Abbeyfeale was amongst the 15 towns in Munster with the highest retail vacancy rates 30% in Q2, 2022. The retail and commercial sectors are pivotal to the revitalisation of the town, as they determine foot-fall, which in turn has positive spin-offs in terms of social interaction, cultural and civic activities, perceptions of safety, due to the presence of more people, improved visual appearance, community

pride and place-making, and general ambiance of the town.

The Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 – 2028 designates Abbeyfeale as a Tier 3, Level 1 Service Town. Policy ED 14 Town Centres in the Limerick Development Plan state that for Abbeyfeale as a Tier 3 Level 1 Town, it is the policy of the Council to



a) Support the improvement of retail facilities so as to improve the service they provide to their local catchment population; b) Encourage the provision of tourism and visitor orientated retail provision to capitalise on the inherent potential in this centre. The Council supports the sequential approach for the provision of retail as promoted by Government policy and the Retail Strategy, when assessing planning applications. Out-of-centre locations for retail business and services are generally not permitted in efforts to consolidate the existing retail centre, encourage the reuse of vacant units within the centre and provide services close to the existing development.

The LAP anticipates that additional retail development in Abbeyfeale will be achieved through the redevelopment of vacant units or the change of use of existing units. All retail development will be subject to compliance with the Retail Strategy which forms part of the Limerick Development Plan.

**Policy RL 3: Retail Strategic Policy:** It is policy of the Council to:

To support the sustainable long-term retail growth of Abbeyfeale as a Tier 3 Level 1 Small Town, in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan and the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 – 2028.

**Objectives RL 01: Retail Development:** It is an objective of the Council to:

Enhance the vitality and viability of Abbeyfeale as a retail service centre and to improve the quantity and quality of retail provision in the town by:

- a) Emphasising the town centre as the primary shopping location.
- b) Encouraging the upgrade and expansion of existing retail units and the development of new units in the town centre.
- c) Ensuring that proposals with retail development elements comply with the provision of the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick 2022 – 2028 in relation to site suitability and the sequential

approach and ensure proposals which would undermine the vitality and viability of Abbeyfeale town centre will not be permitted.

d) Encourage proposals at ground floor level within the town core for commercial uses.

e) 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.

f) Encourage the use of upper floors in retail premises for commercial or residential uses.

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

h) Encourage the upgrade and 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.

#### **4.5 Opportunity Areas in the town centre**

The purpose of the Opportunity Areas identified by this Plan is to encourage the restoration, consolidation and improvement of these potential sites for the long-term benefit of Abbeyfeale Town Centre. Appropriate development is needed to enhance the attractiveness of town centre living and the range of economic, social and environmental benefits this brings. It also needs to reinforce the approach to community growth by directing future investment and the location of urban development inwards, concentrating future living communities and jobs centrally and thereby promoting further investment in the public realm in order to create a distinctive place.

**Objective TCF 02: Opportunity Areas:** It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Encourage and support the appropriate and sustainable development or redevelopment where appropriate of lands, areas and buildings identified as having development potential in line with the principles set out in opportunities sites outlined below.

b) Ensure that new development in the town centre and in particular the opportunity areas and buildings comprise the highest of qualitative and design standards, complimenting the existing historical built fabric, or national heritage, sustaining Abbeyfeale, as a town in which to live, work, invest in and do business.

The inherent potential of the town centre to provide an attractive lifestyle choice needs to be actively pursued, particularly for the younger and older sectors of the community who are often not so concerned with personal open space or provision for private cars. To successfully deliver town centre living opportunities, developments need to provide a variety of well-designed homes and businesses in good neighbourhood settings, in walkable distance of key facilities, in close proximity to high quality urban spaces, and with easy access to the natural environment.

The Opportunity Areas are well-connected to and compliment the significant transportation and public realm enhancements proposed as part of the Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Scheme. The sites are located within close walking distance of the town centre and other key facilities and amenities. Developers are strongly advised at an early stage to engage with the planning authority and avail of a pre-planning meeting to discuss their proposals.

Indicative layouts for each of the identified areas are as follows:

**- Opportunity Area 1**

Backland development - North of Main Street

**- Opportunity Area 2**

Backland development - South of Main Street (east)

**- Opportunity Area 3**

Backland development - South of Main Street (west)

**- Opportunity Area 4**

Old Cinema Site

**- Opportunity Area 5**

Land between Grove Crescent and Collins Park

**- Opportunity Area 6**

Link between Killarney Road and Pound Lane

**- Opportunity Area 7**

Connecting with the Limerick Greenway

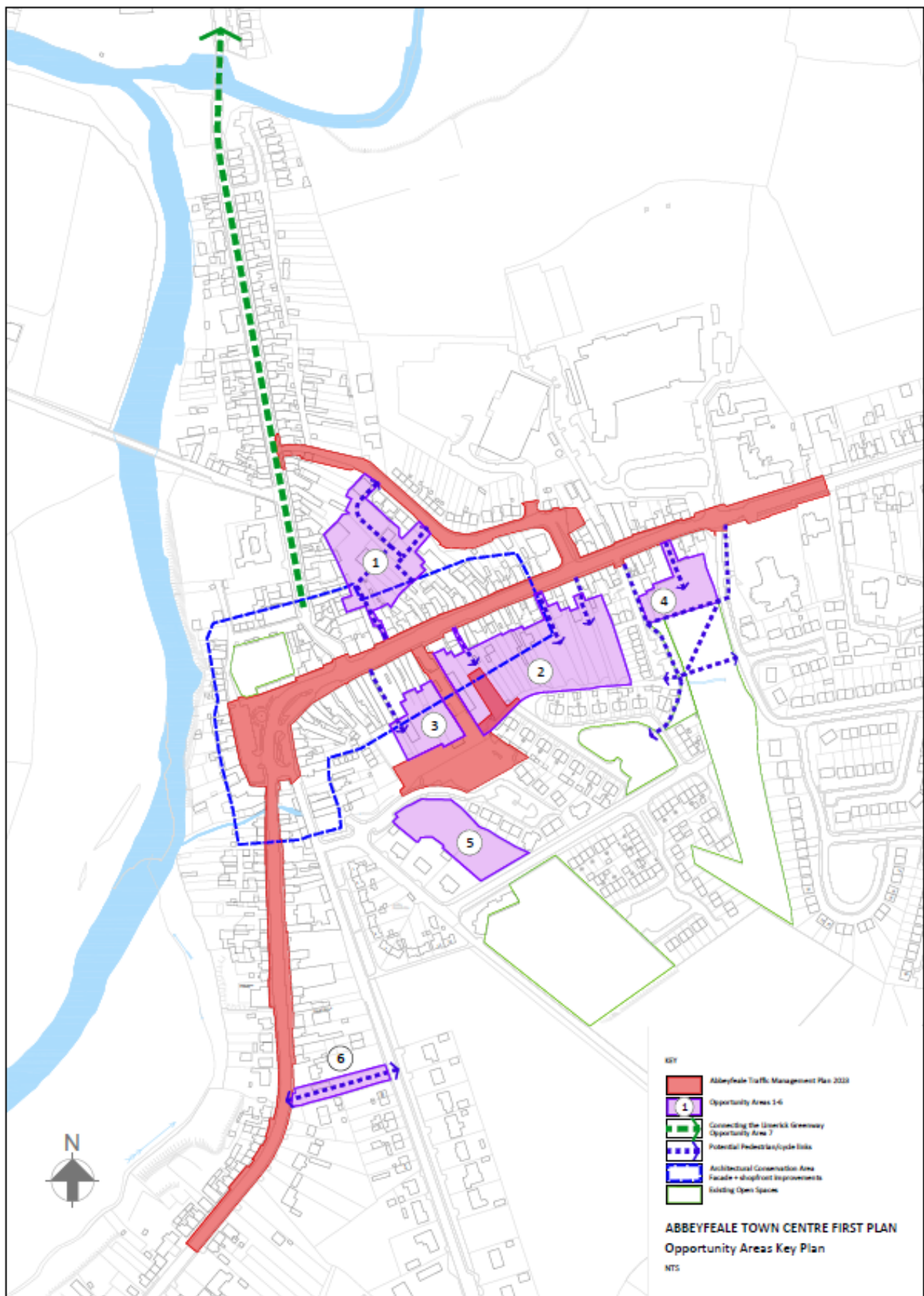


Fig 4.7: Opportunities sites in Abbeyfeale – with associated Traffic Management Scheme



## Opportunity Area 1 – Backland development - North of Main Street

This backland site is located to the rear of Main Street and New Street. Pedestrian access to the site is possible via a laneway from Main Street adjoining Murphy's Bar and has two rear shared access points onto Colbert Terrace. Much of the site is presently in use as a tile centre and associated storage yard.

Given its location the site presents considerable opportunity to allow for improved pedestrian permeability and town centre consolidation through securing a high-density mixed-use scheme.



Aerial view of general area



Laneway entry from Main Street



Entry 1 from Colbert Terrace



Entry 2 from Colbert Terrace



Existing plan

The area is zoned Town Centre.

Approx. site area = 0.57ha



Concept Proposals (Indicative only)

Proposed Main Features:

1. Ground floor commercial with apartments above
2. Parking court
3. Low rise commercial
4. Laneway upgrade and pedestrian link
5. Walk/cycle way link
6. Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Scheme Proposals



## Opportunity Area 2 – Backland development - South of Main Street (east)

This large backland area presents considerable opportunity for creating multiple redevelopment opportunities within the heart of the town centre. This area is currently in use as under-utilised backlands to Main Street and consists of several narrow plots, bounded to the south by the Council owned public carpark and Collins Park housing estate.

The development would allow for town centre expansion that includes a range of housing types and new commercial uses, with a focus on a new urban civic square, fronted by retail development and over the counter commercial services where possible. A pedestrian street is proposed linking the new urban civic square and Main Street. Residential developments in the form of family town-

houses and apartments could front the through streets. The new urban form should promote pedestrian scale and permeability, with vehicle access restricted to shared space treatment and Homezones. Pedestrian links to Main Street and to a possible future public park located on the vacant strip of land between Collins Park housing estate and Cedarville/Belfry housing estates will be encouraged.

Overall any proposed development of this area would require plot amalgamation and the co-operation of multiple landowners. The proposal would have to demonstrate a well-planned, integrated scheme for the redevelopment of the entire area.



The lands are zoned Town Centre

Site Area: 1.05ha



Fr. Casey Close, cul-de-sac 1



Fr. Casey Close, cul-de-sac 2



View of backlands from Collins Park





Concept Proposals (Indicative only)

### Proposed main features:

1. Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Proposals – Grove Crescent link and car park
2. Terraced residential, family units fronting onto new Grove Crescent link
3. Feature end block with ground floor retail and upper floor apartments
4. Commercial (e.g. ‘over-the-counter’, business start-up, small retail) with upper floor apartments
5. Commercial business/enterprise units
6. Shared space/Home zone
7. Pedestrian links to Main Street
8. Public square
9. Laneway upgraded to service road
10. Indicative one-way vehicle circulation from Fr. Casey Close
11. Pedestrian/cycle links across public open space to Cedarville



Example of residential scheme with other compatible uses in backlands site, Westport, Co. Mayo



Enclosure of space creating pedestrian scale Cork County Council Making Places: A design guide for residential estate development



Small scale mixed-use infill



Contemporary courtyard housing can provide clear, liveable family spaces in the town centre - Cluain Padraig, Westport, Co. Mayo: Urban Design Manual



Indicative phasing of development by plot amalgamation





#### Indicative Yield

Residential (subject to building type design)

Block 2.1a: 3-storey, 150sq.m.  
Ground floor retail/commercial  
3no. 1-bed first floor apartments (av. 50sq.m./ea)  
2no. 2-bed second floor apartments (av. 75sq.m./ea)

Block 2.1b: 3-storey, 200sq.m.  
Ground floor retail/commercial  
4no. 1-bed first floor apartments (av. 50sq.m./ea)  
2no. 2-bed second floor apartments (av. 75sq.m./ea)  
1no. 1-bed second floor apartment (av. 50sq.m./ea)

Block 2.1c: 2.5 storey, 190sq.m.  
4no. 3/4-bed townhouses (av. 110sq.m./ea)

Block 2.2a: 2.5-storey, 170sq.m.  
3no. 3/4-bed townhouses (av. 110sq.m./ea)

Block 2.2b: 2.5-storey, 215sq.m.  
4no. 3/4-bed townhouses (av. 110sq.m./ea)

Block 2.2c: 3-storey, 375sq.m.  
Ground floor retail/commercial  
8no. 1-bed first floor apartments (av. 47sq.m./ea)  
5no. 2-bed second floor apartments (av. 75sq.m./ea)

Block 2.3: 2.5-storey, 280sq.m.  
5no. 3/4-bed townhouses (av. 110sq.m./ea)



### Opportunity Area 3 – Backland development - South of Main Street (west)



Existing Site Plan

The site is zoned for Town Centre.

Approx. site area = 0.26ha.



View from Grove Crescent



Concept Proposals (indicative only)

#### Proposed main features:

1. Terraced residential, family units fronting onto new Grove Crescent link
2. Feature end block with ground floor retail and upper floor apartments
3. Commercial business/enterprise units
4. Indicative Heavenly Gift commercial extension
5. Hotel car park
6. Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Proposals – Grove Crescent car park

Opportunity Area 4: Old Cinema Site

The former cinema located towards the eastern end of Main Street has been derelict since the 1980's. In 2013 a local 'tidy town' group carried out improvement works to the façade. The building is a Protected Structure and entered onto the NIAH Building Survey of Ireland (ref. 21833021):

Detached three-bay, three-storey Art Deco style former cinema, built c.1940. Its symmetrical design includes towering pilasters which coupled with an

angular parapet wall creates a sense of increased height to this impressive façade.

Adjoining properties in the block include O'Tobins garage, also with a distinctive angular facade, with single storey residential adjoining.

An extensive rectangular under-utilised open space extends southwards behind the block to Collins Park.



Existing Plan

Lands are zoned Town Centre to the front of the site and Open Space and Recreation to the rear of the site.

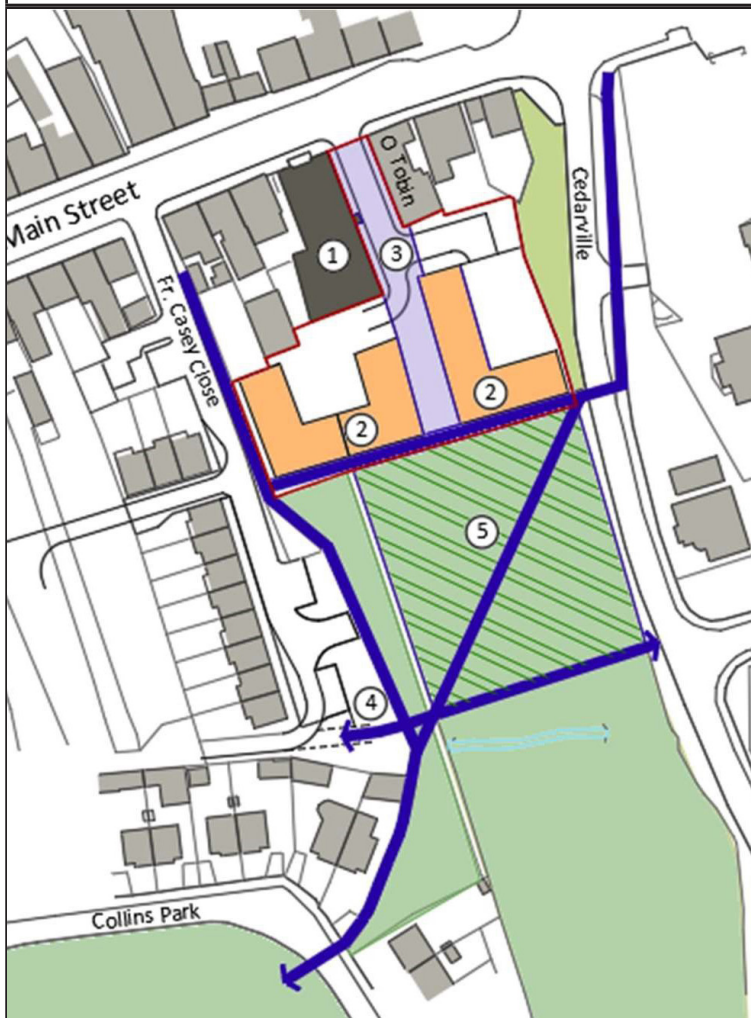
Approx. site area: 0.25ha



View towards site from Fr. Casey Close



The cinema frontage and O'Tobins garage



Concept proposals (Indicative only)

### Proposed main Features:

1. Existing cinema building requiring re-purposing for community and/or leisure uses
2. Commercial business/enterprise units overlooking public open space
3. Shared priority access route from Main Street
4. Pedestrian/cycle links to Fr. Casey Close, Opportunity Area 2 and Collins Park
5. Active recreation facilities as part of public open space upgrade



## Opportunity Area 5: Land between Grove Crescent and Collins Park



Existing site plan

The lands are zoned residential in the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029

Site area: 0.38ha



View towards site from Grove Crescent



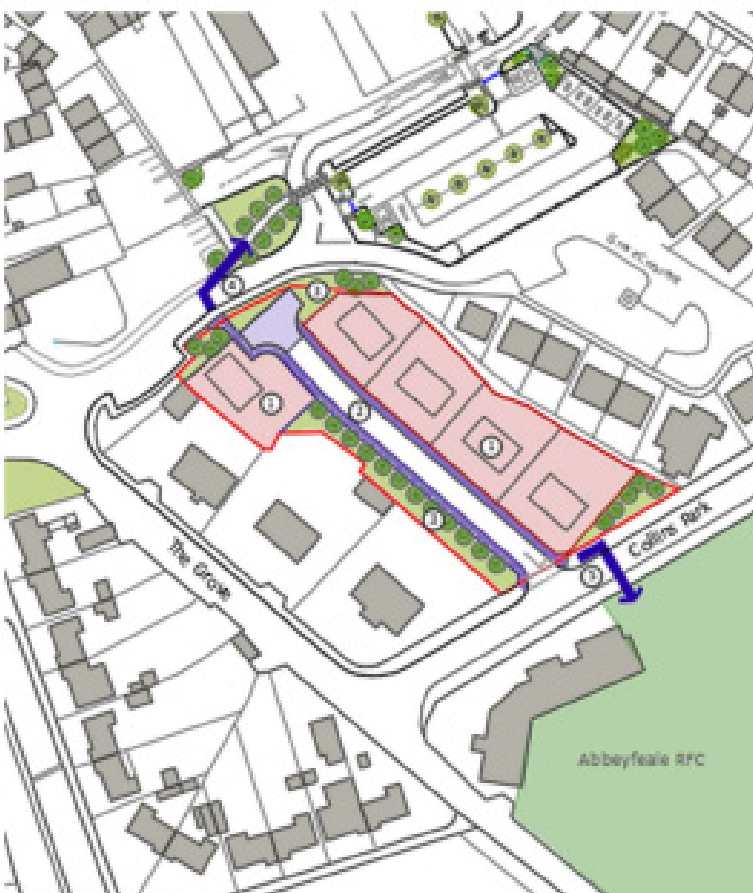
View of site from Collins Park



Concept Plan A

### Concept A proposed main features:

1. 6no. traditional semi-detached houses on average size plots (c. 250sq.m.)
2. 1no. detached one-off house
3. 2-way through service road
4. Open space
5. Pedestrian link via Grove car park to Main Street and Collins Park/Cedarville
6. Pedestrian link to sports ground



Concept Plan B

### Concept B proposed main features:

1. Larger size serviced plots (c. 450sq.m.) for 5no. single one-off self-build houses
2. 2-way cul-de-sac
3. Open space
4. Pedestrian link via Grove car park to Main Street and Collins Park/Cedarville
5. Pedestrian link to sports ground

Opportunity Area 6: Link between Killarney Road and Pound Lane



Site identified for the proposed Link Road and is zoned Existing Residential

Site Area: 0.13ha

Existing Site Plan



Entry from N21 Killarney Road





### Proposed main features:

1. Two-way Link Road with foot-paths each side (subject to geometric junction design)
2. N21 Abbeyfeale Traffic Management upgrade proposals
3. Landscape margin with tree planting and wildflower verge

## Opportunity Area 7: Connecting with the Limerick Greenway

The 40km Greenway in Limerick follows the old Limerick to Tralee railway line, providing an off-road cycling and walking route that can be accessed through one of six entry points. Starting in Rathkeale, the route passes through Ardagh, Newcastle West, Barnagh, Templeglantine and Abbeyfeale in Limerick and continues onto Listowel in Co. Kerry. The Abbeyfeale railway station was once one of the busiest stops on the Limerick to Tralee railway, sitting on the border between Kerry and Limerick as the system was expanded in 1880.

The Plan seeks to deliver a safe walkway/cycleway connection of the Limerick Greenway to Abbeyfeale Town Centre, to promote sustainable mobility and to capitalise on the tourism potential of Abbeyfeale. The Council are currently examining options for a safe connection to the Limerick Greenway from Abbeyfeale Town Centre.



Railway Road towards Abbeyfeale



Railway Bar and Greenway Bridge



Allaghoun River and bridge



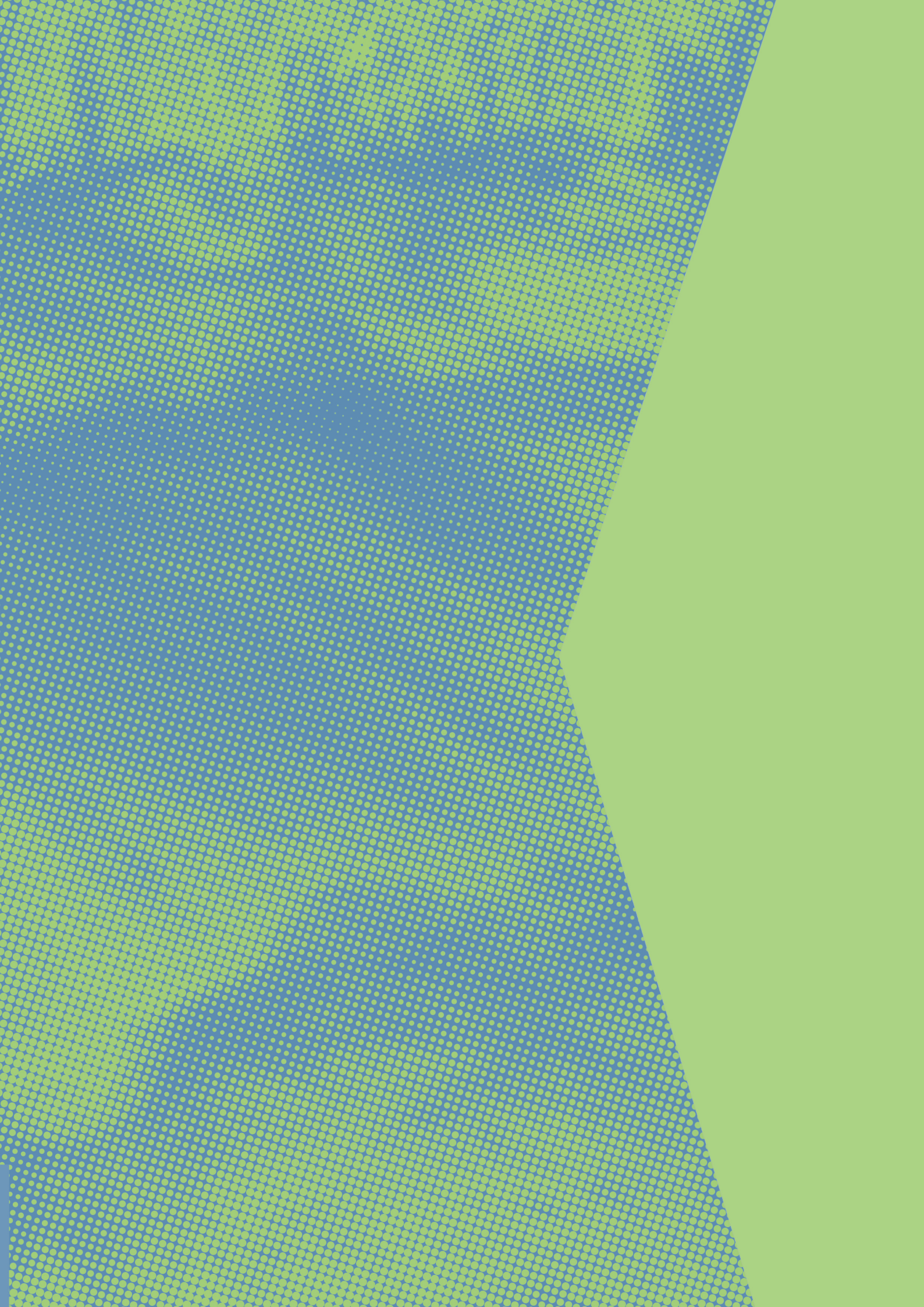
New Street looking north

# CHAPTER 5

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

<u>5.1</u>	<u>Community and Education Facilities</u>	<u>54</u>
<u>5.2</u>	<u>Parks, Walkways, Open Space and Recreation</u>	<u>56</u>

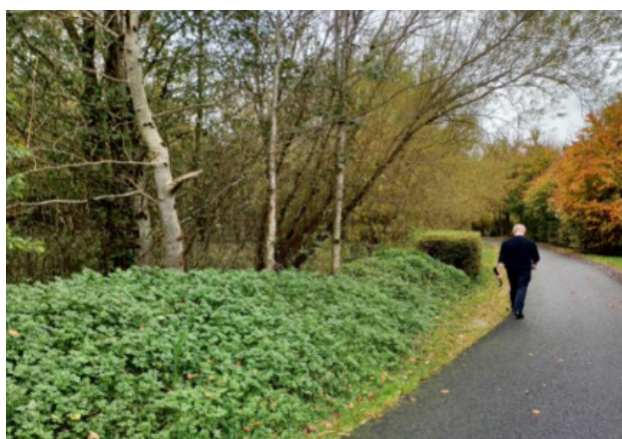






Community infrastructure of social, sporting, educational, and amenity value are crucial to provide opportunities for inclusion of all community members and provides benefits to health and helps attract inward investment. An Age Friendly Strategy for Limerick was adopted in 2015 and this commits to improving key areas of infrastructure service, information and overall social response to older persons needs and aims to improve overall quality of life. Abbeyfeale Community Council published the Abbeyfeale Community Enhancement Plan 2015 to provide a forum for the local community to express their vision of how they would like Abbeyfeale to develop. The overall vision for the people living and working within the community could be described as follows: ***A clean, natural, vibrant, safe, attractive Town where people are encouraged to visit, live and create business opportunities.***

The Council has had regard to this document in the formulation of the LAP. The Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023 - 2029 provides policy support for expansion of existing community infrastructure and development of new services in Abbeyfeale to meet the needs of all sectors of the community. This Plan zones 12.57 ha for community and educational facilities.



## **Policy C1: Community Infrastructure, Recreation and Open Space Strategic Policy:** It is policy of the Council to:

Support the provision of a broad range of high quality social/community, educational, health-care and recreational facilities and infrastructure in Abbeyfeale.

### **5.1 Community and Education Facilities**

The provision of good quality educational and childcare facilities is important to support the development of sustainable communities and facilitate economic development in Abbeyfeale. Abbeyfeale has a range of educational facilities, including childcare, pre-school/early learning, two primary schools, a post-primary school and a vocational/post-leaving cert training campus. In the Census 2016, 20% of the population in Abbeyfeale were aged 0-14 years. This was an increase of 2% from the 2011 Census. According the 2016 Census, 25.7% of the population in the town has attained a third level qualification, which is lower than the average for Limerick.

Scoil Mhuire, known locally as St. Mary's Boys National School, is located on Church Street, and in the school year 2022/23 had an enrolment of 97 pupils. Scoil Mhathair Dé Girls National School is located on Convent Street and had an enrolment of 103 pupils for the school year 2022/23. The post-primary school Coláiste Íde agus Iosef is located beside Scoil Mhathair Dé on Convent Street and has an enrolment of 678 for the 2022/23 academic year, attracting students from Limerick, North Kerry and North Cork. For further education and training opportunities the College of FET – Abbeyfeale Campus at Mountmahon offers a wide range of courses to advance into employment or further education opportunities.

Figure 5.1: Abbeyfeale Town Park



Figure 5.2 Abbeyfeale College

The HSE provides a Primary Care Clinic on Main Street, Abbeyfeale. St. Ita's Voluntary Housing and Daycare Centre is located off Convent Street, beside the Glórach Theatre, and provides a range of services to the elderly and vulnerable adults. Abbeyfeale Garda Station is located on Convent Street and Abbeyfeale Fire Service is located on Main Street, both important community services in the town.

According to the 2016 Census, 15% of the population were aged 65+, which was an increase of 1.5% on the 2011 Census figure. Limerick City and County Council's "Age Friendly Limerick Strategy 2015-2020" commits to improving key areas of infrastructure, services, information and an overall social response to older person's issues. Limerick City and County Council in conjunction with Healthy Limerick, which is informed by the national policy, Healthy Ireland: A National Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025 seeks to enhance Limerick from a health and wellbeing perspective. The Council has regard to the National Positive Aging Strategy.

The primary role of the Planning Authority with regard to community facilities and services 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 community services.

**Objective C 01: Community 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) Support and facilitate the development and expansion of health service infrastructure by the Health Services Executive and other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of appropriate healthcare facilities and the provision of community-based care facilities at appropriate locations, subject to proper planning consideration and

the principles of sustainable development.

e) Require future development of new community facilities to generally meet the following criteria of the 10 Minute Town Concept, generally located within 800m walking/cycling distance of the town centre and located centrally with respect to the community it serves, taking into account limitations of topography and the road and footpath network.

f) 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.

g) 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.

h) Support the upgrade of St. Ita's Community Hall, subject to funding.

i) Support the development of a new cemetery in Abbeyfeale, on lands located at Knockbrack to the north of the town. The lands shall be safeguarded for the future delivery of a graveyard, as per the Zoning Map.

## 5.2 Parks, Walkways, Open Space and Recreation

Abbeyfeale has a range of recreational facilities and amenities, including walkways/cycleways, clubs for rugby, athletics, cycling, soccer and angling. The GAA club is located close to, but outside the town at Shanbally, Co. Kerry. Páirc Cois Féile or Abbeyfeale Town Park is a 12 hectare amenity on the banks of the River Feale with over 7km of walkway, an astro-turf mini-pitch, outdoor exercise equipment, pond, woodland, playground, basketball court, fairy park, public art sensory area and many other health and recreational amenities. The Park was awarded the international accreditation Green Flag Award, in recognition of the quality of this amenity in terms of accessibility, biodiversity and facilities. Abbeyfeale Community Council in partnership with the Council are developing a biodiversity educational park on New Street on under-used lands acquired by the Council for community outdoor space.

The Limerick Greenway is located to the north of the town. It is a cycling/walking amenity extending from Rathkeale, Co. Limerick into Co. Kerry along the re-purposed former Limerick – Kerry railway line. Public access to this amenity is at the former Railway Station in Abbeyfeale. This amenity seamlessly links the West Limerick landscape with towns and villages linking some of the county's most historic sites, offering its visitors a range of activities, including walking, cycling, sightseeing and family adventures. The Limerick Greenway offers a huge tourism opportunity for the town of Abbeyfeale, in terms of the development of tourism accommodation, café/restaurants and other niche tourism products.

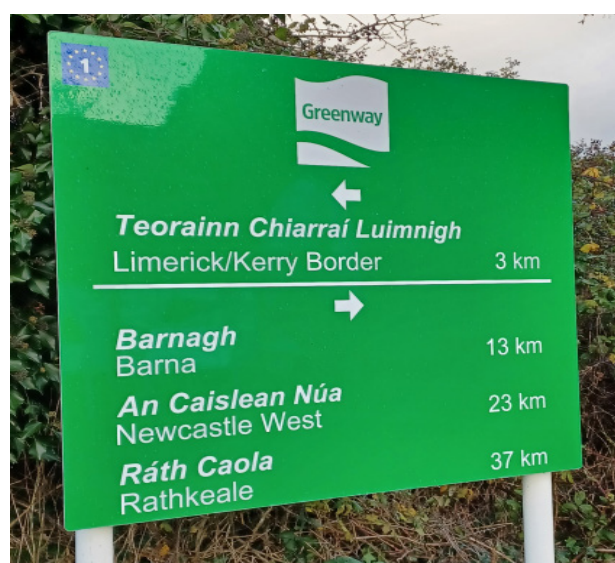


Figure 5.3: Limerick Greenway – Abbeyfeale



In addition to the superb amenity that is the Limerick Greenway, there is a 6.8km Slí an Slainte walking route within the town, promoted by the Irish Heart Foundation. There may be further potential for appropriate recreational activities close to the Feale and Allaughan rivers, such as angling or water-based activities subject to an appropriate level of ecological assessment, given the sensitivity of these waterways, in the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Limerick City and County Council is committed to the provision, upgrade, maintenance and expansion of connected, usable and appropriately located open space, amenities and recreational opportunities in the town in conjunction with private, public and voluntary organisations, subject to funding.

The strategic vision for Abbeyfeale set out in Chapter 3 recognises that if Abbeyfeale is to fulfil its role as a Level 3 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 <sup>2</sup> – 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 <sup>2</sup> 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.

Table 4: Public Realm Open Space Provision in Residential Developments in Abbeyfeale

**Objectives C 02 New Amenity Areas, Walkways and Cycleways:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways and cycleways as indicated on the Amenity and Sustainable Transport Map (Appendix 1, Map 3) in co-operation with all sectors, subject to funding. Any proposed development adjacent to walkways must incorporate connecting pathways in their design. Developments shall be designed to overlook proposed walkways and shall link existing and proposed residential areas to each other, to amenity areas and to provide connections to the town centre.
- b) Encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Abbeyfeale, and facilitate the provision of an attractive and coherent network of off-road footpaths and cycle facilities.
- c) 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.
- d) Explore the feasibility of providing a connection between Páirc Cois Féile/Abbeyfeale Town Park and the Limerick Greenway.

**Objectives C 03 The Limerick Greenway:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Support the development of the Limerick Greenway and the development of Abbeyfeale as a Greenway Hub.
- b) Provide a safe connection between the Limerick Greenway and the town centre, connecting with the heritage and cultural assets within the town.
- c) Provide secure cycle parking infrastructure at appropriate locations as opportunities arise.

**Objectives C 04 Parks, Open Space and Recreation:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Examine the feasibility of blue-way opportunities/potential along the River Feale and River Allaughan in Abbeyfeale, 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 Table 4 above.
- e) Support any upgrade maintenance works to the Páirc Cois Féile/Abbeyfeale Town Park and the development of the Abbeyfeale Biodiversity Park on New Street, subject to resources.





# CHAPTER 6

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

<u>6.1</u>	<u>Enterprise and Employment</u>	<u>63</u>
<u>6.2</u>	<u>Tourism</u>	<u>64</u>





Abbeyfeale town is a service centre for its own community and its hinterlands. There is a diverse range of services in the town, including retail, retail services, hospitality, tourist accommodation, professional services, educational, civic and community facilities. There is one medium size manufacturing enterprise operating in the town, which is Kostal. Other key employers in the town, include retail/restaurants/pubs and the 3 schools located within the town. The RSES identifies that there are strong sub-regional independencies between Newcastle West, Listowel, Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale providing opportunities for economic growth with potential for joint projects to attract investment, for example the Limerick Greenway extending into the North Kerry Greenway; or the Engine Hub co-working space in the former Provincial Bank on Main Street, operating as a part of a network with other locations in Listowel, Tralee and Macroom.

RSES also outlines the importance of the North Kerry/West Limerick/ Shannon Estuary/Clare network for the development of Abbeyfeale, along with Listowel, Newcastle West and Kilrush. Furthermore, it highlights the potential economic opportunities for these settlements, given their connectivity with the Shannon Estuary, the Shannon Foynes Port, and the strategic locations identified by the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP) as part of a Shannon Estuary Coastal Network.

Abbeyfeale is also located within the Atlantic Economic Corridor (AEC), an initiative of the Department of Rural and Community Development seeking balanced economic development strengthening a culture of enterprise and innovation in local authority areas on the western coast. Furthermore, Abbeyfeale is one of the 25 communities located in North Kerry – West Limerick: Smart Villages, Stronger Communities project funded under the LEADER programme for Rural Development. This programme supports communities across the region to achieve smart and sustainable social, economic and environmental development.

Tourism is a proven economic driver, and can play a significant role in the overall development of Abbeyfeale, sustaining employment and providing opportunities for new business and services. The Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019 outlines the action plan with relevant stakeholders to revitalise the tourism sector in Limerick, captur-

ing key opportunities to grow the sector. Abbeyfeale has significant further tourism opportunities, as a hub with access to the Limerick Greenway and the North Kerry Greenway offering over 50km of off-road cycleway/walkway through County Limerick and into North Kerry.

This plan provides the appropriate framework for development through the provision of adequately zoned lands and policies, which support economic and tourism development. The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 sets out the strategic context for economic development in Limerick. The Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan adopted in 2016 and currently under review sets out the objectives and actions to promote and support economic development and local and community development across Limerick. This LAP zones 1.1 ha for tourism related development and 37.4 ha for enterprise and employment. It is also acknowledges the opportunities of infill development in the town centre for tourism development opportunities including a range of tourist accommodation.

#### **Policy ED 1: Strategic Economic Development:** It is policy of the Council to:

Promote, facilitate and enable economic development and employment generating activities in Abbeyfeale on appropriately zoned lands, in a sustainable manner, in accordance with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.



## 6.1 Enterprise and Employment

Together the National Planning Framework, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region and the Limerick Development Plan, all place a strong emphasis on compact, smart, sustainable, appropriate and inclusive economic growth in settlements. RSES refers to the inter-urban partnership opportunities of the North Kerry/West Limerick/Shannon Estuary/Clare region that could capitalise on collective strengths to attract and support smart enterprise, innovation and clustering of business across the region. WorkBase, is a co-working space established by Innovate Limerick on Main Street. The digital e-work hub is located in the town centre and re-uses a former vacant building – the former Provisional Bank. This initiative supports modern hybrid employment and business infrastructure, in the heart of the town and supports the local economy.

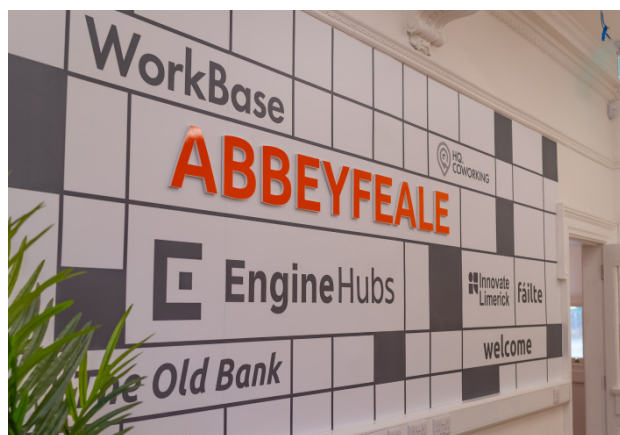


Figure 6.1: WorkBase, former Provisional Bank

According to the 2016 Census, the population of Abbeyfeale aged 15 or over at work was 42.12%, which is below those at work for the County as a whole at 50%. The unemployment rate of the town was high at 14.8%, well above the state average of 6.3% in 2016. Of those at work 23.2% were employers, managers or professionals, whilst 42.8% of the workforce were employed as non-manual, manual skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled workers. Abbeyfeale has the largest net gain in the working population in County Limerick that is, a significant number of workers commute into the town (836) which reflects the economic importance of the town.

With the opportunities afforded by digitalisation and e-working, the Council promotes Abbeyfeale as a location to support remote working, supporting hubs, culture/creative and Smart tech enterprises. A trend of an increasingly skilled workforce is desirable to generate employment, capitalise on the knowledge economy, support enterprise opportunities and growth in the town. These types of high-quality employment opportunities support higher disposable incomes to invest and spend money on the services within Abbeyfeale. The LAP supports opportunities for employment creation, business and technology development in Abbeyfeale to facilitate economic activity, in accordance with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the Limerick Development Plan.

A total of 36 hectares of land was zoned for Enterprise and Employment use in the 2014 – 2020 (as extended) Abbeyfeale LAP. These lands are located in the Abbeyfeale Business Park, Mountmahon, Killarney Road and Railway Road. A substantial amount of this land remains undeveloped and remain zoned in the plan, to support economic activity for the town.

The form and scale of development proposed on these sites shall be appropriate to their location, having regard to surrounding land uses and scale.

**Objective ED 01: Enterprise and Employment Objectives:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Encourage the reuse and redevelopment of appropriately zoned vacant units, brownfield, derelict and infill sites for employment creation, subject to normal planning and environmental criteria.
- b) Ensure any proposals for the lands zoned for Enterprise and Employment adjoining the N21 include a Traffic and Transport Assessment, to ensure that the local road network and associated junctions with the regional road 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. Any proposals on these sites shall ensure the provision of a minimum 20m landscaped buffer zone between proposed development and residential developments.
- c) 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 at Mountmahon.
- d) 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.
- e) Early engagement with all utilities providers, including Uisce Eireann is strongly advised.
- f) Promote inter-urban linkages and partnerships across county boundaries, capitalising on collective strengths to attract investment in Abbeyfeale, the wider West Limerick /North Kerry region and the Atlantic Economic Corridor.

## **6.2 Tourism**

Tourism is a proven economic driver, and can play a significant role in the overall development of Abbeyfeale, sustaining employment and providing opportunities for new business and services. Access to the Limerick Greenway has already stimulated business growth in the town. Abbeyfeale's location on the former Limerick - Kerry railway line; its location on the N21 with connectivity to Limerick City and Tralee/Killarney; its cultural heritage in traditional music, song, dance and drama; and the town's traditional streetscape with many fine traditional shopfronts and Stucco detail all contribute to the attractiveness of Abbeyfeale as a tourist destination. The Rivers Feale and Allaughan also offer potential for appropriate riverine tourism development, including angling, kayaking and swimming. There is a demand for a range of tourism accommodation types in the town, including hostel, camping and camper van facilities. To further develop the successful unique festival traditions of the town, there is a need to improve public open space with attractive public realm to support the delivery of a quality festival programme outdoors in the town, with connections to other features in the town, including the Limerick Greenway, the Heritage Trail in the town and the Glórach Theatre.

The Council are currently examining the feasibility to redevelop the former goods store along the Limerick Greenway and to develop a Greenway hub at this location, subject to resources. Furthermore, the Council are seeking to enhance connectivity between the Limerick Greenway to the town centre, which will enhance opportunities for active travel and tourism potential. The proposed town enhancement scheme will also provide for improved public amenity space.



**Objective ED 02: Tourism Objectives:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Support growth in the tourism sector in Abbeyfeale by facilitating vital connections between complementary sites, attractions and town centre, and ensuring visitors can easily avail of services in Abbeyfeale town centre.
- 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 Abbeyfeale'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, Abbeyfeale as a Greenway hub, with enhanced accessibility to the heritage and cultural assets of the town.

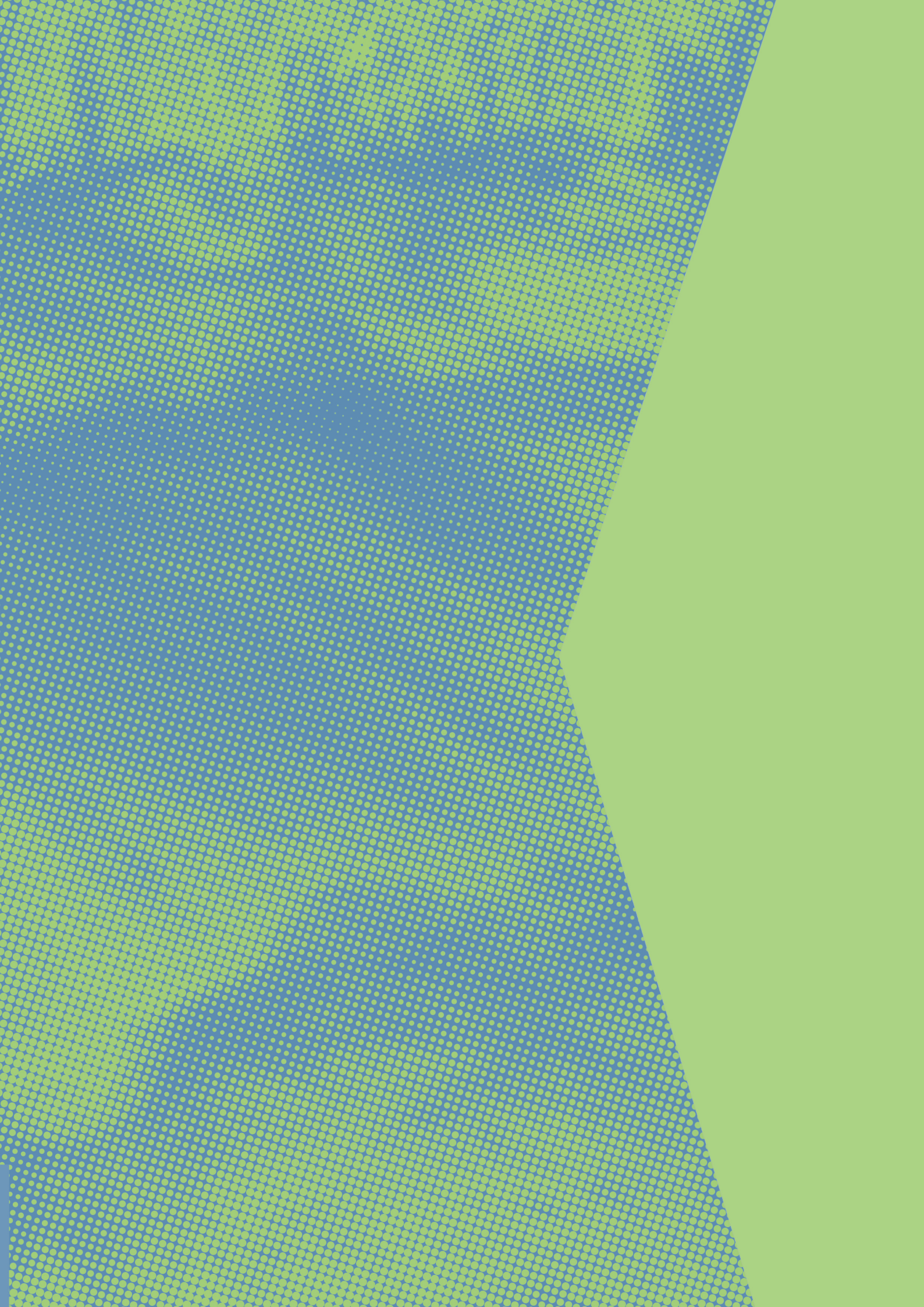


# CHAPTER 7

## SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

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National and regional planning policy emphasises the efficient movement of people and goods, through an integrated multi-modal, accessible and affordable transport network. 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 promote healthier lifestyles, climate change and improved air quality. A key objective of sustainable travel and its infrastructure is to ensure active travel is easily accessible and convenient for normal daily routines, including the commute to school, college or work. A transition towards more sustainable modes of transport is essential to reduce Ireland's carbon emissions and reach the Government's goal of a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and net-Zero emissions by 2050.

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. This will unlock significant improvements in quality of life, including more sustainable modes of movement which also have a role in achieving climate targets.

**Policy SMT P1: Integration of Land Use and Transport Policies-** It is policy of the Council to:

Support and facilitate the integration of land use and transportation policies for Abbeyfeale, 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 various modes of transport with a focus on reducing the need to travel.

**Policy SMT P2: Transport and Movement - Promotion of Sustainable Patterns of Transport Use:** It is 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, the National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022) 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 Abbeyfeale, including public transport, cycling and walking.



## 7.1 Movement and Accessibility

### 7.1.1 N21 Abbeyfeale Road Scheme

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 Abbeyfeale. This project is called the N21 Abbeyfeale 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 the through-traffic through Abbeyfeale.

### 7.1.2 Local Access Routes and Parking

The Council is committed to the development of a network of access routes reflecting the requirements of personal safety, choice and convenience to services and amenities. The access network should facilitate access for all, and be socially inclusive. The requirement and desire to minimise dependence on the car for short journeys, requires

that permeable places are developed throughout Abbeyfeale. This plan supports the enhancement of the existing walking and cycling routes, as well as the upgrade and creation of new linkages within the town.

### 7.1.3 Traffic Management Scheme for Abbeyfeale

In order to enhance the traffic management in Abbeyfeale town centre, the Council have prepared a traffic management scheme for the town centre. The purpose of implementing the scheme is to improve the public realm of the town centre in terms of improved traffic management, better access to car parking, improved pedestrian links and the provision of dedicated bus parking. This traffic management scheme has undergone the necessary consent process and has been formulated with significant consultation with local community and business owners in Abbeyfeale. The Council will seek to implement the traffic management scheme, subject to funding, in conjunction with the local community in Abbeyfeale.

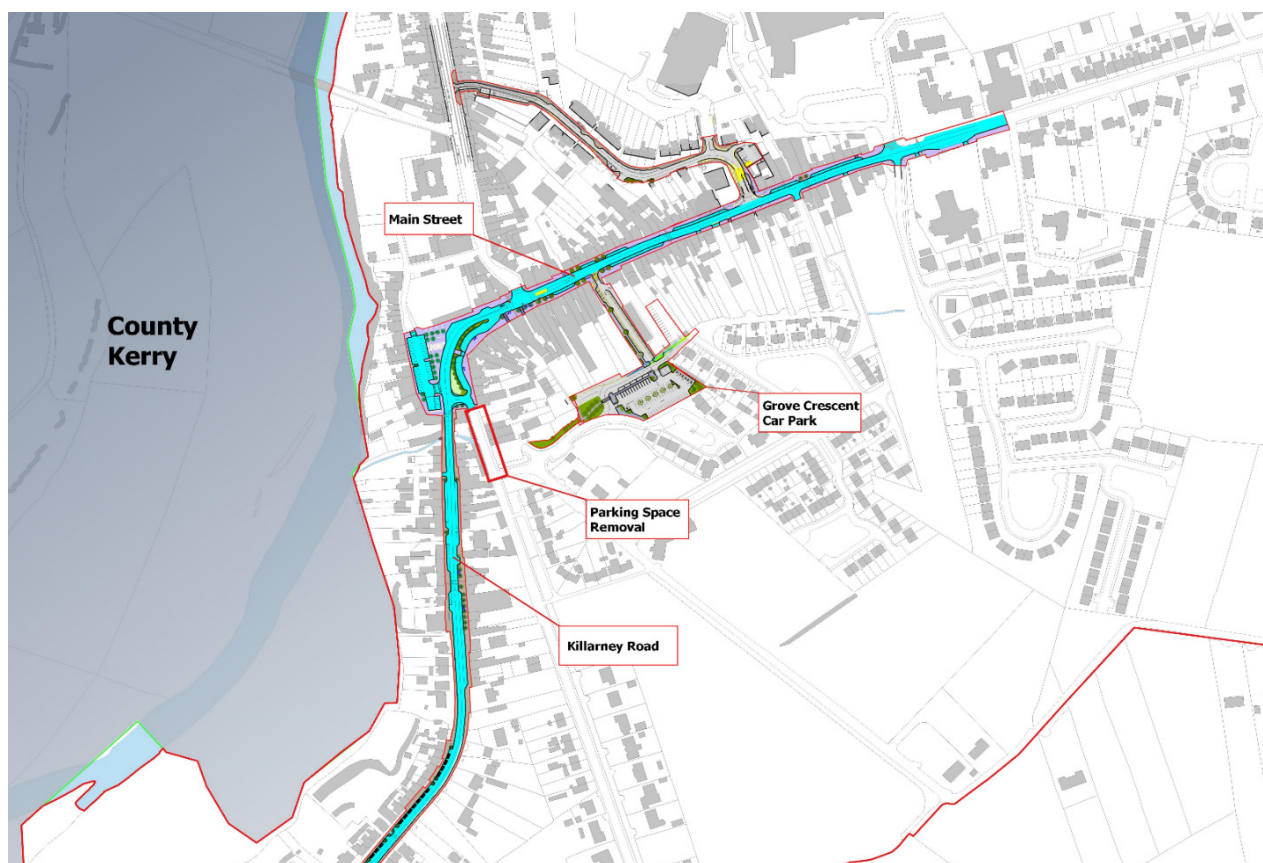


Figure 7.1: Abbeyfeale Traffic Management Scheme

The scheme once implemented will have a positive effect in the town and enhance the experience for both local people, residents and visitors coming to the town through; improved traffic management for the through flow of traffic in the town; improved car parking arrangements; enhanced access to the Grove Crescent car park; increased

number of dedicated bus parking in the centre of the town and improved vehicular traffic movement along Colbert Terrace following the demolition of buildings and road widening. Improvements in the public realm will also provide additional amenity space for the community



Figure 7.2: Illustrative image from the Traffic Management Scheme for Main Street, Abbeyfeale

Abbeyfeale is readily accessible by a number of regional roads - northwards to Athea and Glin (R523), westwards to Duagh and Listowel (R555), and southwards to Mountcollins (R576). The Council seeks to protect the carrying capacity and safety of these strategic roads. The Main Street is part of the national road network (N21). Development proposals accessing the N21 in the town shall adhere to the TII Traffic and Transportation Guidelines and any subsequent replacement.

#### 7.1.4 Limerick Greenway Connectivity Active Travel Scheme

To promote active travel modes, offering opportunities to commute through the Limerick Greenway to other settlements, healthy active lifestyles and support the tourism potential of the town centre, the Council is seeking to provide a safe and convenient connectivity between the town centre and the Limerick Greenway.

#### Objective SM 01: Movement and Accessibility: 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) Deliver the Traffic Management Scheme for the town within the lifetime of the Plan. High quality public realm will be required as part of any town centre redevelopment.
- c) 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.
- d) Incorporate Sustainable Travel measures in all new developments in the town.
- e) Support the progression of the N21 Abbeyfeale

Road Scheme (as already provided by the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, including Objective TR O31), to provide improved regional connectivity and ensure future development proposals do not compromise the development of this scheme.

f) 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.

g) Deliver a footpath on the Clash Road to connect existing and proposed development to the town centre.

h) Protect the capacity of the national and regional road network from inappropriate development, having regard to all relevant Government guidance, Objective TR O39 National Roads and Objective TR O41 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.

i) 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.

j) Ensure all developments protect and safeguard the capacity and efficiency of the drainage regimes of the regional and local network.

k) Support the provisions set out in the 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response and the Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads and S.I. No. 140 of 2006 Environmental Noise Regulations.

l) 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 Plan relating to sustain-

able 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.

## **7.2 Achieving Modal Shift**

In order to achieve more sustainable travel patterns, a significant focus on reducing car dependency and increasing permeability is required as promoted by higher-level spatial plans. These behavioural changes will contribute to healthier lifestyles, lower greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and increase footfall through the town. Vehicles often dominate the streets and vehicle movement can be detrimental to vibrancy and livability of the town, 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 choice to active travel through behavioural change projects and support initiatives.

In line with national transport and planning policy, the Council welcomes any improvement to public transport services and infrastructure within the lifetime of this Plan. Abbeyfeale is served by two Bus Eireann routes, Limerick to Killarney and Limerick to Tralee and by Local Link Limerick to Newcastle West and Mountcollins. Improvements to connectivity for the daily commute to the wider region and employment and educational centres are encouraged by the Council to improve accessibility to the opportunities for employment and education facilities.

According to the 2016 Census, 21% of persons aged 5 years + walked to work, school or college in Abbeyfeale. In the 2011 Census, this mode of



commute accounted for 24% of daily commutes. Less than 1% cycled in 2016 as was the case in the 2011 Census. In the 2011 Census 3.8% of commuters took the bus and by 2016 this had decreased marginally to 3.4%. The car is still the dominant means of travelling to work, school or college in Abbeyfeale and either as a driver or as a passen-

ger it accounts for 50% of journeys. In 2011, 58% of commuters travelled by car as a passenger or driver. According to Powscar (2016), 1,052 people commute into Abbeyfeale daily and 353 people commute out of the town daily. Abbeyfeale has the largest proportion of residents in County Limerick who live and work in the town (51%).

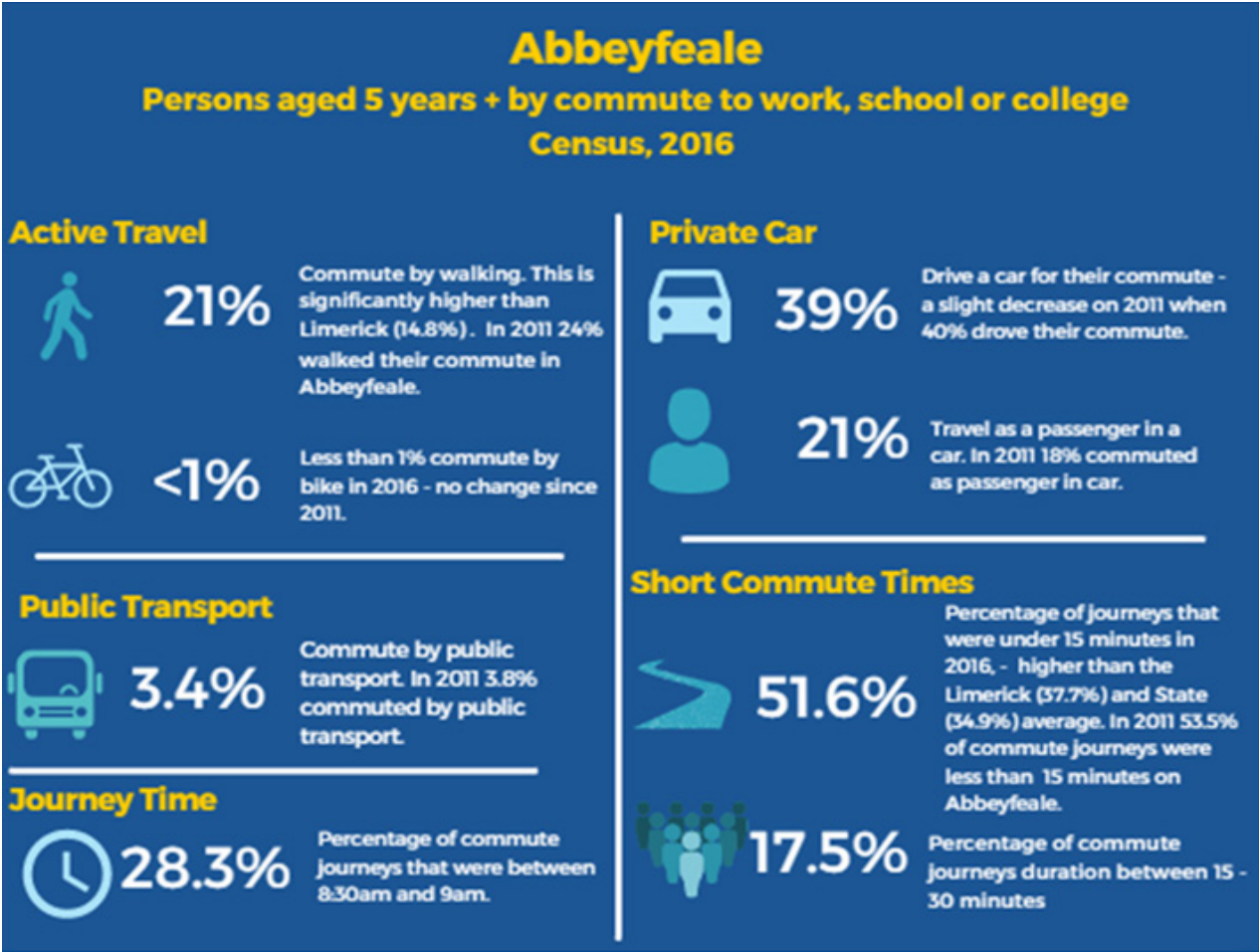


Figure 7.3: Persons Aged 5 years + mode of commute to work, school or college in Abbeyfeale, Census 2016

These Census figures are substantially below current national policy for modern transport, including active travel. With a compact settlement offering a range of residential choice, access to the services and amenities that Abbeyfeale currently processes, supports for better connectivity, and choice of mode of movement in a safe, efficient and affordable integrated mobility network there

is potential for Abbeyfeale to progress towards reaching the national targets for more sustainable travel.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 sets the following targets for the modal shift for Level 3 settlements, which includes Abbeyfeale.

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

Table 5: Mode Shift Targets for commute to work, school or college, by 2028 – Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028

While, there are challenges facing Abbeyfeale, with regard to promoting a modal shift away from the private car, this Local Area Plan 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 concept, a compact settlement and the town centre first approach. Continued improvements to Limerick Greenway, including improved pedestrian and cyclist access between the Greenway and the town centre will support sustainable movement with settlements including Listowel, and Newcastle West. The Council will co-operate closely with other relevant agencies and stakeholders, including the NTA and TII to address modal shift targets as above.

**Objective SM 02: Modal Shift and Behavioural Change:** It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Encourage, promote and facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport in Abbeyfeale, including the Limerick Greenway.
- b) Support and facilitate implementation of an integrated, multi-modal and accessible public transport network for Abbeyfeale and its hinterland.

# CHAPTER 8

## CLIMATE ACTION, ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

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## 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 are quickly becoming the biggest challenge facing society 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 to the protection of our environment. Implementation of the LAP will take into account relevant targets and actions arising from sectoral plans in order to comply with the requirements of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. This supports Ireland's transition to Net Zero and achieving a climate neutral economy by no later than 2050.

The Limerick City and County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 - 2024 outlines that Climate Action comprises of two elements – (1) Adaptation and; (2) Mitigation. Adaptation is the efforts to manage the risks and impacts associated with existing or anticipated impacts of climate change, while mitigation is the efforts to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, and reduces the severity of future climate change impacts.

Through the policies and objectives set out in the NPF and RSES, climate adaptation and mitigation measures are embedded in the plan-making process. The Local Area Plan has been prepared with the purpose of integrating and implementing these policies and provisions where relevant. The approach to density, land use, design and movement is consistent with broader measures to address climate change in the areas of sustainable travel, green infrastructure, flood risk adaptation and renewable energy sources, amongst others.

There are a number of ways in which a Local Area Plan can seek to reduce the carbon footprints and mitigate against the negative impacts of climate change. These include:

- Promoting the provision of blue green infrastructure (planting of trees, hedgerows, woodlands, construction of surface water retention features, such as ponds, lakes or swales);
- Promoting climate proofing in the design of buildings and neighbourhoods;

- Promoting the use of indigenous resources and adaption of new building techniques and designs that minimize energy intensive inputs;

- Seek to improve 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 Building (NZEB) Regulations.

- Promote the use of SuDS and nature-based solutions such as riparian buffers as climate adaption options to address flood risk and support biodiversity and associated micro-climates, and linked wildlife corridors.

**Policy CH 1: Climate Change:** It is policy of the Council to:

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

**Objective CH 01: 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 Abbeyfeale 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 Biodiversity and Blue Green Infrastructure**

Blue green infrastructure refers to the incorporation of blue elements (water environments), like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities, and green elements, such as trees, forests, fields and parks, in urban and land-use planning. This infrastructure uses natural processes, such as filtration or absorption to address water and air quality. Blue and green infrastructure can exist side by side in a complementary relationship, such as the rivers, their banks and vegetation include trees and hedgerows. This Plan promotes networks of blue green infrastructure as aligned with higher-level plans, including the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

This Local Area Plan can help mitigate further impact on the environment through ensuring that future development takes cognisance of the natural elements of sites and incorporates them within the design of buildings and neighbourhoods, connecting them into the wider blue green infra-

structure network. Where there are no natural site features present, the potential for a landscaping plan to re-establish green features and infrastructure should be examined.

The River Feale and its tributaries, the River Allaughan and the Glórach stream flowing through Abbeyfeale are within the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) catchment. The legal basis on which SACs are selected and designated is the EU Habitats Directive, transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 477 of 2011), as amended. In particular, this watercourse is important for the Freshwater Pearl Mussel and Salmon. There are no Special Protections Areas (SPAs) designation under the Birds Directive or Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 in the LAP area. There are no designated geological sites within the Plan area. The main soil types are generally gleys, alluvial soils, with peat bog soils in the surrounds of the town.



Figure 8.1 – Vista from Abbeyfeale Town Park of the River Feale



A wide diversity of species, habitats, ecosystems and landscapes make up the biodiversity of the town found at the wildlife corridors of the Limerick Greenway, the banks of the River Feale and the River Allaughan and the tributary known locally as the Glórach stream. Connected green spaces provide the greatest benefit to biodiversity in an urban context. In this regard, there is an opportunity to recognise the key conservation role the watercourses plays in the town's biodiversity. Existing trees and hedgerows are important features supporting biodiversity and should be carefully considered in any planning application. This Plan seeks to 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.

Applications shall seek to retain hedgerows, landscaped areas, retention or planting of trees and preservation of natural features where possible. Suitable planting of new edge or buffer treatments will be encouraged as part of new developments. These areas will emphasize enhancement of local biodiversity and local surface water management,

while enhancing visual amenity. Management of invasive species, prior to and during construction shall be considered.

Limerick City and County Council have a Blue Green Infrastructure (BGI) Strategy, which will be used to inform and guide the planning and management of BGI within Limerick City and Suburbs. Many of the BGI principles will also be relevant to Abbeyfeale. BGI has far-reaching benefits, including the creation of places, which improve physical and mental health, contributes towards the provision of space for nature, and plays a vital role in climate change mitigation and adaptation along with many economic benefits.

This strategy identifies a number of specific, inter-linked and cross-cutting themes. The Local Area Plan for Abbeyfeale, includes a number of policies and objectives that will guide the direction and support the delivery and enhancement of BGI within the town. These 'Enhancement Opportunities' are outlined in Table 6 and includes the associated key cross compatible Climate Change themes. The benefits of implementing BGI are as follows:



LAP Climate Action and Enhancements Opportunities in Abbeyfeale	Theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancement to the Abbeyfeale Town Park on the principles of SuDS and nature-based solutions as the need arises to maintain or improve existing infrastructure, amenities and facilities.</li> </ul>	

















<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the local community in the development of the biodiversity educational park on Bridge Street providing opportunities, for an educational resource, access to nature, passive and active recreation, community garden/allotment and sustainable local food production and social enterprise.</li> </ul>	   
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the provision of active travel infrastructure to provide for accessible safe pedestrian and cycling route networks in Abbeyfeale to minimise the need to travel via private transport.</li> <li>• Support the delivery of the Traffic Management Scheme for the town which will improve movement, active travel modes, and accessibility through the town, improve air quality and enhance the public realm.</li> </ul>	    
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and the provision of play lots, in tandem with new residential developments.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure connectivity/linkages and open space provision, are provided for in the design of future developments, in accordance with the Development Management Standards of Chapter 11 of the Limerick Development Plan.</li> </ul>	 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the Rivers Feale and Allaughan to attract target species as identified in its designation as part of the Lower River Shannon SAC to enhance the ecological corridor.</li> </ul>	 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the integration of surface water management solutions into the landscape features including nature-based SuDS.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguard ecological connections across all infrastructure projects for biodiversity.</li> </ul>	

Table 6: LAP Climate Action Opportunities



### Biodiversity

Conservation priorities  
Designated sites  
Habitat networks



### Landscape and Recreation

Landscape character  
Open space provision  
Urban greening



### Access and connectivity

Active travel  
Public Rights of Way  
Public transport



### Blue Infrastructure

Watercourses  
Flood risk  
Water quality



### People, Communities, Health and Well-being

Health and well-being  
Deprivation  
Community food growing



### Tourism, Culture and the Economy

Historic sites and heritage  
Economic benefits  
Tourist destinations

Feature	Local name	Condition/Description	Asset Value
River Feale	As indicated	Good – Designated part of the Lower River Shannon SAC.	A key natural resource adjacent to the town park located on the outskirts of the town offering access to riverine biodiversity of the riverbank.
River Allaughan	As indicated	Good – Designated part of the Lower River Shannon SAC.	A natural watercourse within walking distance of the town centre
Abbeyfeale Town Park – Páirc na Féile	As indicated	Good – offers a range of amenities including woodland, outdoor sport and exercise infrastructure, playground, 7km walkway/cycleway, on 30ha adjacent to the banks of River Feale.	Access to woodland and riverine biodiversity, and promotes active lifestyles and social interaction as a community park. However, the aggressive riverine erosion to the riverbank in the park is a challenge.
Limerick Greenway and North Kerry Greenway	As indicated	Good – part of the Limerick Greenway cycleway/walkway, functions as a rich biodiversity corridor facilitating access to nature by local community and tourists.	Sustains biodiversity, promotes active lifestyles and active travel connectivity with settlements on the Greenway in Limerick and North Kerry such as Listowel, Newcastle West and Rathkeale. A safer connection between the town centre and the Greenway is required.



Local walking loop	Slí na Sláinte	Good street pathways on a 6.8km route along Main Street, Doctor's Road and New Street.	Looped walking route for the town, well used and popular among locals – infrastructural upgrades needed in places – public amenity value, connectivity and lifestyle.
Biodiversity Educational Space	New Street by Feale Bridge	A partnership between the Council and Abbeyfeale Community Council to bring into use a vacant site as an community garden for biodiversity and potential social enterprise in local produce. it also represents an important educational resource.	Social interaction, active lifestyle, opportunities for social enterprise and local produce production, access to biodiversity as an educational resource within walking distance to town centre and schools. Funding and resources required to progress the potential of this site. SuDS and nature-based solutions a key element of any future development.

Table 7 - Inventory of Blue – Green Infrastructure assets in Abbeyfeale

### Objective CH 02: Blue Green Infrastructure:

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Develop and enhance blue and green infrastructure opportunities throughout Abbeyfeale and in line with the detail set out in Table 6: LAP Climate Action Opportunities.
- 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.

### 8.2.1 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. Local Authorities are responsible for the development and implementation of RBMPs at a local level.

## Policy CH 2 Water Framework Directive

**Policy:** It is 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 WFD to achieve at least good status in all waters and to ensure that status does not deteriorate in any waters.

### 8.2.2 Special Area of Conservation

The LAP seeks to protect the ecological integrity of the river by maintaining a buffer along the River Feale and River Allaughan, which prevents the encroachment of future development onto the riverbank as recommended by Inland Fisheries Ireland.

These watercourses are recognised as an important amenity for the town and are valued as a natural habitats. Natura 2000 is a European network of important ecological sites. The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) placed an obligation on Member States of the EU to establish the Natura 2000 network. The network is made up of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), established under the EU Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), and SACs, established under the Habitats Directive itself. The Lower River Shannon has been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Both the River Feale and the River Allaughan are part of the Lower Shannon SAC. This designation has implications for development, in terms of buffer zones, but also constitutes an opportunity, as the designation of such areas is generally in recognition of good species, diversity and river quality, which would have implications for angling and other water-based activities. This Plan zones 9 ha as Semi-Natural Open Space which respects the designation of the SAC.

Appropriate recreational development may be considered subject to environmental considerations, where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that there will be no impact on the integrity of this Special Area of Conservation or on the natural habitat of the river and its designation as part of the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation.

A number of field boundaries within the plan area, form an essential part of the natural fabric of the

area. Any natural stone boundary walls should be retained where possible. Similarly, any mature tree coverage should be a key consideration in the design of future developments and shall be retained where possible.

This Local Area Plan seeks to protect, preserve and enhance the natural heritage for the benefit of future generation as well as safeguarding the continued and sustainable use of this asset.



Figure 8.3 – Special Area of conservation Abbeyfeale taken from Abbeyfeale Town Park

## Objective CH 03: Special Area of Conservation: It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Protect and maintain the integrity of the Special Area of Conservation by the River Feale and protect the watercourses in Abbeyfeale, in accordance with the Semi-Natural Open Space zoning designation on the Land Use Zoning Map and the lands zoned Agriculture by the River Allaughan.

b) Ensure the protection of a 20m riparian buffer zone on greenfield sites free from development. Proposals shall have cognisance of the contents of the Inland Fisheries Ireland document Planning for Watercourses in Urban Environments.

c) Ensure that appropriate wastewater infrastructure is available to support new developments to safeguard water quality.

d) No projects which will be reasonably likely to give rise to significant adverse direct or indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives arising from reduction in species diversity, shall be permitted on the basis of this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects)<sup>1</sup>.

e) To seek to ensure the sustainable and responsible management of all leisure fishing and water-based activities within the Lower River Shannon SAC, in consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and/or Inland Fisheries Ireland where relevant, and in compliance with the Salmonid River Regulations (SI No. 293/1988) and the Habitats Directive.”

<sup>1</sup> Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

**Objective CH 04: Tree Protection and Nature Conservation:** It is an objective of the Council to:

Seek to protect natural stone boundary walls, ponds/wetlands, other natural features of local importance and mature trees, where possible. Development that requires the felling or harming of such trees will not generally be permitted, unless supported by a tree survey establishing that the subject trees are of no ecological or amenity value. Such report shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and competent person.

## 8.3 Built Heritage and Archaeology

### 8.3.1 Protected Structures

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 must include objectives for the protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or

technical interest. The complete list for Limerick City and County is available as Volume 3 of the Limerick Development Plan. A Protected Structure, unless otherwise stated, includes the interior of the structure, the land lying within the curtilage of the structure, and other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors. The protection also extends to boundary treatments.

There are 61 Protected Structures in Abbeyfeale and 31 of these structures are also listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) such is their significance at a regional and national level. The diversity of structures on the Record of Protected Structures lists, includes railway buildings, religious buildings, the buildings and terraces of the traditional vernacular streetscape and shop-fronts, medieval structures (Refer to Appendix III). There is an onus on the owner and/or occupier of a protected structure to ensure that the structure or any element of it is not endangered. Endangering a structure can mean either directly or indirectly damaging any element of the structure or neglecting the structure to the extent that it is damaged. When considering works, including minor works to a Protected Structure you are advised to contact the Conservation Officer to ascertain obligations in terms of the proposed development to avoid damage to the integrity of the historical built fabric of the structure. Some minor works, while exempt from planning permission in general circumstances may not apply to Protected Structures.



Figure 8.4 – Example of Protected Structure in Abbeyfeale



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 carried out the survey to inform the preparation of the NIAH.



Figure 8.5 – Example of NIAH 21833001 Teach na Féile and Protected Structure RPS 752 in Abbeyfeale

### 8.3.2 Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

The Abbeyfeale ACA is generally defined by the historic core, comprising the Square, parts of Main Street, Bridge Street and Church Street. There are 30 Protected Structures in this ACA, and 12 of these structures are also NIAH structures. There are a number of Recorded Monuments associated with the Cistercian complex north of the Square. Buildings are generally two and three storeys, with render, redbrick or limestone finish. Many display ornate stucco, decorative quoin embellishments on the front façade, a feature found throughout West Limerick/ North Kerry. Building lines in Abbeyfeale reflect the traditional Irish streetscape. Each individual building, be it for commercial or residential purposes, tended to have its own distinct plot of land.

The collective arrangement of buildings within these areas are considered of significance to the built heritage of the town and contributes to the character and established street and townscape. It is the objective of the Council to preserve the character of these areas and therefore they are designated as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA). The ACA is defined on the Protected Structures and ACA Map 4. The designation of the ACA does not preclude future development, but the carrying out of works to the exterior of structures

within the ACA shall not be considered as exempted development where those works would materially affect the character of the ACA. In assessing development proposals within the ACA, the Council shall take into account the material effect that the proposed development would be likely to have on the character of the ACA.

In undertaking repairs or maintenance works to buildings in the Abbeyfeale Architectural Conservation Area, property owners and their contractors should be aware of the materials traditionally used in the county, and more specifically, in the town itself and its immediate surrounds.

Works in Conservation Areas must retain existing surviving elements, aim to re-instate lost elements or character, with new builds complementing the original streetscapes, building lines and open areas. Proposals for new buildings should not seek to dominate the historic core and should respect the historic fabric of the buildings and the morphology of their plots.



Where original or early surviving elements, such as windows and doors, rainwater goods of rolled mild steel or cast iron (or a combination of both), natural slate roofing and lime renders, and so forth, then these should be repaired sensitively. The guidance here is to “do as much as necessary and as little as possible”. If replacement proves necessary, then they must be replaced on a “like-for-like” basis.

In replacing elements that were installed as replacements in recent decades, such as aluminium windows or smooth finish artificial slate, there

are good reasons, apart from those put forward on the basis of architectural heritage, to return to the original materials, such as timber windows and natural slate. These reasons include the compatibility of traditional materials with one another and the fact that the historic material allows the building to breathe, thereby providing a healthier internal atmosphere for those using the buildings.

**Objective CH 05: Built Heritage:** It is an objective of the Council to:

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

**Objective CH 06: 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 adaptation of built heritage to climate change as per Heritage Ireland 2030, the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for the Built and Archaeological Heritage, 2019, the Built Vernacular Strategy, 2021, the 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 CH 07: Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's):** It is an objective of the 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) Promote shopfront improvements and building facades enhancements in Abbeyfeale town centre, with particular focus within the ACA, while safeguarding the character of the buildings and subject the necessary consents and funding.

c) 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 planting of trees in the wider public open spaces, benches for sitting and the articulation of uses through appropriate paving.

## 8.4 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is the study of ancient societies through their material remains and the evidence of their environments. Archaeological heritage is comprised of all material remains of past societies with the potential to add to our knowledge of these societies. There are two Recorded Monuments located in the LAP boundary - the church and the graveyard on the site of the Cistercian Abbey (LI042-12001/002) adjacent to the Square. 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. Under the provisions of the National Monuments Act Section 12, 1994 Amendment any person proposing any works (this includes exempted development) 'at or in relation to such a monument' has to give written notification two months in advance to the Minister for the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Archaeological heritage is comprised of all material remains of past societies with the potential to add our knowledge of such societies. Sites continue to be discovered, some of those found subsequent to the publication (1997) have been included in the Site and Monuments Database which is available on the website [www.archaeology.ie](http://www.archaeology.ie). Under Section 14 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 2004, proposed development or works within or in the vicinity of archaeological monuments in Local Authority or State ownership or guardianship may require authorisation in the form of Ministerial Consent to proceed and the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage shall be consulted in this regard in advance of site works. Proposed developments and/or works, dredging schemes etc. within or in the vicinity of watercourses have the potential to impact on previously unrecorded wrecks or small craft that may be over 100-years old and which are therefore protected under the

National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1987. The Underwater Archaeological Unit of the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage shall be consulted in advance of any works on the rivers in Abbeyfeale.

Limerick City and County Council is committed to protecting the archaeological heritage, including the preservation of unrecorded or newly discovered archaeological material. Consequently, the planning authority will include a condition of archaeological monitoring on developments whose scale and nature may have an impact on previously unknown archaeological materials.

### Objective CH 08: Archaeological Heritage: It is an objective of the Council to:

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

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

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

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

(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 adaptation 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.

## **8.5 Cultural Heritage**

Abbeyfeale is famous for its musical tradition and performance arts. Abbeyfeale is home to annual traditional Irish music and singing festivals, and the voluntary theatre Glórach hosts plays, children's workshops, youth theatre, and many other community events all year round in a multifunctional 100 seat auditorium. The local community organise the Fleadh by the Feale and Garry McMahon Traditional Singing Weekend and Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and these festivals have a strong tradition in Abbeyfeale.

However, these events are challenged by the lack of a quality open public performance space in the town with a high-quality public realm to facilitate the outdoor experience of these events. The delivery of the Traffic Management Scheme should offer additional quality public space. A range of tourism accommodation would also support the cultural experience offered by the town.



Figure 8.7 – Local Musicians, Fleadh by the Feale 2018

**Objective CH 09: Cultural Heritage:** It is the objective of the Council to:

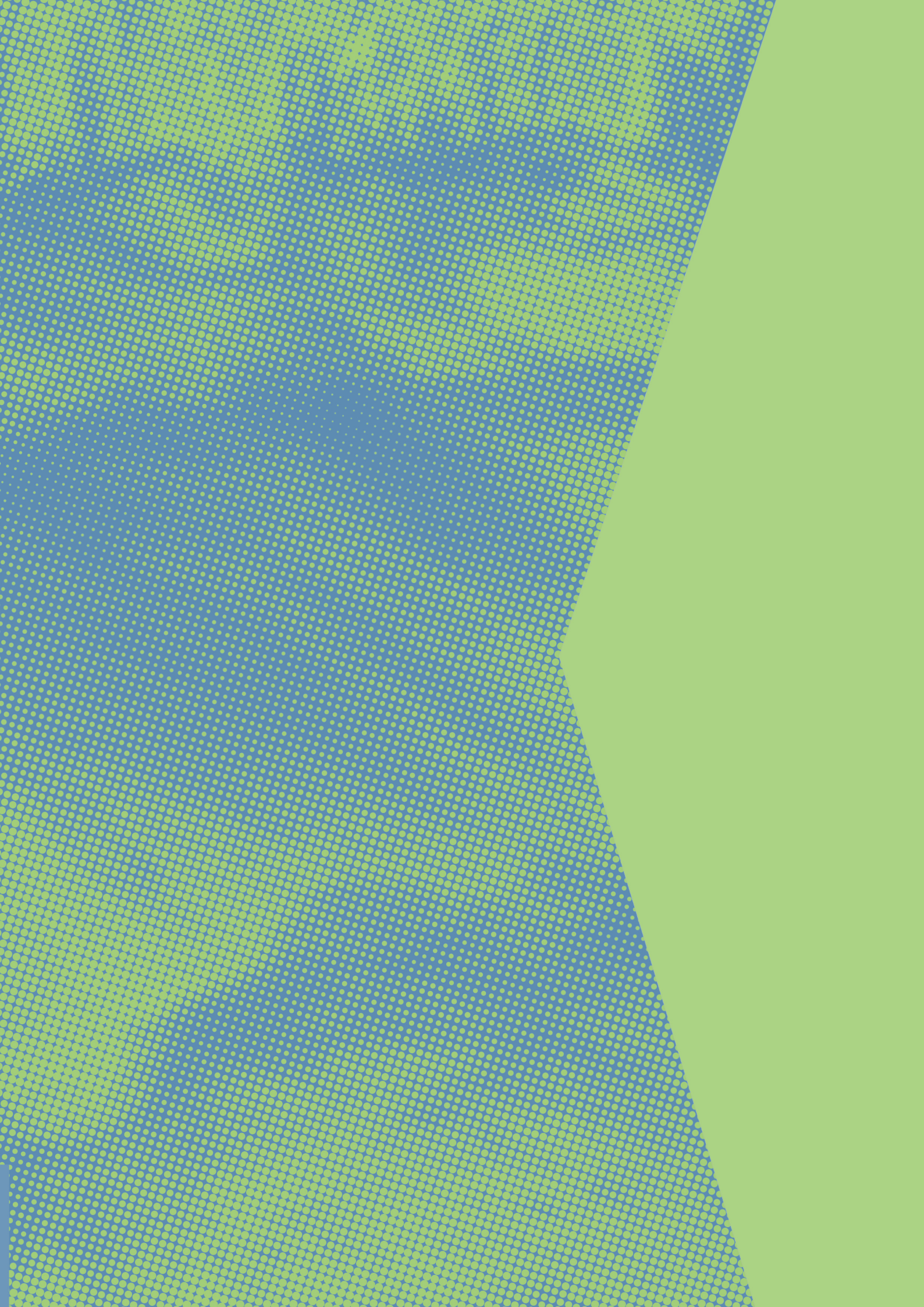
- a) Ensure that the capacity to stage public events is a factor in the design of public realm throughout the town.
- b) Support the further development of the cultural heritage of Abbeyfeale, through the development of festival and events.

# CHAPTER 9

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

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The sustainable social and economic growth of Abbeyfeale is dependent on the satisfactory provision of high-quality infrastructure associated with the provision of services for new residential and commercial developments. Key infrastructural provisions, undertaken in a plan led manner will support the development of the town and ensure the development of good quality place making, where health and well-being 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, social and economic development of the town.

### **Policy IU P1: Infrastructure and Utilities:**

It is 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 Abbeyfeale.

## **9.1 Water and Wastewater Infrastructure**

Uisce Eireann is responsible for the provision and operation of public water and wastewater services across the country. Limerick City and County Council delivers water services in accordance with a Service Level Agreement with Uisce Eireann. The Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP) published in 2015 by Uisce Eireann sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over a 25-year period and a context for investment and implementation plans. Uisce Eireann and Limerick City and County Council work together to identify the water services required to support planned development, in line with national and regional planning objectives. Abbeyfeale's public water supply is served by the Abbeyfeale Water Resource Zone (WRZ). The regional water resource plan for the South-West region is being finalised by Uisce Eireann and will identify approaches to address the future water supply needs of Abbeyfeale in a sustainable manner. This involves ground water investigations to determine if the existing supply can be augmented and the long-term plan is to connect Abbeyfeale to the Listowel WRZ. The Abbeyfeale Water Treatment Plant, located to the south of the town will be upgraded for water quality purposes while, subject to budgetary approvals, the interconnection to Listowel is progressed in

the next investment programme period, which is 2025 – 2029. It is envisaged that, with these works there will be sufficient capacity to accommodate envisaged population growth of this Plan.

In terms of wastewater, Uisce Eireann identifies that there is potential spare capacity of 370 population equivalent available to serve future development of the town, while also complying with discharge license requirements. Consequently, there is insufficient capacity available to cater for the total projected population growth set out in Chapter 3 of the Plan. An upgrade of the Abbeyfeale Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is not included in the 2022 – 2024 Uisce Eireann Investment Plan. The preparation of the subsequent investment plan will involve statutory consultation with planning authorities in 2023. 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 planning permission to be granted

Uisce Eireann and Limerick City and County Council are continually progressing leakage reduction activities, mains rehabilitation and capital maintenance in the water and sewer network. Both agencies will continue to monitor the performance of the networks to ensure that the most urgent works are prioritised as required. There are no known major wastewater or public mains network constraints in Abbeyfeale. However, localised upgrades/extensions may be required to facilitate development. Potential developers are advised to contact Uisce Eireann regarding potential connections to the public networks at an early stage of the design process.

### **Objective IU 01: 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 consul-

tation by developers with Uisce Éireann 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 Éireann 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 IU 02: Wastewater Infrastructure:** It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the implementation of the Uisce Éireann Investment Plans, in accordance with the settlement strategy of the RSES and Development Plan.

b) Ensure adequate wastewater infrastructure is available to cater for existing and proposed development, in collaboration with Uisce Éireann, 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 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 of consultation by developers with Uisce Éireann, prior to submitting a planning application will be required.

c) Ensure compliance for infrastructure led growth in accordance with the DHPLG Water

Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

d) Facilitate improvements to the existing wastewater system to cater for the needs of an expanding population.

e) Ensure future development protects existing wayleave and buffer zones around public water services infrastructure.

## **9.2 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 blue green infrastructure corridors and habitats in Abbeyfeale, 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 manage surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution), biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity are collectively referred to as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). SuDS can contribute to surface water retention and a reduction in the potential for flooding by acting as natural drainage. Using natural solutions to manage surface water can yield results that improve environmental quality. The Council will be informed by the Government guidance Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Run-off in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2022.

**Objective IU 03: Surface Water Management 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 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.

### **9.3 Flood Risk Management**

Flooding is a natural process that can happen at any time in a wide variety of locations and the severity of which is set to increase due to the effects of climate change. The most significant source of flood risk in Abbeyfeale is fluvial from the floodplains of the River Feale and the River Allaughan in the town and the Glórach stream flowing at the rear of Main Street. Flooding from rivers and prolonged, intense and localised rainfall can also cause sewer flooding, overland flooding and groundwater flooding. Flooding has significant impacts on human activities as it can threaten lives, livelihoods, housing, transport, and public service infrastructure and commercial/ industrial enterprises. The impacts of both flooding and climate change can be significant and wide reaching. Developments in inappropriate locations can exacerbate the problems of flooding by accelerating and increasing surface water run-off, altering

watercourses and removing floodplain storage.

Climate change increases flood risk, leading to more frequent flooding and an increase in the depth and extent of flooding. A new approach is needed to manage our future in a planned, productive and sustainable way with increased emphasis on travel patterns, energy use and the protection of the environment. The challenges of climate change and the transition to a low carbon society is a key component of national and regional policies and is a significant cross cutting theme to be included throughout much of the policy and objectives in the Limerick Development Plan and the Abbeyfeale LAP. Careful consideration of flood risk is now a key requirement in the preparation of the LAP and in determining planning applications.

To comply with the EU Floods Directive and in line with the guidelines for Planning Authorities, an assessment of flood risk has been formally taken into account in the preparation of this plan. The objective of “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines” is to integrate flood risk management into the planning process, thereby assisting in the delivery of sustainable development. For this to be achieved, flood risk must be assessed as early as possible in the planning process.

This LAP has been prepared to ensure 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) for Abbeyfeale has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the DoEHLG and OPW ‘The Planning and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities’, and accompanies this Plan. This ensures that flood risk management is integrated into the spatial planning policies of the LAP. The Flood Risk map prepared as part of the SFRA highlights potential development areas that require the application of a Justification Test and/or more detailed assessment at a site-specific level. The SFRA also provides guidelines for development within areas at potential risk of flooding, and specifically looks at flood risk and the potential for development within a number of key sites in Abbeyfeale. Section 4.7 Climate Change and Figure 4-5 within the SFRA demonstrates the precaution-



any approach taken to climate change by avoiding development in areas potentially prone to flooding in the future.

Constraints currently exist along the Glórach stream and associated culvert. In this regard, the Council will seek to upgrade this culvert to minimise the risk to flood. A riparian buffer will also be required on lands zoned New Residential between Cedarville and the Clash Road. Riparian buffers are linear bands of permanent natural or semi-natural vegetation adjacent to streams and rivers. They have a role in preventing flooding as they give room for natural dynamics of the water-course such as rising and falling water levels, and the vegetation and soil can absorb surface water due to rainfall or rising ground water. This reduces the channel erosion potential of watercourses and thus the potential of downstream flooding.

#### **Objectives IU 04: Flood Risk Management:** 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) Seek to upgrade the culvert serving the Glórach stream to minimise the risk of flooding, subject to resources.

f) Ensure the protection of a 20m riparian buffer free from development, on greenfield lands, in particular the lands zoned New Residential by the Glórach stream east of the Clash Road and west of Cedarville.

#### **9.4 Energy Generation, Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructure**

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. 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).

According to the 2016 Census, 54.6% of households have broadband internet services in Abbeyfeale. The fibre broadband network will give significant economic and social advantage for Abbeyfeale, as a place to set up internet-based business, facilitate working from home and the creation of smart homes and smart buildings. Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) and WiFi4EU Access Points (APs) have been installed in the town at St. Ita's Hall, Fuchsia Hair Design, The Coffee Pot, Little Nero's and the Cellar Bar and there is a digital hub co-working space at WorkBase (former Provincial Bank) on Main Street. The Council will continue to support the 5G rollout and National Broadband Plan.

In terms of telecommunications infrastructure, the Local Authority seeks to balance between facilitating the provision of mobile telecommunications services in the interests of social and economic

progress and sustaining residential amenities, environmental quality and public health. When considering proposals for telecommunication masts, antennae and ancillary equipment, all proposals will have regard to the Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures Guidelines and subsequent advisory documents issued by the DECLG.

**Objectives IU 05: Energy Generation, Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure:** 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 founda-

tion 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.

## **9.5 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 Abbeyfeale area. Abbeyfeale has a bring bank facility for recycling of glass and cans and there is are Civic Amenity Recycling facilities nearby in Newcastle West.

Development proposals should have regard to the Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects.

**Objectives IU 06: 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 SETTLEMENT CAPACITY AUDIT

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## 10.1 Land Use Zoning and Implementation

This Local Area Plan outlines specific policies and objectives for the development of Abbeyfeale. 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	39.09	62.29
Education and Community	12.59	10.24
Enterprise and Employment	40.14	36.86
Existing Residential	52.81	51.25
Local Centre	1.72	7.39
Open Space and Recreation	33.50	37.25
Residential Serviced Sites	3.03	16.32
Tourist Related Development	1.52	1.14
Town Centre	12.19	9.12
Utilities	2.15	3.53
New Residential	7.94	24.92
Semi-natural Open Space	9.00	7.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>215.48</b>	<b>275.09</b>

Table 8: Quantum of lands zoned per land use zone 2014 and 2023

Land Use Zoning	Objective and Purpose
<b>Town Centre</b>	<p>Objective: To protect, consolidate and facilitate the development of Abbeyfeale's commercial, retail, educational, leisure, residential, social and community uses and facilities.</p> <p>Purpose: To consolidate Abbeyfeale's Town Centre through densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure, residential uses and urban streets, while delivering a high-quality urban environment, which will enhance the quality of life of residents, visitors and workers alike. This zone will strengthen retail provision, in accordance with 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>
<b>Existing Residential</b>	<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><b>Local Centre</b></p>	<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 Abbeyfeale 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>
<p><b>New Residential</b></p>	<p>Objective: To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of social and physical infrastructure.</p> <p>Purpose: This zone is intended primarily for new high quality housing development. The quality and mix of residential areas and the servicing of lands will be a priority to support balanced communities. New housing and infill developments should include a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, to cater for all members of society. Design should be complimentary to the surroundings and should not adversely impact on the amenity of adjoining residents. These areas require high levels of accessibility, including pedestrian, cyclists and public transport (where feasible).</p> <p>This zone may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to facilitate the development of new residential communities such as open space, schools, childcare facilities, doctor's surgeries and playing fields etc.</p>
<p><b>Residential Serviced Sites</b></p>	<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>
<p><b>Education and Community</b></p>	<p>Objective: To protect and provide for educational, training and 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>

<b>Enterprise and Employment</b>	<p>Objective: To provide for and improve general enterprise, employment, business and commercial activities.</p> <p>Purpose: Provides for enterprise, employment and general business activities and acknowledge existing/permitted retail uses. This land use zone may accommodate light industry, low input and emission manufacturing, logistics and warehousing and office developments. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location, having regard to surrounding uses and scale. A proliferation of retail uses will not be permitted. Proposals may generate a considerable amount of traffic by both employees and service vehicles and traffic assessments may be required. Sites should be highly accessible, well designed and permeable with good pedestrian, cyclist links to the town centre and public transport. The implementation of mobility management plans will be required to provide important means of managing accessibility to these sites.</p>
<b>Open Space and Recreation</b>	<p>Objective: To protect, provide for and improve open space, active and passive recreational amenities.</p> <p>Purpose: To provide for active and passive recreational resources including parks, sports and leisure facilities and amenities. The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a substantial loss of open space. Linked green spaces/corridors are encouraged.</p>
<b>Utilities</b>	<p>Objective: To provide for the infrastructural needs of transport and other utility providers.</p> <p>Purpose: This zoning also provides for and preserves land for the provision of services such as electricity and gas networks, telecommunications, the treatment of water and wastewater etc. Such proposals shall demonstrate resilience to climate change.</p>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<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.</p> <p>One off dwellings will only be considered on agriculturally zoned land outside of Flood Zones A and B, subject to the terms and conditions of the rural housing policy as set out in the Limerick Development Plan.</p>
<b>Semi-Natural Open Space</b>	<p>Objective: To protect the low lying lands adjoining the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation- an EU designated Natura 2000 site, which contains the River Feale.</p> <p>Purpose: This zoning recognises the importance and need for protection of this area for wildlife, habitat, flora and fauna and floodwater storage</p>

<b>Tourism-related Development</b>	<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 Abbeyfeale Greenway Hub on the Limerick Greenway, and Abbeyfeale's architectural and cultural heritage.</p>
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Table 9: Purpose and objective of each land use zoning

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.

<b>Generally Permitted indicated as:</b>  /	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.
<b>Open for Consideration indicated as:</b>  O	A use open for consideration is one which 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.
<b>Generally Not Permitted indicated as:</b>  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.

## **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 Abbeyfeale. 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

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

<b>Campsite/ Caravan Park - Holiday Use</b>	X	X	O	O	X	/	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Car Park</b>	/	O	X	X	/ <sup>1</sup>	/ <sup>1</sup>	/ <sup>1</sup>	/ <sup>1</sup>	X	/	X
<b>Childcare Facilities</b>	/	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Civic Recycling/ Waste Facility</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	/	X
<b>Community/ Cultural/ Tourism Facility</b>	/	/	/	/	/	O	X	/	X	X	X
<b>Conference Centre</b>	/	/	X	X	O <sup>1</sup>	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Dancehall/ Nightclub</b>	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Education/ Training Facility</b>	/	/	/	/	/	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Enterprise Centre</b>	/	X	X	X	O <sup>1</sup>	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Extractive Industry/ Quarry</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O
<b>Fast Food Outlet/ Take-Away</b>	/	/	X	X	X	/ <sup>1</sup>	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Food Drink Processing/ Manufacturing</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	/ <sup>1</sup>
<b>XFXuel Depot/ Storage</b>	O	O	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Funeral Home</b>	/	/	O	O	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Garden Centre</b>	/	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	O
<b>General Public Administration</b>	/	O	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Hair &amp; Beauty Salons</b>	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Halting Site</b>	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X	X	O	X
<b>Health Centre</b>	/	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	X	X	X

<b>Health Practitioner</b>	/	/	/	/	/	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>High Technology Manufacturing</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Hospital</b>	/	X	X	X	/	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Hotel/Hostel</b>	/	O	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Industry - Heavy</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Industry - Light</b>	O	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Leisure/ Recreation Facility*</b>	/	O	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	X	X
<b>Logistics</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Nursing Home/ Residential Care or Institution/ Retirement Town</b>	/	/	/	/	O	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Offices</b>	/	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Petrol Station<sup>3</sup></b>	/	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Place of Worship</b>	/	/	O	O	/	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Plant Storage/ Hire</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Professional Services*</b>	/	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Public House</b>	/	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	/
<b>Renewable Energy Installation</b>	O <sup>1</sup>	O <sup>1</sup>	O <sup>1</sup>	O <sup>1</sup>	O <sup>1</sup>	/ <sup>1</sup>	/	X	X	/	O
<b>Research and Dev./ Science &amp; Technology</b>	/	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	/
<b>Residential</b>	/	/	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	/ <sup>4</sup>
<b>Restaurant/ Café</b>	/	/	X	X	O	O	O	X	X	X	X

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

4 Subject to compliance with the Rural Housing Policy, Limerick Development Plan 2023 - 2029



<b>Retail</b>	/	O <sup>3</sup>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Retail - Warehouse</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Scrap Yard</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X
<b>Sports Facility</b>	O	O	/	/	/	X	O	/	X	X	X
<b>Telecommunications Structures</b>	/	/	X	X	/	X	/	O	X	/	/
<b>Vehicle Sales Outlet</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Vehicle Servicing/ Maintenance/ Repairs</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Veterinary Clinic</b>	/	/	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	/ <sup>5</sup>
<b>Warehousing</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
<b>Waste Disposal &amp; Recover Facility</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	/	X
<b>Wholesale - Cash and Carry</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X

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

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

\*Professional Services - Including for example accountants, architects, solicitors

## 10.4 Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA)

In accordance with Appendix 3 of the National Planning Framework (NPF), the tiered approach to zoning has been applied to zoned lands as laid out in Fig.11.1 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 services, but have the potential to become fully serviced over the lifetime of the Plan. The Settlement Capacity Assessment 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. The sites are identified as being serviced (utilities), served by public transport and communi-

ty infrastructure and satisfies the principles of the Ten-Minute Town Concept and compact growth, all promoted by higher-level spatial plans. Where existing infrastructure is located in close proximity to a site and can potentially extended to service the site, these services have been indicated as available. It should be noted that 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.

Legend			
Serviced/Yes	✓	Serviceable/ Investment required	!
Not required/No	✗	Located within a 500m walk	●
Cost (K)	Cost in Thousands	Services	

SCA No	Location	Area (ha)	Density - units per ha	Lighting	Footpath	Public Transport	Road	Water	Foul	Surface Water	Flood Risk	Infill/	Comments	Tier
Land Use Zoning – Town Centre identified as Opportunity Areas, Chapter 4														
1	North of Main Street	0.57	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	Infill site between Main Street and Colbert Terrace. Refer to Opportunity Area 1, Chapter 4, Section 4.5. Mixture of ground floor commercial with overhead residential with pedestrian walkway/ cycleway links. Localised upgrades/extensions of existing infrastructure may be required to facilitate development.	1
2	South of Main Street (east)	1.05	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Infill site between Main Street and public carpark by Collins Park. Refer to Opportunity Area 2, Chapter 4, and Section 4.5. Mix of residential types (terraced housing and apartments) and commercial units on ground floor, 3 no. pedestrian links to Main Street, shared space and home zone. Plot amalgamation may be required and phasing of development is open to consideration.	1

3	South of Main Street (west)	0.26	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Located within 200m of the town centre. Refer to Opportunity Area 5, Chapter 4, Section 4.5. A mix of terraced housing and detached on larger plots circa 450sqm. Pedestrian links to town centre and sports ground.	1
*Infill lands where density is to be determined at detailed design stage in line with the town centres uses encouraged and a percentage of the site will be for residential purposes.														
Land use Zone – New Residential														
4	Land between Grove Crescent and Collins Park	0.38	*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	1
5	St. Ita's Road, Abbeyfeale West	4.2	22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	1
6	Clash Road	2.7	22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	1



8	Killarney Road	1.4	22	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	Located 800m within town centre and 200m of public bus stop. Part of site granted permission for 97 units under Ref: 05/954, 14 units completed and occupied. Localised upgrades/extensions of existing infrastructure may be required to facilitate development.	1
Land Use Zone – Residential Serviced Sites															
7	Killarney Road	1	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	Located within 480m of town centre, and 350m of public bus stop and located on main route into town. Use as serviced sites is compatible with adjoining uses. The water abstraction point is located approximately 100m away; appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure no impact to drinking water quality.	1
9	Killarney Road	1.5	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	Located within 500m of town centre and 350m of public bus stop. Planning permission granted under Ref 17/561 permission granted for 10 serviced sites. Critical water mains pass along the southern boundary of site 9, account must be taken of these mains in the design layout and provision Made to protect/ divert the mains in accordance with Uisce Éireann standards and procedures.	1

10	Killarney Road	0.50	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	Located within 550m of town centre and 350m of public bus stop. Alongside permitted serviced sites. Critical watermain pass adjacent to Site 10, account must be taken of these mains in the design layout and provision made to protect/ divert the mains in accordance with Uisce Éireann standards and procedures.	1
Land Use Zone – Enterprise and Employment														
11	Mountmahon	32.6	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	Located within 700m of the town centre on the N21. Road Safety Audit and Traffic Impact Assessment will be required for future development. 20m riparian buffer required on eastern boundary to mitigate flood risk. Localised upgrades/extension of existing infrastructure may be required to facilitate development.	

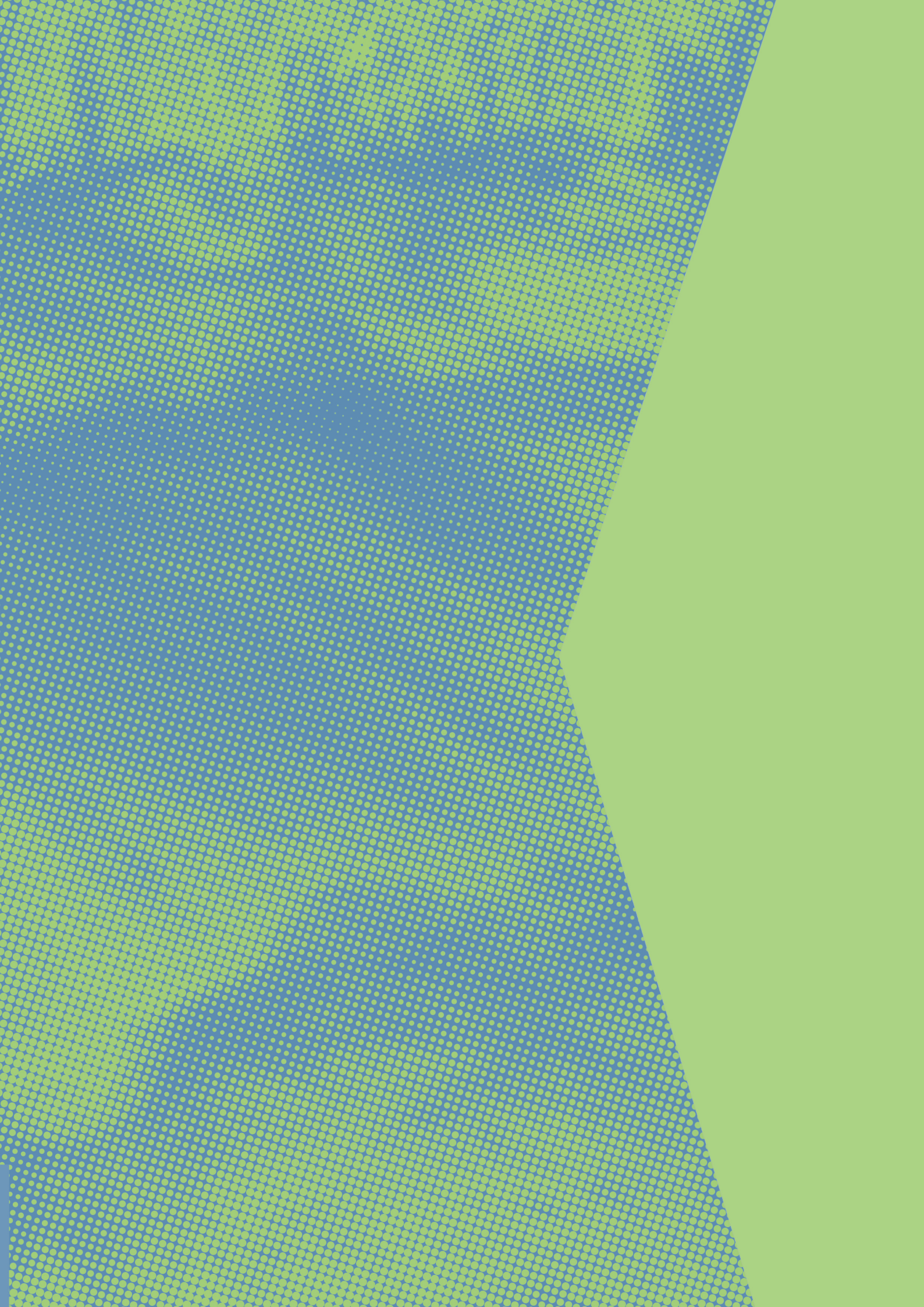
Figure 11.1: Settlement Capacity Audit

# CHAPTER 11

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

<u>11.1</u>	<u>Implementation of the Local Area Plan</u>	<u>112</u>
<u>11.2</u>	<u>Identified Local Area Plan Actions</u>	<u>112</u>







**11.1 Implementation of the Local Area Plan**

The Plan sets out the Council’s vision and strategy for Abbeyfeale, 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 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 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 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 Plan. Table 7 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 Town Centre Traffic Management Scheme and public realm upgrades	LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate/ Planning, Environment and Place-making, NTA and TII	Short – medium term
2	Improved cycleway/walkway connection between the Limerick Greenway and Abbeyfeale town centre	LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate and the NTA	Medium term
3	Maintenance and upgrade works to the Multi Use Games Area in Abbeyfeale Town Park	LCCC Planning, Environment and Place-making Directorate	Short term
4	Development of a Greenway Hub in Abbeyfeale	LCCC Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate	Medium term
5	Develop a new cemetery	LCCC Community, Tourism and Culture Directorate	Long term
6	Upgrade surface water culvert along the Glorach Stream	LCCC Planning, Environment and Place-making Directorate/Transportation and Mobility Directorate	Short – medium term
7	Progress the N21 Road Scheme to planning stage	Mid – West Road Design Office and TII	Medium term
8	Deliver a public footpath on the Clash Road to connect the existing and proposed development to the town centre	LCCC Transport and Mobility Directorate	Short – medium term

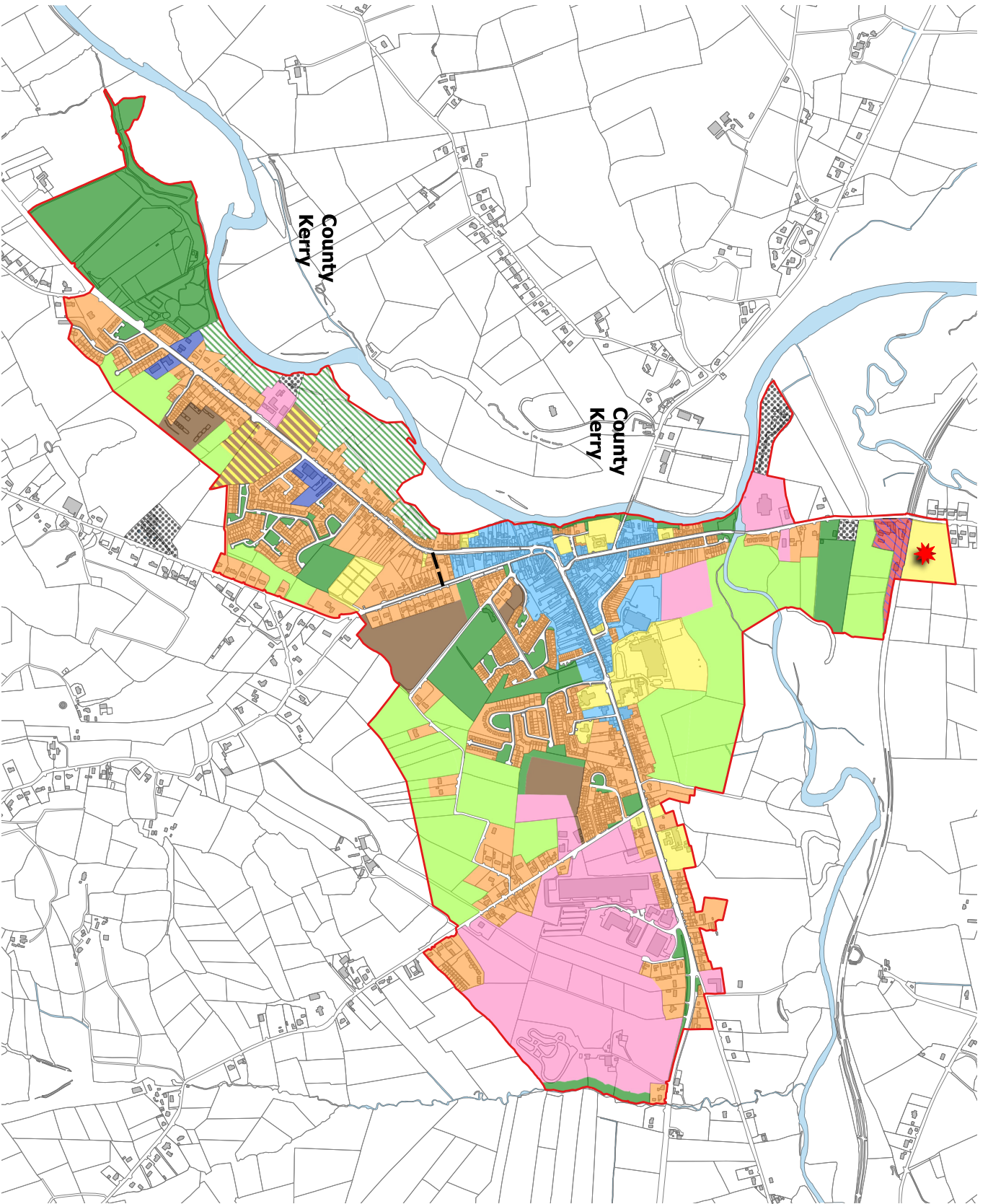


# APPENDIX

<u>Appendix I</u>	<u>Maps</u>	<u>116</u>
<u>Appendix II</u>	<u>Record of Protected Structures</u>	<u>123</u>
<u>Appendix III</u>	<u>Sites and Monuments Record</u>	<u>129</u>







# Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029

## Zoning Map

### Legend

- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Employment
- Existing Residential
- Local Centre
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Semi-Natural Open Space
- Tourism Related Development
- Town Centre
- Utilities
- Indicative Link Road
- See Objective C1
- LAP Boundary

Forward Planning  
Planning, Environment and  
Place-making Directorate

Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan  
2023-2029

October 2023

JD C.B.

Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan  
2023-2029





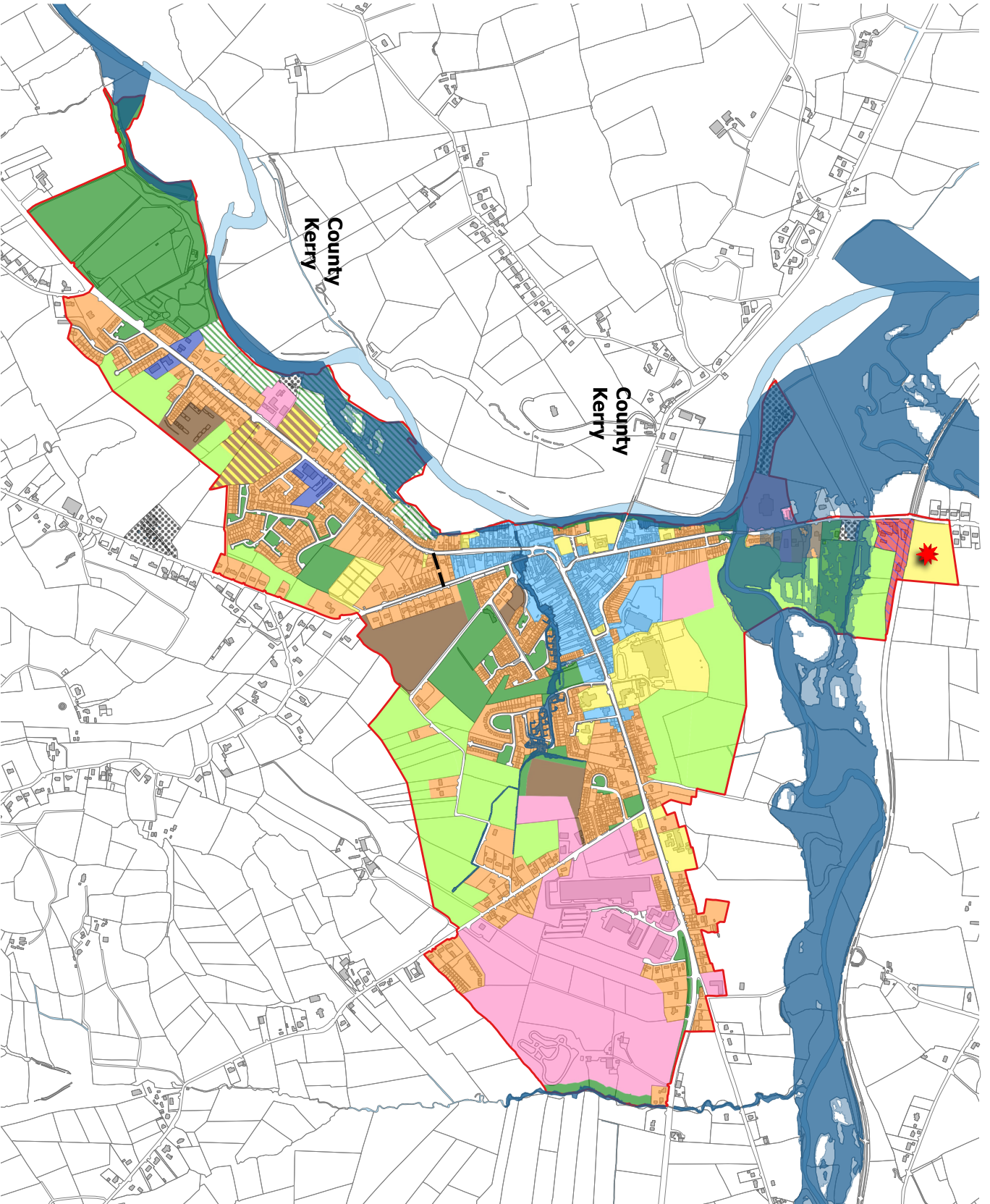
### Legend

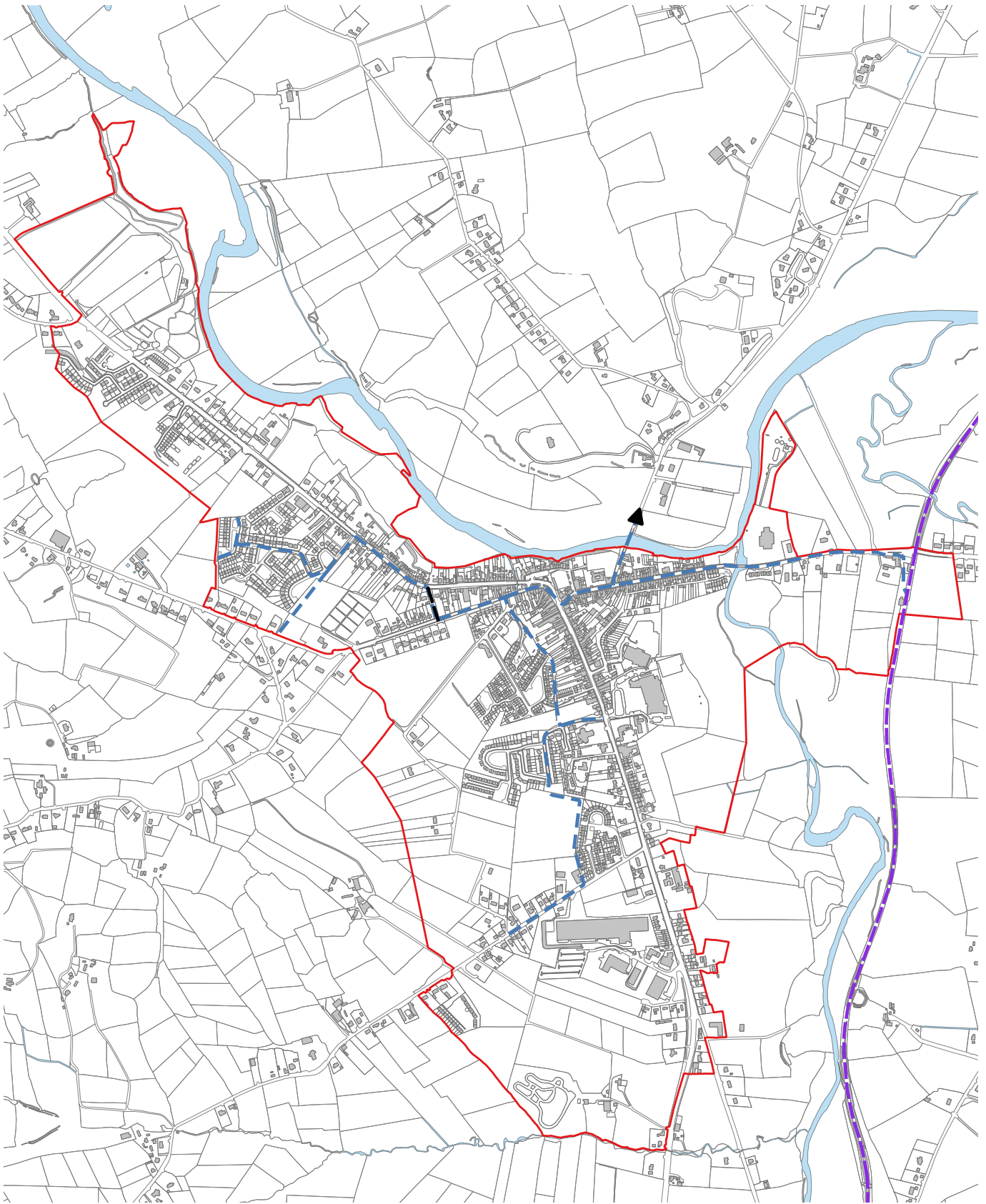
- Flood Zone A
- Flood Zone B
- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Residential
- Local Centre
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Semi-Natural Open Space
- Tourism Related Development
- Town Centre
- Utilities
- Indicative link road
- See Objective C1
- LAP Boundary

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Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan  
2023-2029

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Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029	





# Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029

Amenity and Sustainable  
Transport Map

## Legend

- Limerick Greenway
- Potential Pedestrian and Cycle Links
- Indicative link road
- LAP Boundary

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Approved: 12/01/2023  
E. O'Leary, Executive Director of Planning

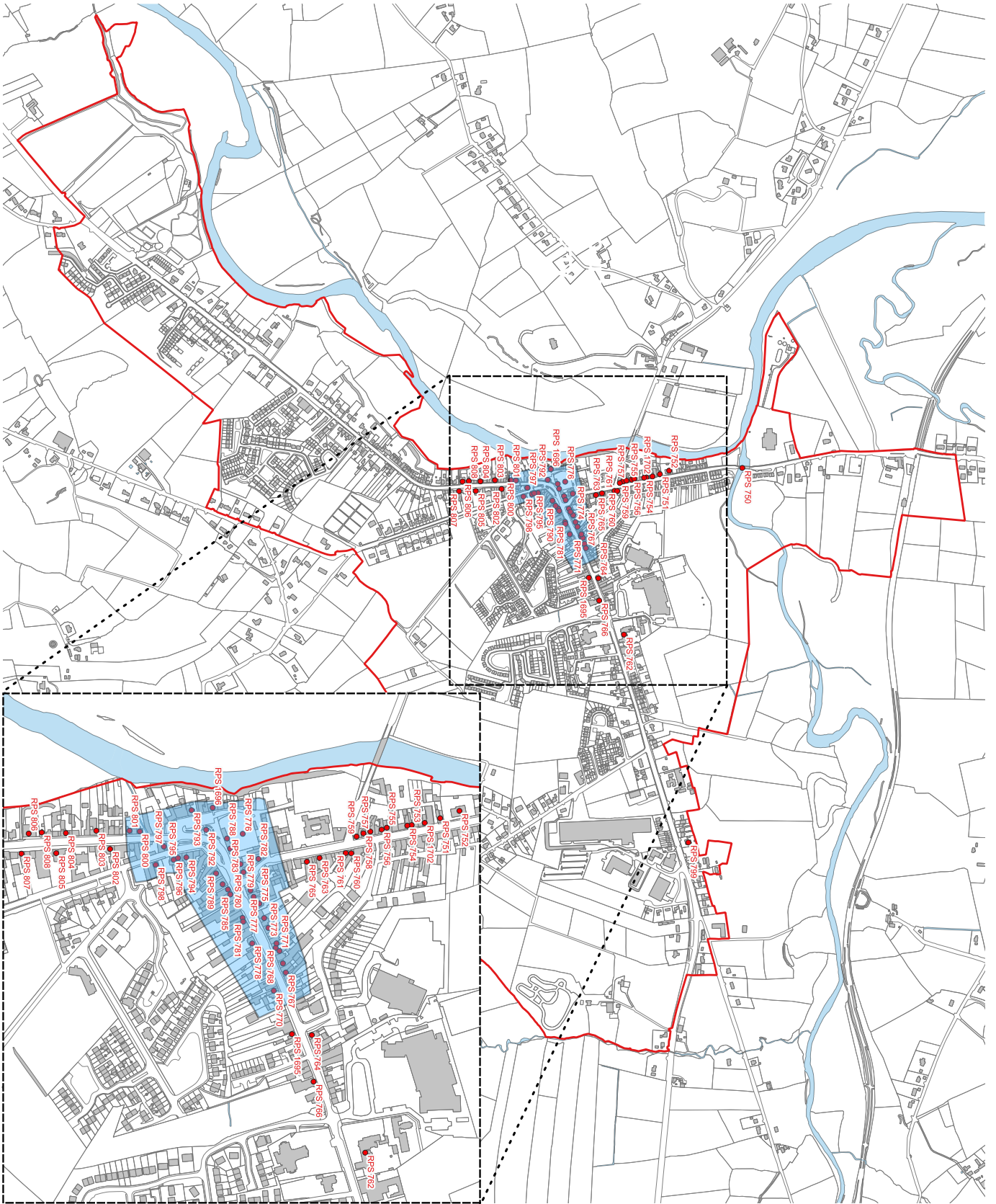
October 2023 ABBYA/23-29/17

J.D. C.B. N/A

Approved: 12/01/2023  
A. O'Leary, Executive Director of Planning







Abbeyfeale  
Local Area Plan  
2023-2029

Record of Protected  
Structures Map

### Legend

- Protected Structures
- Architectural Area
- LAP Boundary

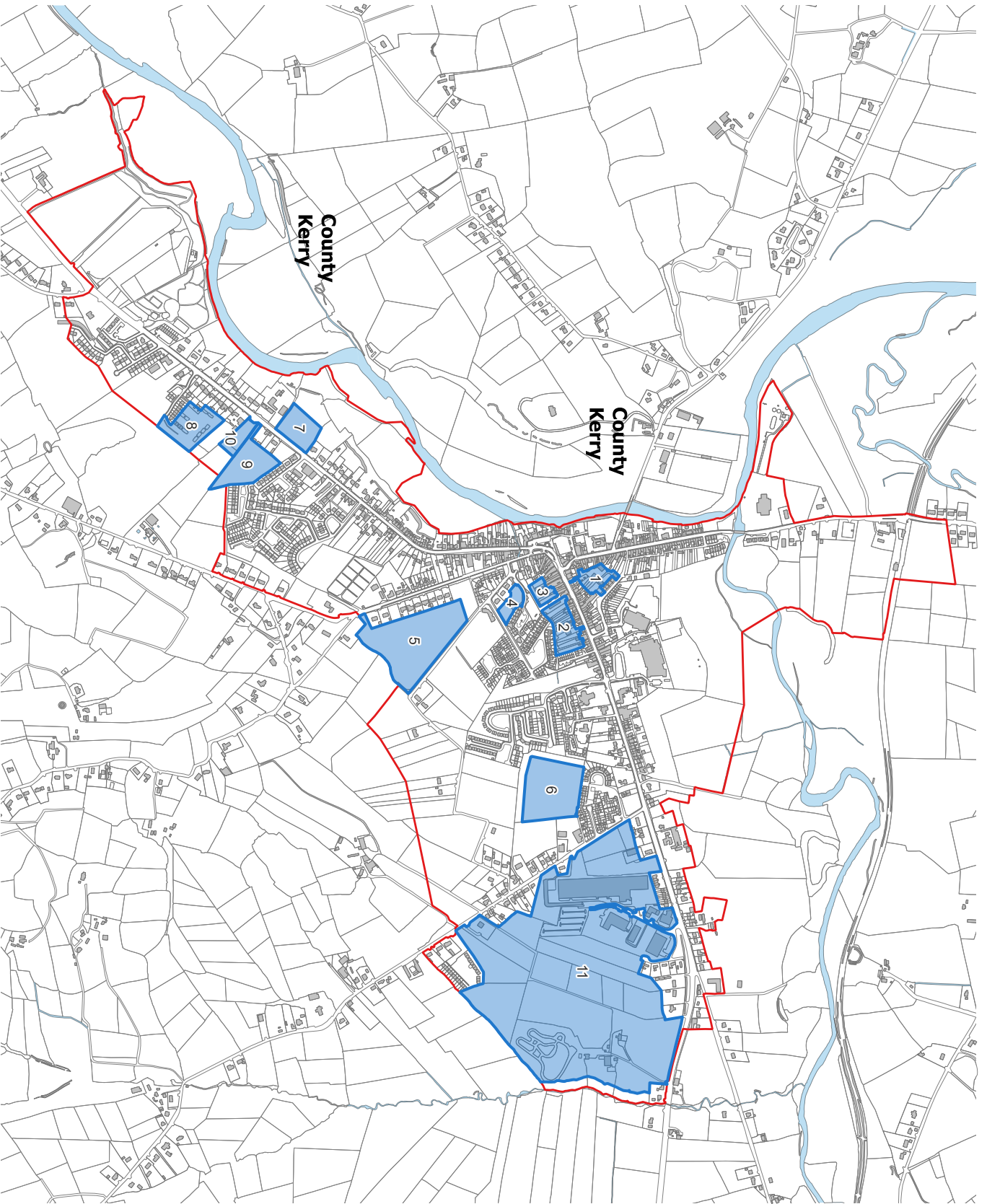
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October 2023	AB/RS/23-29/10
J.D.	C.B.
Author	N/A
Approved	









**Abbeyfeale  
Local Area Plan  
2023-2029**

**Settlement Capacity  
Audit Map**

**Legend**

- Settlement Capacity Audit Sites
- LAP Boundary

**Forward Planning  
Planning, Environment and  
Place-making Directorate**

Abbeyfeale, 2023-2029  
E-mail: [forwardplanning@kerrycc.ie](mailto:forwardplanning@kerrycc.ie)

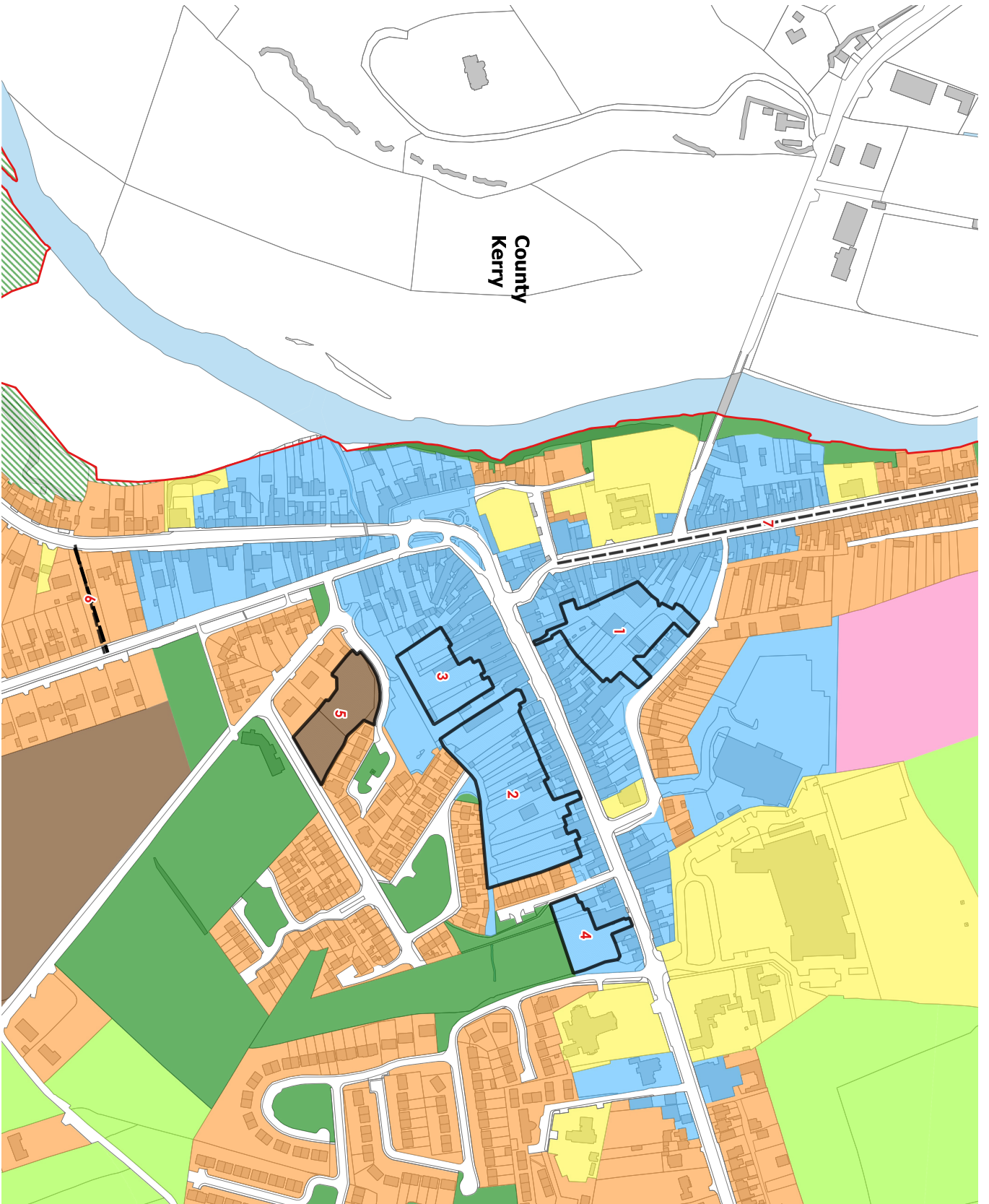
**October 2023** **AB/SCA/23-29/168**

**JD** **CB**

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**Abbeyfeale  
Local Area Plan  
2023-2029**

**Opportunity Sites Map**

**Legend**

- Opportunity Sites
- Opportunity Sites
- Indicative Link Road
- Agriculture
- Education and Community
- Enterprise and Employment
- Existing Residential
- New Residential
- Open Space and Recreation
- Semi-Natural Open Space
- Town Centre
- LAP Boundary

Forward Planning  
Planning, Environment and  
Policing Directorate










Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan  
2023-2029











October 2023  
J.D. C.B.





## Appendix II - Record of Protected Structures

RPS Reg. No.	NIAH Reg. No.	Name	Location	Description	Photo
750	21904203	Allaghaun Bridge	Abbeyfeale West	Triple-span humpback road bridge, built c. 1780	
751	21833009	P.M. Aherne	Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Two-storey former drapery shop, dated 1938	
752	21833001	Teach na Féile	New Street/ Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Former School house dated 1913	
753	21833002	Wards	New Street/ Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Former commercial premises built c. 1915	
754	21833003	Hartnett	New Street/ Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Terraced two-bay two-storey house, built c. 1915 with render shopfront to front	
755	None	O'Connell's Shop	New Street/ Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
756	None	O'Connell's Bar & Grocery	New Street/ Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
757	21833004	Lane's Shop	New Street/ Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises built c. 1915	
758	21833005	Kissane - O'Donovan	New Street, Abbeyfeale	Two-storey former house, built c. 1915, having render shop-front	

759	21833006	J.D.Hartnett	New Street/ Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
760	21833007	Cryle Dry Cleaners	Church Street, Abbeyfeale	Terraced c. 1900, having ornate render shopfront	
761	21833031	Unknown	Church Street, Abbeyfeale	Former commercial premises, built c. 1920	
762	21833022	Convent of Mercy	Limerick Road, Abbeyfeale	Convent dated 1875	
763	None	Roches	New Street/ Athea Road, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
764	None	McMahon's Shop - Facade	Convent Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
765	21833008	M.J. Maloney	Church Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises, built c. 1890	
766	21833021	Abbey Cinema Facade	Convent Street, Abbeyfeale	Art Deco style former cinema, built c. 1940	
767	21833024	McEnery	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Terraced two-bay two-storey former house, built c. 1880, having render shop- front to front	
768	None	Emerald Jewellery - Facade	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	

769	21833025	The Deep End Training Academy	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Terraced two-bay three-storey former house, built c. 1860, having shopfront to front	
770	21833019	J.D. Daly's	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	End-of-terrace two-bay three-storey former house and pub, dated 1859	
771	None	Donal & Ann's Diner - Facade	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
772	None	Ann's Diner - Facade	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
773	None	The Patriot	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Terraced four-bay commercial premises	
774	21833027	Fuschia Hair and Beauty	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises built c. 1900	
775	21833028	D.J. Murphy	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	End-of-terrace three-bay two-storey former shop, built c. 1920, having render and timber shopfront to front	
776	None	Cistercian Abbey	The Square, Abbeyfeale	Medieval site - site of the medieval abbey which gives the town its name	
777	21833029	O'Connor's	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Two-storey former bank, built c. 1950	
778	21833018	Provincial House - Former Provincial Bank	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Two-storey former bank, built c. 1950	





779	21833030	Eccleston's	Main Street/ New Street, Abbeyfeale	Corner-sited three-bay three storey shop, built c. 1920	
780	None	Unknown	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Former commercial premises, known as O'Connell's Bar	
781	None	Bobby's Bar - Facade	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
782	21833009	D.P. Ahern	Church Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises, dated 1938	
783	None	The Bobbin Case	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
784	None	Sue Ryder - former Kerry Bar	Main Street, Abbeyfeale West	Commercial premises	
785	21833017	Adrenalin	Main Street, Abbeyfeale West	Commercial premises built c. 1900	
786	21833016	Harnett	Main Street, Abbeyfeale West	End-of-terrace, three- bay three storey former house, built c. 1900	
787	None	Stack Auctioneers	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
788	None	O'Connell's	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	

789	21833014	A.I.B.	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises, built c. 1870	
790	21833015	Leens Hotel	Main Street, Abbeyfeale	Detached five-bay three-storey built c. 1840	
792	21833010	Fr. Casey Statue	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Civic structure, erected in 1910	
793	None	Unknown	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
794	None	The Vegetable Shop	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
795	None	Paddy Power's	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
796	None	O'Rourke's Bar	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
797	21833011	The Cellar Bar	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Corner-sited three-bay two-storey public house, built c. 1860	
798	None	Mullanes	Market Square, Abbeyfeale	Former commercial premises	
799	None	Unknown	Limerick Road, Abbeyfeale	Detached three-bay single-storey mid-20th Century house with loose Arts and Crafts references	

800	21833012	Unknown	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	Formerly the Post Office - built c. 1915	
801	None	Unknown	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	Former commercial premises	
802	None	Unknown	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	Private dwelling	
803	None	O'Connor Solicitors	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
804	None	Begley's	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
805	None	Supervalu - formerly Maloney's Garage	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	Commercial premises	
806	None	Courthouse Abbeyfeale	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	Urban Structure - civic	
807	None	Abbeyfeale Credit Union	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	End-of-terrace three-bay two-storey premises	
808	21833013	Feale Ville	Bridge Street, Abbeyfeale	Dwelling, dated 1934	
1695	21833020	Tobins	Abbeyfeale West	Two-storey house, built c. 1940, having render shopfront	



1696	None	West Limerick CDP, formerly O'Connell's	Market Square, Abbey West	Community Resource Centre	
1702	None	Abbeyfeale West	Abbeyfeale West	Former commercial premises	

### **Appendix III - Sites and Monuments Record**

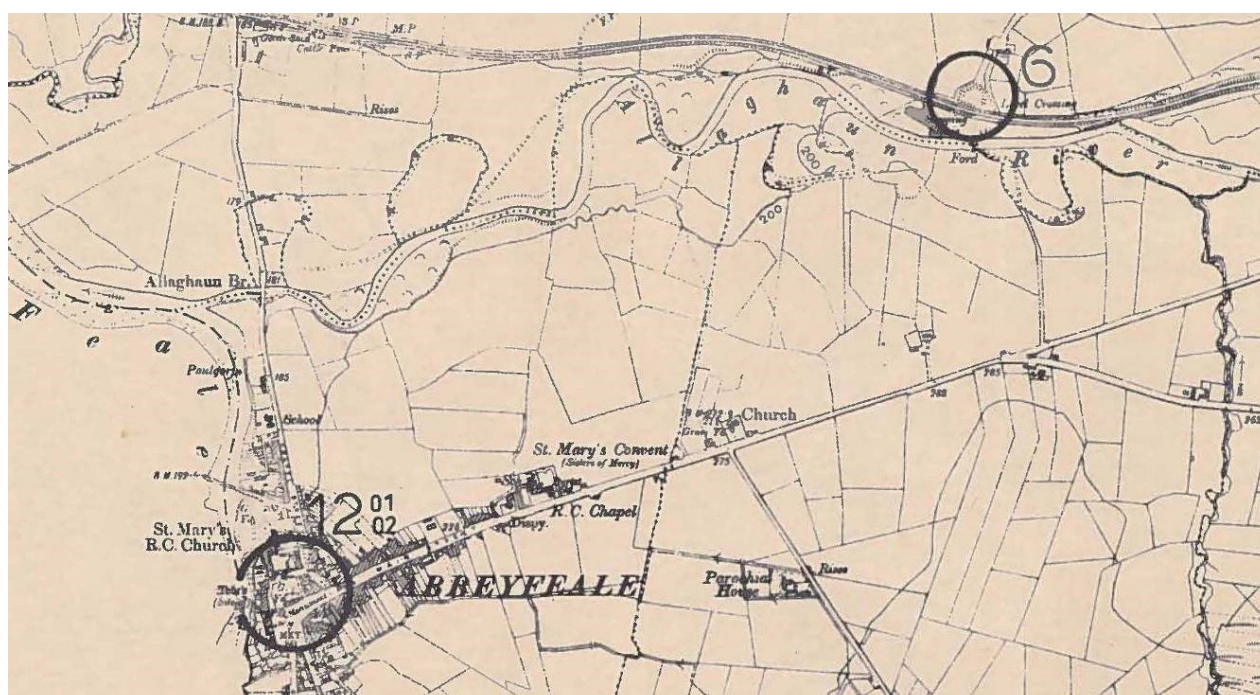
Archaeological sites are included in the Sites and Monuments Record under the provisions of Section 12(1) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994. Section 12(3) of the Act states "When the owner or occupier...of a monument or place which has been recorded under subsection (1) or any person proposes 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 Abbeyfeale:

<b>RMP Ref. No.</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Townland</b>
LI042-12001	Church	Abbeyfeale West
LI042-12002	Graveyard	Abbeyfeale West



Sites and Monuments Record – Abbeyfeale





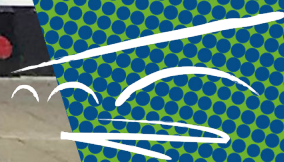




ABBEYFEALE

ATLANTIC EDGE

**LIMERICK**  
EUROPEAN EMBRACE



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

**Limerick** City  
& County Council