



To the Cathaoirleach and Each Member of the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale

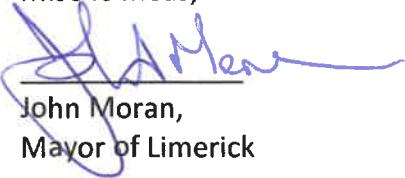
Re: Proposal to extend the life of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026.

A Chomhairleoir, a chara,

I enclose herewith a copy of the Mayor's Report on the proposal to extend the life of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026, for your consideration.

The Elected Members, of the Municipal District of Adare-Rathkeale at their December meeting shall consider the Mayor's Report and decide by resolution in accordance with Section 19(1)(d) to defer the sending of notices under Section 20(3)(a)(i) and the publishing of notices under Section 20(3)(a)(ii) for the Croom Local Area Plan for a further period of 4 years and thereby extending the duration of the Local Area Plan.

Mise le meas,



John Moran,
Mayor of Limerick

CROOM LOCAL AREA PLAN 2020 – 2026 EXTENSION

Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
to accompany the Director General's Report
in accordance with Section 19 (1)(d) and 19(1)(e) of the
Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) in
relation to the deferral of making a new Local Area Plan,
and
in accordance with the Planning and Development
Amendment Act 2021 having regard to European Directive
92/43/EEC Habitats Directive

29th November 2024

Limerick City and County Council
Forward Planning
Planning, Environment and Place-making Directorate
Merchants Quay

Limerick



Prepared by:
Limerick City & County Council

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1 Introduction

This Screening report to inform the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process has been prepared by Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) to inform the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process with regard to the proposed extension of the duration of the Croom Local Area Plan (LAP) 2020 -2026 for a further four years until 2028.

The proposed extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026 is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan.

The report comprises information in support of the Screening of the proposal in line with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (hereafter referred to as the Habitats Directive).

The evaluations presented in this Screening report have been completed by a qualified and competent ecologist utilising current guidance and scientific information, as well as ecological survey data on the ground. The baseline environment and assessment of significance of effects has been informed through consultation with NPWS.

The purpose of this Screening report is to inform the Appropriate Assessment (AA) process to determine, based on objective scientific information, whether the proposal, alone and in combination with other plans or projects, has the potential for significant effects on any designated European Site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The Screening conclusion statement is determined based on the description of the proposed measures provided herein, and is full and complete. Local ecological interests separate to any Natura 2000 designation were identified on site but are not evaluated or assessed in the context of the current document, which is restricted to the requirements for AA reporting with regard to the Habitats Directive requirements under Article 6(3).

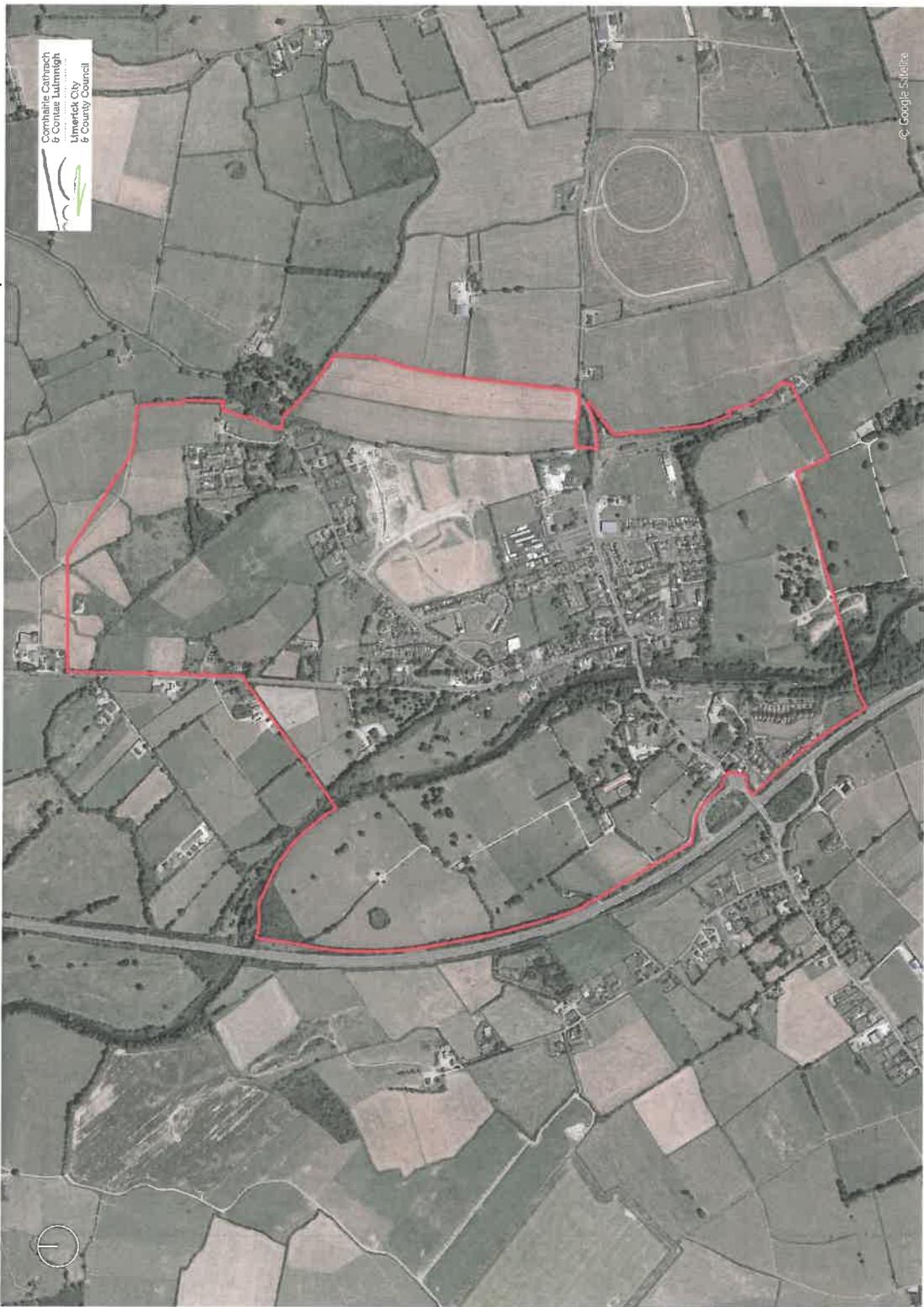
This Screening Report complies with the requirements of Article 6 of the EC Habitats Directive (1992) transposed in Ireland principally through the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (as amended) (referred to as the Habitats Regulations herein). In the context of the proposed project, the appropriate legislation is the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations (2011) and the 'public authority' is the relevant local authority, in this case Limerick City and County Council. As the project proponent, L.C.C.C. has prepared this report to inform the Appropriate Assessment process to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Article 42 of the Habitats Regulations, which states as follows:

"A screening for Appropriate Assessment of a plan or project for which an application for consent is received, or which a public authority wishes to undertake or adopt, and which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a European Site, shall be carried out by the public authority to assess, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the site, if that plan or project, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on the European site".

The Croom Local Area Plan (LAP) 2020–2026 is the public statement of planning policies and objectives for future growth and development of the town. The Croom LAP was adopted by the Elected Members of the Adare - Rathkeale Municipal District the 3rd March 2020 and came into effect 14th April 2020.

The Croom LAP was screened for SEA and AA in 2020. The LAP is due to expire in 2026. The total lands zoned is 158.17 hectares in the Croom LAP. According to the 2022 Census the population of Croom town is 1240 persons.

Fig. 1. Croom LAP Area 2020 – 2026 adopted April 2020 by Elected Members, Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District



Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides for the extension of the valid lifespan of a Local Area Plan, from a maximum of 6 years to an effective maximum of 10 years in total. The extension of the Local Area Plan timeframe is sought in order to provide certainty and opportunity to realise the objectives of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 which are in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Refer to the Mayor's Report dated September 2024 to be considered by the Elected Member of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District which outlines the rationale for the extension of duration of the LAP and the consequent deferral of making a new LAP for Croom. The Mayor's Report should be read in tandem with this report and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report that accompanies the Mayor's Report to be considered by the Elected Members.

Limerick City and County Council consulted with the environmental authorities on the proposed extension to the duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026 as part of the obligations of the local authority under Article 14A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive and the SEA Planning Regulations. The Council, in consultation with the environmental authorities, must make a determination as to whether an AA is required, taking account of the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and any submissions or observations received from the prescribed environmental authorities.

2 THE APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

2.1 Legislative Context

European and national legislation places a collective obligation on Ireland and its citizens to maintain habitats and species in the Natura 2000 network at favourable conservation condition. The Government and its agencies are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of regulations (in particular Part XAB of the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477) (referred to as the Habitats Regulations herein) to ensure the ecological integrity (i.e. Conservation Objectives) of these sites. The Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) seeks to protect birds of special importance by the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for bird species and their habitats listed on Annex I of the Directive. Similarly, the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) designates Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for habitats and species listed in Annex I and Annex II of that Directive.

Ireland has obligations under EU law to protect and conserve biodiversity. This relates to habitats and species both within and outside designated sites. Nationally, Ireland has developed a National Biodiversity Plan (DCHG, 2017) to address issues and halt the loss of biodiversity, in line with international commitments. The vision for biodiversity is outlined: “That biodiversity and ecosystems in Ireland are conserved and restored, delivering benefits essential for all sectors of society and that Ireland contributes to efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems in the EU and globally”.

Ireland aims to conserve habitats and species, through designation of conservation areas under both European and Irish law. The focus of this Screening is on those habitats and species designated pursuant to the EU Birds and EU Habitats Directives in the first instance, however it is recognised that wider biodiversity features have a supporting role to play in many cases where the Conservation Objectives of designated sites is to be maintained/restored.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is an assessment of whether a plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans or projects, could have significant effects on a European site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The requirement of AA is outlined in Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive (1992). Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

Furthermore, Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive requires that:

“If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.”

Over time legal interpretation has been sought on the practical application of the legislation concerning AA, as some terminology has been found to be unclear. European and National case law has clarified a number of issues and some aspects of European Commission (EC) published guidance documents have been superseded by case law. Appropriate Assessment is required to utilise best scientific knowledge in the field, as determined in case law. Competent Authorities must ensure that scientific data (ecological and hydrological expertise) is utilised as appropriate. This report presents a Screening to inform the AA process, which is finalised by a determination for Appropriate Assessment, to be completed by the appropriate Competent Authority (i.e. the local authority), in compliance with their obligations under Article 42 (sub-sections 1, 6, 7, 16 and 18) of the Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations, 2011 (as amended).

2.2 Appropriate Assessment Methodology

The AA process follows a step-wise approach, commencing with a Screening Assessment to determine whether Appropriate Assessment is required; progression through the AA process is contingent on the potential for adverse effects on European Sites (SAC/SPA).

Screening Assessment – This process identifies the likely significant impacts upon a European site from a proposed project or plan. Its purpose is to determine, on the basis of a preliminary assessment and objective criteria, whether a plan or project which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site as a European Site, individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect upon the European site. A project may be “screened-in” if there is a possibility or uncertainty of significant effects upon the European site, thus requiring AA. If there is no evidence to suggest significant effects due to the proposed plan or development the project is “screened-out” and AA is not required.

Appropriate Assessment – Consideration of the project or plan with regard to adverse effects on the integrity of designated European Sites, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site’s structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where adverse impacts have been identified, an assessment of the potential mitigation to reduce/minimise/avoid such impacts is required. The AA statement is the responsibility of the appropriate Competent Authority; this decision making is informed by a Natura Impact Statement (NIS). Such an assessment is required where uncertainty of the significance of effect arises or a potential effect has been defined which requires further procedures / mitigation to remove uncertainty of a defined impact.

Assessment of Alternative Solutions – Where adverse effects on a European Site are identified in the AA process (detailed in the NIS), despite the prescription of mitigation, this third stage examines

alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the European Site.

Assessment Where Adverse Impacts Remain - The fourth and final stage is required where an alternative solution is not available. In this situation, the project can only proceed for Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI), despite the plan or project resulting in adverse effects on European Site(s). This stage provides for an assessment of compensation measures to maintain or enhance the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network.

2.3 Guidance Followed

This report has been carried out using the following guidance:

- Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities. Circular NPW 1/10 & PSSP 2/10.¹
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities. (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2010)².
- Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC 2021) .
- Guidance document on Article 6(4) of the 'Habitats Directive' 92/43/EEC – Clarification of the concepts of: alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest, compensatory measures, overall coherence, opinion of the commission. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg (EC 2007)³.
- Office of the Planning Regulator. Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01. (OPR 2021).⁴

¹ NPWS (2010). Legislation Unit, NPWS Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Dublin.

² National Parks and Wildlife Services (2010):

http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/NPWS_2009_AA_Guidance.pdf

³ European Commission (2007)

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/natura2000/management/docs/art6/guidance_art6_4_en.pdf

⁴ <https://www.opr.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/9729-Office-of-the-Planning-Regulator-Appropriate-Assessment-Screening-booklet-15.pdf>

3 Description of the proposal and the context of the Croom LAP 2020 – 2026.

3.0 Local Area Plan 2019 – 2026

The LAP must be consistent with the objectives of the higher-level spatial plans, including the NPF, RSES and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 as varied.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040. The purpose of the NPF, together with the National Development Plan (NDP), form ‘Project Ireland 2040’ to enable all parts of Ireland, rural and urban, to successfully accommodate growth and change, shifting population and economic growth towards Ireland’s regions and cities other than Dublin, whilst recognising Dublin’s ongoing key role.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region provides a long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic and social development of the Southern Region. The RSES includes Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) to guide the future development of the Region’s three main cities and metropolitan areas – Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 as varied sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Limerick over a 6-year period to 2028. It is informed by the policy and objectives of the RSES and NPF, a public consultation process, collaboration with other agencies including Statutory Bodies and Government Departments, local level strategies, Ministerial Guidelines issued pursuant to Section 28 of the Act, together with EU requirements, regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA). The Limerick Development Plan was adopted as a Reserved Function of the Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council on 17th June 2022 and came into effect 29th July 2022. Variation No. 1 to the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 was adopted by the Elected Members on the 22nd April 2023 comprising an amendment to Policy TR P11 Road Safety and Carrying Capacity of the non-national Road Network and Objective TR O37 Land Uses and Access Standards.

Informed by the RSES and the NPF, the Limerick Development Plan identifies Croom as a Level four Large Village (>500 population) which cater for the daily and weekly needs of its inhabitants and the needs of the surrounding wider catchment area. Level four settlements provide a range of employment opportunities and services appropriate to their size and function, such as secondary and primary schools, childcare facilities, sports grounds/complexes, libraries, Garda stations, medical centres and a good range of local services including shops, pubs, post offices and banks/credit unions.

The Croom LAP 2020 – 2026 as amended sets out a land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town of Croom, complying with the provisions of higher-level spatial plans. The LAP consists of a written statement and maps indicating objectives for zoning of land, residential development, economic development, community infrastructure, built and natural heritage, vacancy, regeneration, open space and recreation, active travel and transport, environmental protection and climate action. The total area of lands zoned in the Croom LAP is

158.17 hectares. This Plan also includes a Serviced Land Assessment, which informed the quantum and location of the land zoned in the Plan. The adoption of the LAP, and the proposed extension to the duration of the timeframe is a reserved function of Elected Members of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District. The Croom LAP underwent an AA, SEA and Flood Risk assessment in 2020. All the Plans in the hierarchy of spatial plans have undergone SEA and AA processes by the relevant competent authorities for each level of plan.

3.1 Local Area Plan 2019 – 2026 proposed extension

The proposed extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020– 2026 as amended for a further four years until 2028 is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan.

3.2 Consultation with the Environmental Stakeholders

In accordance with Article 14A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive and the SEA Planning Regulations Limerick City and County Council invited environmental stakeholders to make a submission or observation in relation to whether or not the deferral of making a new LAP for Croom would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, prior to the Council making a determination.

A notice via email to the Environmental Authorities including; The EPA, The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications and The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, under Article 14 A (4) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) was issued by Limerick City and County Council on 17th September 2024 inviting written submissions on the proposed extension of duration for the Croom LAP. Contained within the notice, the deadline for submissions was by 15th October 2024.

A submission was received from the EPA in relation to the proposed extension of Croom LAP. A number of points were outlined in this submission. These points are outlined in the below table. No other submissions were received from any other stakeholders by the deadline, October 15th 2024 in relation to the extension of duration of the Croom LAP.

Table 1- Summary of consultation with EPA

Name/Group:	Environmental Protection Agency
Submission:	Response
<p>1. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promotes the full and transparent integration of the findings of the Environmental Assessment into the Plan and advocates that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are considered and addressed, as relevant and appropriate to the Plan.</p> <p>2. The EPA's guidance document "SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources", assists Local Authorities to incorporate relevant recommendations as relevant and appropriate to the Plan.</p> <p>3. SEA Determination If an SEA determination hasn't been made regarding the plan or programme a determination should be made on whether implementing the plan or programmes would be likely to have significant effect on the environment. Guidance documentation on the SEA process is available on the EPA website and it is recommended that this is taken into account in the making of the SEA Determination.</p> <p>4. EPA SEA Screening Guidance EPA recommends the use of Good Practice Guidance for Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening.</p> <p>5. Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Planning Authorities: EPA recommends the use of The Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities.</p> <p>6. Sustainable Development The Council should ensure that the implementing of the Plan or programme is</p>	<p>1. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026.</p> <p>2. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026.</p> <p>3. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 and is accompanied by a SEA screening carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance.</p> <p>4. Noted – this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 and is accompanied by a SEA screening carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance.</p> <p>5. Noted – as above.</p> <p>6. Noted</p>

consistent with the need for proper planning and sustainable development and national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Local Area Plan is required to be consistent with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes and consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

Compliance is also required with the OPW's The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

7. State of the Environment Report – Ireland's Environment 2024

The recommendations of the State of the Environment Report *Ireland's Environment*, due to be published in October 2024 should be integrated into the plan over its lifetime.

Available guidance and resources are outlined for the assistance of the Local Authority, including an SEA WebGis Tool.

Any future amendments to the Plan should be screened for likely significant effects, using the same method as applied to the environmental assessment carried out to inform this plan.

The Local Authority are required to ensure that the plan complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive and where an Appropriate Assessment is required the findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the plan or programme. The EPA AA GeoTool is referenced here as a resource.

8. Environmental Authorities

Under the SEA Regulations, the Council should consult with: the Environmental Protection Agency; Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications; Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and any adjoining planning authority, whose

7. Noted

8. Noted – The Planning Authority have consulted with the Environmental Authorities and adjoining counties in the preparation of this report.

area is contiguous to the area of the Planning Authority, which prepared the proposed plan, proposed variation or local area plan.

9. SEA Determination

After the making of a determination on whether SEA is required or not a copy of the decision including reasons shall be made available for public inspection and a copy sent to the relevant environmental authorities.

9. Noted – this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026. This Mayor's Report and associated screening document will be made available to view on the Council's website.

4 Overview of the Receiving Environment

4.1 Existing Environment Description

The proposed extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026 by four years is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan.

The proposed extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026 is a plan designed to support the development of the Croom village. This is a temporal expansion of a high level plan. Any future developments within or close to the area assessed in this report will be subject to AA during the development of that same project, and so any potential impacts to European sites will be assessed at that stage. Furthermore, the particular impacts associated with a specific development cannot be assessed until such a time as a detailed plan for that development exists. Therefore no effective AA can be completed in advance of the planning stage of any development. This plan of itself, will result in no material change within or outside the plan footprint. As a result there is no source pathway for potential impacts on European sites arising due to this plan.

The Croom Local Area plan is concerned mainly with the village of Croom and its immediate surrounds in central Co. Limerick (See Fig. 1). The LAP covers an area of approximately 170 hectares, of which a total of 158.17 of lands are zoned. The village itself is an urban area that is surrounded by rural land. The landscape within the town is largely urban in nature with residential and commercial buildings as well as the associated infrastructure of roads, footpaths and amenity features. The town is situated in a lowland area surround by agricultural pasture land. The Laskiltagh Stream flows through the northern side of the village before joining the River Maigue at the northern extent of the LAP area. The Maigue River flows through the village. The Maigue continues north before joining the Shannon near Kildimo. There is an amenity park within the town situated on the banks of the Maigue.

The footprint of the LAP area overlaps with no European site. However, as described above there is a hydrological connection to the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA through the Maigue.

An ecological desk based survey was conducted using existing species and habitats data records November 13th 2024. This study comprised of a review of the NPWS Article 17 and article 12 data sets, and NDBC data. A field survey for habitats and pertinent species was conducted on Oct 31st. The findings of the studies are presented in the section below and represent a comprehensive review and combination of available data and field survey results.

4.2 Data Search Results

4.2.0. Data Search Results

Habitats The available NPWS Article 17 habitats datasets were reviewed on Nov 13th 2024. There were no records for any EU Annex I habitats recorded within or in close proximity to the LAP area.

Biodiversity Ireland Database

The National Biodiversity Data centre database was accessed on the on Aug 28th 2024 and the following information was obtained. Table 2. lists the protected faunal species (excluding birds) recorded within the footprint of the proposed LAP extension which pertains to the current study area. The database was also searched for records of Third Schedule non-native invasive species within the area. Table 2. lists the protected mammal, amphibian and invertebrate species recorded within the study area. Table 3 lists the birds species found recorded within the study area. Table 4. lists the non-native invasive species recorded within the defined area.

Table 2: NDBC species records within the immediate LAP area (Records of species pre 1990 were omitted as these are considered outdated).

English Name	Scientific Name	Legal Status
Irish Hare	<i>Lepus timidus</i> subsp. <i>hibernicus</i>	WA
Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> sensu <i>stricto</i>	HD Annex IV, WA
Daubenton's Bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	HD Annex IV, WA
Leisler's Bat	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	HD Annex IV, WA
Soprano Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	HD Annex IV, WA
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	WA
Eurasian Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	WA
European Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	HD Annex II, Annex IV, WA
Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>	HD Annex V, WA
Freshwater White-clawed Crayfish	<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>	HD Annex II, Annex IV, WA

Table 3: NDBC bird species of conservation concern (listed under Annex 1 of the birds directive, Red or Amber listed on BoCCI 2020-2026 or both) recorded within the immediate LAP area.

English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	BD Annex I, BoCCI Red List
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	BoCCI, WA,
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	BOCCI Amber List
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Common Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	BoCCI Red List

Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	BD Annex I, BOCCI Amber List
Common Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	BoCCI Red List
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	BoCCI Red List
European Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	BoCCI Red List
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	BoCCI Amber List
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Meadow Pipit	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	BoCCI Red List
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Northern Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	BoCCI Red List
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	BoCCI Red List
Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Sky Lark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	BD Annex I, BOCCI Amber List
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	BoCCI Red List

There were older records for species such as grey partridge *Perdix perdix* and concrake *Crex crex* within the data sets. However these records predated 1990 and were considered outdated and obsolete for the purpose of this report, the purpose of which is to assess ecologically extant populations of species. Within the LAP area and the relevant European sites.

Table 4: NDBC records of non-native invasive species listed under the Third Schedule of The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

Scientific Name	English Name
Giant Hogweed	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>

4.3 Field Survey Results

The following is a summary of the habitats contained within the Croom LAP area. For visual representation of the same, please see fig. 2 below. The footprint of the area of the Croom LAP area consists of a number of habitats. These are described in order of declining area below. The LAP area footprint consists of mostly agricultural pasture land improved agricultural land (GA1) and fringed by a network of hedgerows (WL1) of varying quality with some treelines (WL2). Some of the fields are drained by artificial drainage channels and ditches (FW4).

The village itself largely consists of urban habitats such as hard stand and buildings (BL3). Gardens and amenity planting areas, flower beds and borders (BC4) artificial garden ponds (FL8) make up a small portion of the habitats within the footprint of Croom village. There are some smaller areas of stonewalls and other stonework (BL1), scattered trees. Croom park (WD5) contains mixed broadleaf and conifer woodland (WD2) and amenity Grassland (GA2).

The river Maigue [EPA Code: 24M01] (FW2) flows north through the town. This Maigue and its tributaries are important spawning waters for salmon. The latter stage of The Maigue forms part of the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA. By the time the Maigue reaches Croom, it can be classified as a lowland depositing river. South of the village the river is slow moving and deep. After passing a weir feature approximately 350m south of Croom Mill, the river takes becomes shallower and faster flowing and could be characterised as FW1. A narrow fringe of riparian habitats containing species such as reed canary grass, common club rush, nodding – branched and unbranched bur reed, and willow spp occurs in places along the river banks. There is similar habitat on small islands in the deeper southern portion of the river. This habitat is best described as Reed and tall sedge swamp (FS1). There is a band of woodland to the south of Croom Mill on both sides of the river. This is wet woodland characterised by the presence of birch *Betula pendula* and *pubescens*, willow *sallix spp.*, some oak *Quercus petraea*. A heavy cover of horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* are present the tree layer. Horse chestnut is the dominant tree species over much of the woodland area. There are some beech *Fagus sylvatica* and some pine species specimens. The Understory is poorly developed but contains scattered holly *Ilex aquifolium* and sparse wych elm *Ulmus glabra*. The ground vegetation layer is poorly developed and bare in places but in some, less frequent areas, is well formed and contains sedge species Pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*, Glaucous sedge *Carex flacca*, fern species *Dryopteris dilatata* and polypody spp., common nettle *Urtica dioica* and Ivy *Hedera hibernica* is ubiquitous. Polypody ferns are abundant on the branches and trunks of trees as are moss species *Hypnum cupressiforme*, *Hypnum jutlandicum* and *Kindbergia praelonga*. There is a smaller patch area of woodland north of Croom mill on private land, to the west of the river bank that contains dryer, planted non-native woodland (WD2). Within the immediate surrounds of the Maigue, Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* is abundant. This is listed as a high impact invasive alien species on the third schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011. There are some smaller patches of species poor, dry Mixed broadleaved/conifer woodland (WD2) scattered around the LAP area but these are small and poorly connected.

Table 4: Field survey results terrestrial mammal

English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	HD Annex II, Annex IV, WA
Eurasian Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	WA

Table 5: Bird species found during field survey

English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	BoCCI Green List
Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	BOCCI Amber List
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	BoCCI Green List
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	BoCCI Green List
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	BoCCI Green List
Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	BoCCI Green List
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	BoCCI Green List
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	BoCCI Green List
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	BoCCI Red List
Coal Tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	BoCCI Green List
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Long Tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalus caudatus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	BoCCI Amber List
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	BoCCI Green List
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	BoCCI Green List
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	BoCCI Green List
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	BoCCI Green List
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	BoCCI Green List

Table 6: Field survey results non-native invasive species listed under the Third Schedule of The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

English Name	Scientific Name	Status
Giant Hogweed	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	3 rd Schedule ECR Regulations, 2011

Fig. 2: Field survey photos, October 2024



Plate-1: Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*, Maigue, Croom



Plate-2: Riparian fringe habitat typical on parts of River Maigue, Croom



Plate-3: Two Otters *Lutra lutra* River Maigue, Croom



Plate-4: Harts Tongue Fern *Asplenium scolopendrium* on stone wall habitat, Croom



Plate-5: Great White Egret *Ardea alba* River Maigue, Croom , this is the second county record for this species in County Limerick



Plate-6: Old Railway station, abandoned building, Croom

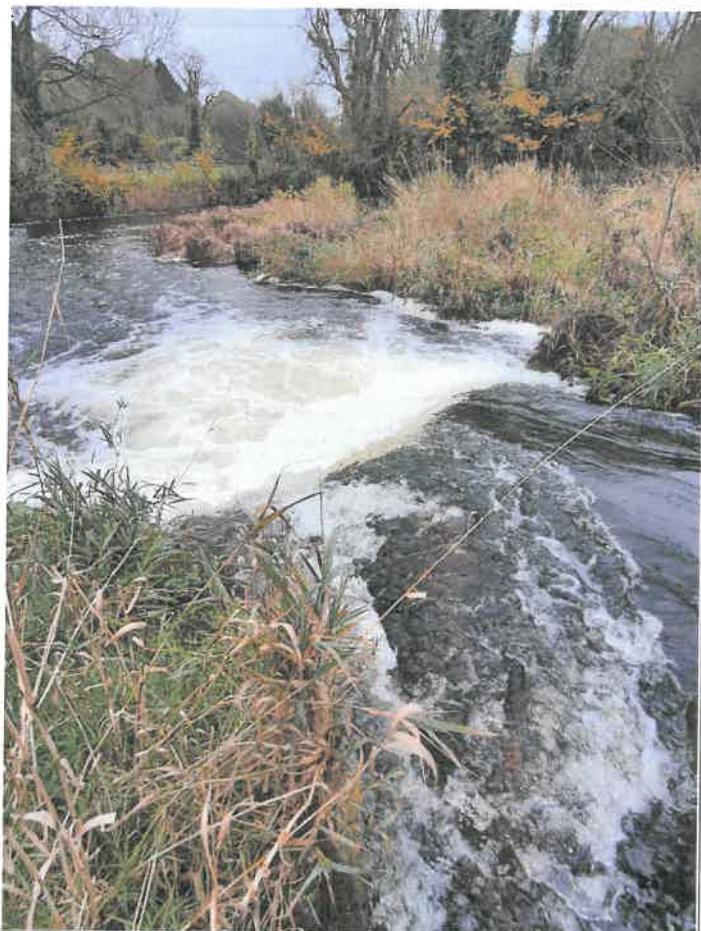


Plate-7: Smaller of the weirs in River Maigue Croom



Plate-8: *Polypodium cambrica* growing in the mill wheel housing unit, River Maigue

Fig. 3. Croom LAP Area Habitat Map



5 SCREENING ASSESSMENT

5.1 Introduction

This stage of the process identifies any likely significant effects upon European Sites from the proposal, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans. The Screening Assessment is progressed in order to determine:

- Whether the proposal can be excluded from AA requirements because it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site; and
- Whether the proposal has the potential to give rise to significant effects on a European site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, in view of the site's conservation objectives or conversely, that the potential for significant effects cannot be excluded.

In the instance of this proposal, it is not directly connected to or necessary for the management of any European site, therefore the potential for significant effects must be evaluated, as per the second test.

5.2 Identification of Relevant Natura 2000 Sites

A standard source-receptor-pathway conceptual model was used to identify a preliminary list of 'relevant' European sites (i.e. those which could be potentially affected due to connectivity via impact pathways). This conceptual model is a standard tool in environmental assessment. In order for an effect to occur, all three elements of this mechanism must be in place. The absence or removal of one of the elements of the mechanism means there is no likelihood for the effect to occur. In the context of the proposal, the model comprises:

- Source(s) – e.g. noise disturbance, habitat loss, pollution.
- Pathway(s) – e.g. drains and streams connecting to European Sites; increased human activity; creation of barriers to movement/migration.
- Receptor(s) – Qualifying habitats and species of European Sites.

The designated European Sites identified in the wider study area of the proposal are detailed in Table 1, showing the designated site name, code and distance of separation. Designated European Sites were considered within a 15km buffer, in line with published guidance (NPWS, 2010); these are identified in Figure 5. Potential pathways for impacts affecting European Sites outside of this buffer were also evaluated; however, given the size and scale of the proposed jetty installation works, no pathways for effects at this extent were identified.

All sites which were considered are shown in Figure 7; no additional SPA or SAC sites were screened in following this process. It is vital that an assessment of potential source-pathway-receptor links is undertaken to assess potential impact links between the receptor (European Sites) and source (proposed development) to establish the risk of any likely significant effects. Additional designated sites including proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA's), Natural Heritage Areas and RAMSAR sites were also reviewed, as although they do not form part of the Appropriate Assessment, they often provide important supporting functions to European Sites.

Information collected on the sensitivity of the Qualifying Interests (i.e. the stated Conservation Objectives) of each European Site identified in Table 3 was assessed with reference to the proposal, with regard to any likely significant effects.

The potential for hydrological pathways to connect potential impacts arising from the proposal with European Sites downstream have been examined, with regard to the potential for significant effects in the absence of protective measures or measures intended as mitigation for the avoidance of impacts on the sensitivities of a European Site.

As outlined in Table 3, one European site identified within the 15km buffer has been evaluated in terms of potential connectivity to the proposed development by reason of proximity, hydrological pathways, supporting features of importance to qualifying interests' structure and function, etc.

Fig. 4 SAC sites relative to footprint of proposed extension to Croom LAP

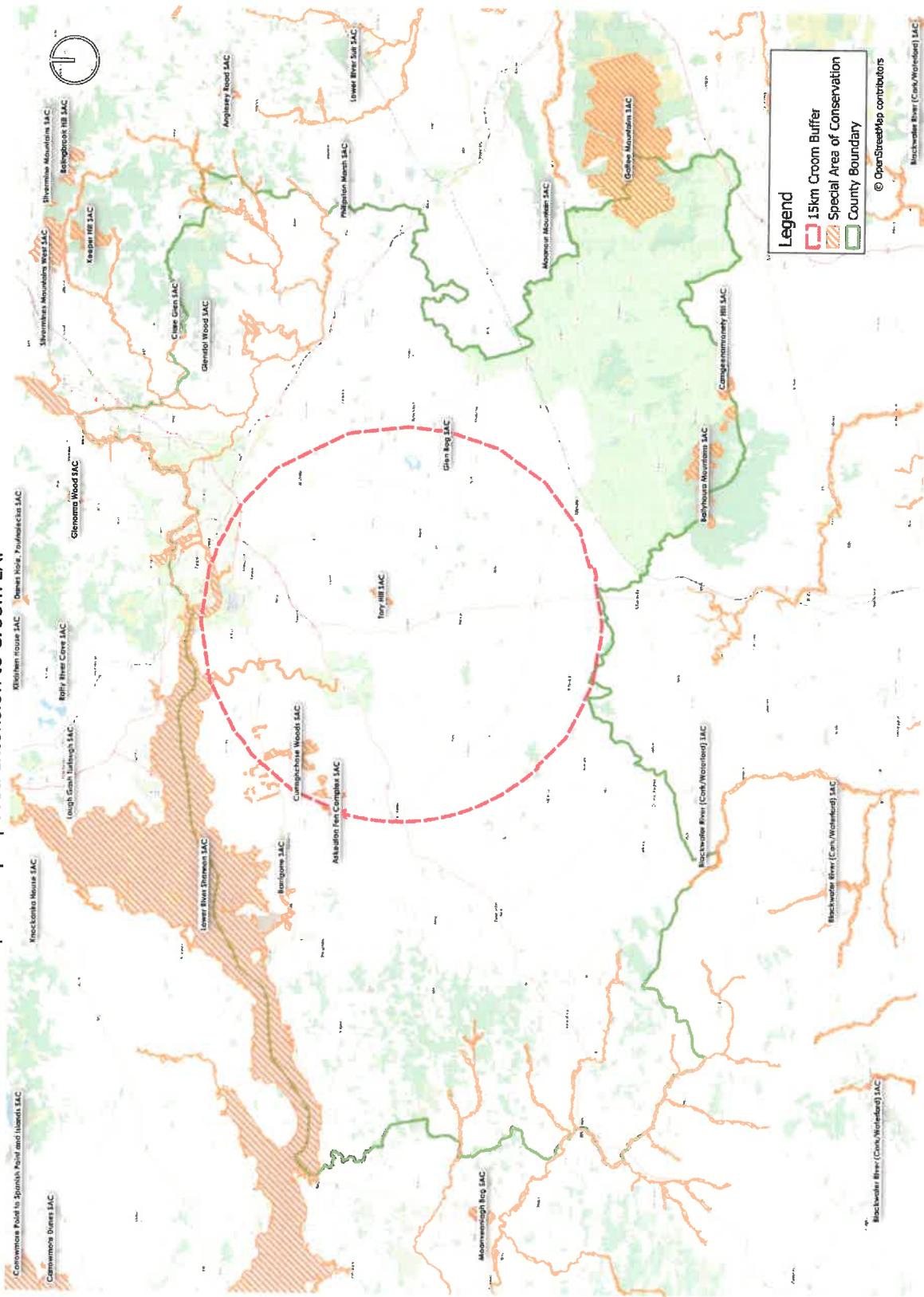


Fig. 5. SPA sites relative to footprint of proposed extension to Croom LAP

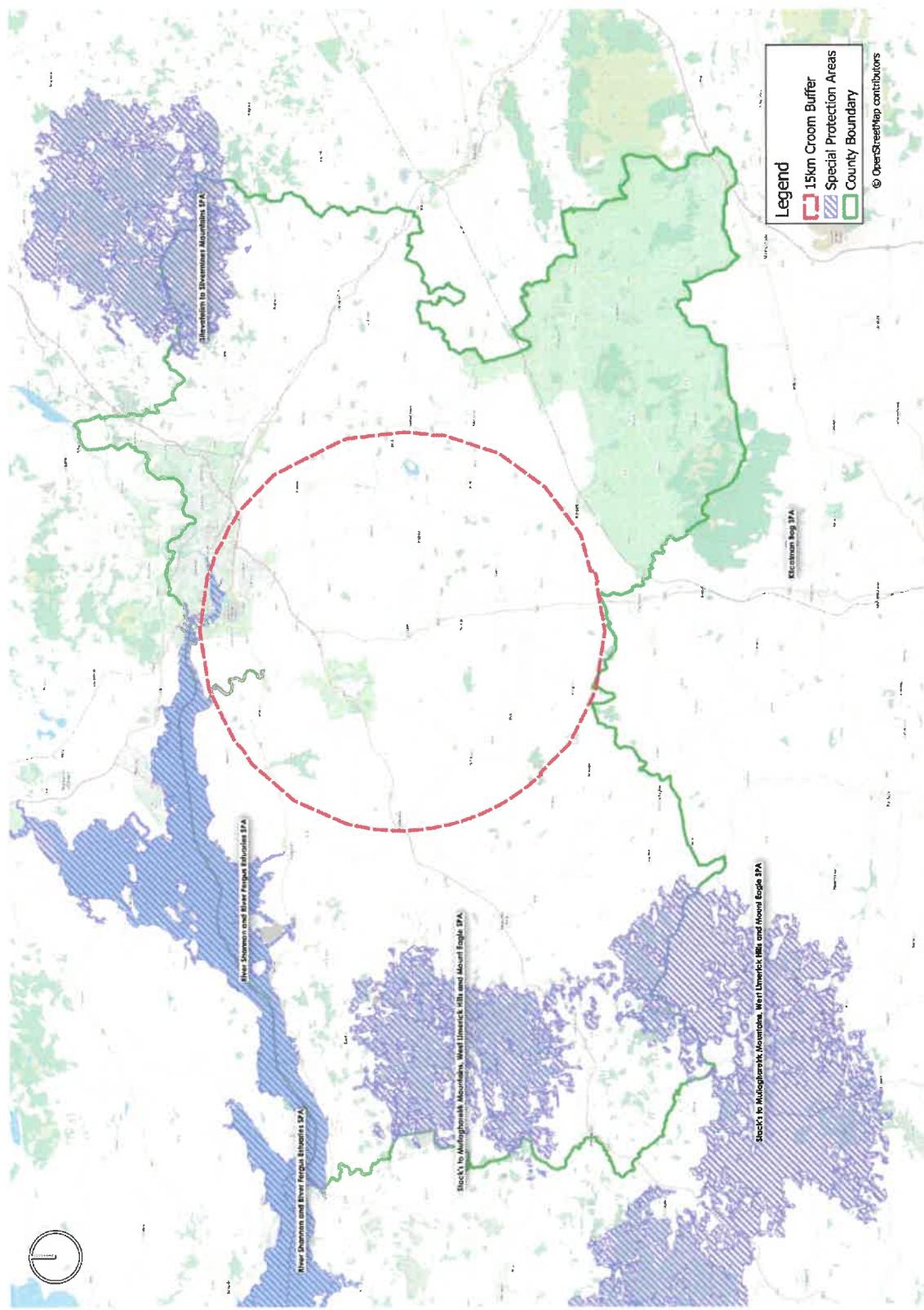


Table 4: List of designated European Sites identified within a 15km buffer of the study area for the proposed extension of the Croom LAP

European Site	Site code	Distance from area of proposed LAP extension	Qualifying interests of the European site	Identification of potential source pathway receptors for potential significant impacts	Pathway for Significant Effects	Potential for In-Combination Effects
Special Areas of Conservation						
Curraghchase Woods	000174	Approx. 10.9KM north west of the Croom LAP area	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]	<p>This SAC is situated inside the 15Km buffer radius of the proposed LAP extension area and so was considered for assessment.</p> <p>There will be no direct effects on the habitats or species within this SAC as the proposed extension of the Croom LAP is located entirely outside the boundary of this designated site and lacks any downstream hydrological connection.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>The proposed extension of duration of the Croom LAP is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan. The proposed LAP extension is a high level plan and will not directly result in any material change to any Q.I. species or habitats within the SAC.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>As such, in the absence of any mitigation,</p>

			there is no potential for any significant effect on the Q.I. receptors within this SAC arising due to the proposed extension of the Croom LAP.
Askeaton Fen Complex	002279	Approx. 12.75Km north west of Croom LAP area	<p>Calcareous fens with <i>Cladonia mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210]</p> <p>Alkaline fens [7230]</p> <p>This SAC is situated inside the 15Km buffer radius of the proposed LAP extension area and so was considered for assessment.</p> <p>There will be no direct effects on the habitats or species within this SAC as the proposed extension of the Croom LAP is located entirely outside the boundary of this designated site and lacks any downstream hydrological connection.</p> <p>The proposed extension of duration of the Croom LAP is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan. The proposed LAP extension is a high level plan and will not directly result in any material change to any Q.I. species or habitats within the SAC.</p> <p>As such, in the absence of any mitigation, there is no potential for any significant effect on the Q.I. receptors within this SAC arising due to the proposed extension of the Croom LAP.</p>

				No	No
Glen Bog	001430	Approx. 13.5Km south east of the Croom LAP area	Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus</i> <i>glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus</i> <i>excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion</i> <i>incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) [91E0]	<p>This SAC is situated inside the 15Km buffer radius of the proposed LAP extension area and so was considered for assessment.</p> <p>There will be no direct effects on the habitats or species within this SAC as the proposed extension of the Croom LAP is located entirely outside the boundary of this designated site and lacks any downstream hydrological connection.</p>	<p>The proposed extension of duration of the Croom LAP is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan. The proposed LAP extension is a high level plan and will not directly result in any material change to any Q.I. species or habitats within the SAC.</p> <p>As such, in the absence of any mitigation, there is no potential for any significant effect on the Q.I. receptors within the SAC arising due to the proposed extension of the Croom LAP.</p>
Tory Hill SAC	000439	Approx. 1km north east of Croom LAP area	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium</i>	<p>This SAC is situated inside the 15Km buffer radius of the proposed LAP extension area and so was considered for assessment.</p> <p>There will be no direct effects on the habitats or species within this SAC as the proposed extension of the Croom LAP is located entirely</p>	<p>No</p> <p>No</p>

mariscus and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> [7210]	Alkaline fens [7230]	outside the boundary of this designated site and lacks any downstream hydrological connection.	The proposed extension of duration of the Croom LAP is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan. The proposed LAP extension is a high level plan and will not directly result in any material change to any Q.I. species or habitats within the SAC.	As such, in the absence of any mitigation, there is no potential for any significant effect on the Q.I. receptors within the SAC arising due to the proposed extension of the Croom LAP.
Lower River Shannon SAC	002165	6Km north west of Croom LAP area	[1110] Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time [1130] Estuaries [1140] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1150] Coastal lagoons [1160] Large shallow inlets and bays [1170] Reefs [1120] Perennial vegetation of stony banks	This SAC is located approximately 6Km directly north west from the Croom LAP area. As this SAC falls within the 15Km radius and there is a hydrological connection between the Croom LAP area and the SAC through the River Maigue this SAC has been assessed in this document. There will be no direct effects on the habitats or species within this SAC as the proposed extension of the Croom LAP is located entirely outside the boundary of this designated site.

		<p>Due to the hydrological connection of the LAP area with the SAC through the Maigue, the application of the precautionary principle, a potential pathway for effect on some or all of the Q.I. habitats and species was identified.</p> <p>[1330] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)</p> <p>[1410] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>)</p> <p>[3260] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation</p> <p>[6410] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>)</p> <p>[91E0] Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae</i>)</p> <p>[1029] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel)</p> <p>[1095] <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> (Sea Lamprey)</p> <p>[1096] <i>Lampetra planeri</i> (Brook Lamprey)</p> <p>[1099] <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> (River Lamprey)</p> <p>[1106] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon)</p>
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Special Protection Area	004077	Approx. 10.6Km north of the Croom LAP area.	[1349] Tursiops truncatus (Common Bottlenose Dolphin) [1355] Lutra lutra (Otter)	This SPA is situated inside the 15Km buffer radius of the proposed LAP extension area. It is located approximately 10Km directly north west from the Croom LAP area. As there is a hydrological connection between the Croom LAP area and the SPA through the River Maigue.	No	No
River Shannon and Fergus estuaries SPA			<p>[A017] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>)</p> <p>[A038] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>)</p> <p>[A046] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>)</p> <p>[A048] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)</p> <p>[A050] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>)</p> <p>[A052] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)</p> <p>[A054] Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)</p> <p>[A056] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>)</p> <p>[A062] Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>)</p> <p>[A137] Ringed Plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>)</p> <p>[A140] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>)</p> <p>[A141] Grey Plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>)</p> <p>[A142] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>)</p> <p>[A143] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>)</p>	<p>There will be no direct effects on the habitats or species within this SPA as the proposed extension of the Croom LAP is located entirely outside the boundary of this designated site.</p> <p>Due to the hydrological connection of the LAP area with the SAC through the Maigue, the application of the precautionary principle, a potential pathway for effect on some or all of the Q.I. habitats and species was identified.</p> <p>However, the proposed extension of duration of the Croom is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan. The proposed LAP extension is a high level plan and will not directly result in any material change to any Q.I. species or habitats within the SPA.</p>		

	<p>[A149] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>)</p> <p>[A156] Black-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>)</p> <p>[A157] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>)</p> <p>[A160] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)</p> <p>[A162] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)</p> <p>[A164] Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>)</p> <p>[A179] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>)</p> <p>[A999] Wetland and Waterbirds</p>	<p>As such, in the absence of any mitigation, there is no potential for any significant effect on the Q.I. receptors within the SAC arising due to the proposed extension of the Croom LAP.</p>	

5.3 Potential Cumulative and In-combination Effects

5.3.1 Other Plans and Programs

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires an assessment of a plan or project to consider other plans or programmes that might, in combinations with the plan or project, have the potential to adversely impact upon European Sites. The characteristics of the LAP are foreseen to have no effects to any European Sites. It is thought that the proposed LAP in-combination with the project listed below are not likely to have significant effects on any European Site. However, following a precautionary approach relevant plans and projects have been assessed. A list of the plans and projects considered are as follows:

- Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028;
- Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028;
- The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028;
- Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028;
- Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029;
- Tipperary County Development Plan 2022- 2028
- Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy;
- Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future, A new Transport policy for Ireland, 2009 –2020;
- Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029;
- Adare Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030;
- Askeaton Local Area Plan 2015 – 2021 (Extended to February 2025);
- Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;
- Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;
- Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2028;
- Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;
- Patrickswell Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030;
- Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;

Table 5. Outlines plans or projects that were considered under the precautionary principle with regards to possible interaction with the LAP to cause in-combination effects to European Sites.

Plan or project	Status	Overview	Possible significant effects from plan or project	Possible significant in-combination effects	Risk of significant in-combination effects with the proposed extension of Cork Local Area Plan
Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028	Published	The Plan sets out Limerick City & County Council's policies for the sustainable development of the County to 2028 and beyond.	No Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	Development proposals which arise as a result of the Development Plan are subject to Appropriate Assessment. This will provide specific project level detail to ensure no adverse significant effects to European Sites.
Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028	Published	The Plan sets out Cork County Council's policies for the sustainable development of the County to 2028 and beyond.	No Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	Development proposals which arise as a result of the Development Plan are subject to Appropriate Assessment. This will provide specific project level detail to ensure no adverse significant effects to European Sites.
The Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028	Published	The Plan sets out Cork City Council's policies for the sustainable development of the County to 2028 and beyond.	No Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	Development proposals which arise as a result of the Development Plan are subject to Appropriate Assessment. This will provide specific project level detail to ensure no adverse significant effects to European Sites.

Kerry County Development Plan 2022-2028	Published	The Plan sets out Kerry County Council's policies for the sustainable development of the County to 2028 and beyond.	No Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	Development proposals which arise as a result of the Development Plan are subject to Appropriate Assessment. This will provide specific project level detail to ensure no adverse significant effects to European Sites.
Clare County Development Plan 2023-2029	Published	The Plan sets out Clare County Council's policies for the sustainable development of the County to 2029 and beyond.	No Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	Development proposals which arise as a result of the Development Plan are subject to Appropriate Assessment. This will provide specific project level detail to ensure no adverse significant effects to European Sites.
Tipperary County Development Plan 2022- 2028	Published	The Plan sets out Tipperary County Council's policies for the sustainable development of the County to 2028 and beyond.	No Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	Development proposals which arise as a result of the Development Plan are subject to Appropriate Assessment. This will provide specific project level detail to ensure no adverse significant effects to European Sites.

Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future, A new Transport policy for Ireland, 2009 – 2020;	Published	A framework for actions aimed at ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking. Actions aimed at improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies, and actions aimed at strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets.	No Stage 1 Appropriate Assessment carried out	None	The overarching aim of this document is the reduction of travel and the associated emissions through the reduction of private transport. No potential cumulative impacts can arise as a result of this.
Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Abbeyfeale area.	No AA was undertaken.	No	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Abbeyfeale Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.

Adare Local Area Plan 2024 - 2030	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Adare area.	No AA was undertaken.	No No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Adare Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Askeaton Local Area Plan 2015 – 2021 (Extended to February 2025);	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Askeaton area.	No AA was undertaken.	No No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Askeaton Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Caherconlish Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Caherconlish area.	No AA was undertaken.	No No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Caherconlish Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.

Castleconnell Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Castleconnell area.	No AA was undertaken.	No AA was undertaken.	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Castleconnell Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2028; as amended	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Kilmallock area.	No AA was undertaken.	No AA was undertaken.	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Kilmallock Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Newcastle West area.	No AA was undertaken.	No AA was undertaken.	No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Newcastle West Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.

Patrickswell Local Area Plan 2024 – 2030;	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Patrickswell area.	No AA was undertaken.	No No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Patrickswell Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.
Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029;	Published	The overall purpose of this Local Area Plan is to set out a strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Rathkeale area.	No AA was undertaken.	No No impacts are foreseen as arising as a result of the proposed Croom LAP due to the conceptual nature of the plan. Any projects that occur within the footprint of this plan in the future will be subject to AA and should be impacts can only be assessed then. As the Rathkeale Local Area plan contains similar high level concepts and information, in- combination impacts can arise. Thus, in- combination effects cannot arise. Therefore, no in- combination effects are foreseen.

From an evaluation of the nature of the proposed extension of duration of the Croom LAP for a further four years to December 2028, no European Sites were considered to be subject to potential cumulative or in-combination impacts which may lead to likely significant effects. As there is no potential for the proposal to result in any individual effect on any European Site, therefore it cannot contribute to any cumulative effect. There are no likely significant residual effects and no significant cumulative and/or in-combination effects on any of the QIs within the European sites identified with regard to the proposed extension of duration of the Croom LAP.

6 CONCLUSION STATEMENT

The proposed extension of the Croom 2022-2026 by four years until 2028. This will benefit the Croom area through the provision of a road map for future sustainable development. The proposed plan extension footprint is not situated within any EU or designated sites for nature conservation.

From an evaluation of the proposal description, and the consideration of potential impact pathways with connectivity to the wider environment, there are no SAC or SPA sites within proximity of the proposed development, and no pathways for impacts are identified whereby indirect effects may occur affecting other European sites at a distance from the proposed works.

On the basis of the description of the proposed extension of the Croom LAP and taking account of the ecological information and data provided to inform this assessment, it has been evaluated that the potential for likely significant effects on the special conservation interests of SACs and SPAs within the recommended distance can be excluded in the absence of protective measures or mitigation measures to avoid significant effects, and in view of best scientific evidence in the field.

This Screening for AA report has determined that there is no potential for significant direct, indirect or cumulative impacts which could affect the qualifying interests/special conservation interests of the European sites within the study area. It is therefore concluded, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that the proposal will not give rise to significant effects, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, within the identified European Site(s).

On the basis of objective scientific information, this Screening has therefore excluded the potential for the proposed extension to the Croom LAP, individually or in combination with other plans or projects, to give rise to any significant effect on a European site. Consequently, it is concluded that the extension to the Croom LAP, does not require Appropriate Assessment.

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7 Appendix 1 AA Determination

Appropriate Assessment Screening Determination

under

Section 177U and Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended,

for the

Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 – Proposed Extension of Duration for a further four years to December 2028

In order to comply with the requirements of Section 177U and Sections 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and pursuant to Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive as to whether or not a plan or project would adversely affect the integrity of any European site(s), this Appropriate Assessment determination is being made by Limerick City and County Council relating to the potential for the proposed extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020- 2026 to have any likely significant effects on any European Sites.

In carrying out this Appropriate Assessment (AA) Final Determination, the Council is taking into account the matters specified under Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), including the following:

- The AA Screening Report for the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – for a further four years to 2028
- Submissions received in accordance with Article 14A (2) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)
- The alignment of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026 as amended with higher-level spatial plans that have been assessed in terms of appropriate Assessment.

The proposed extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026 to December 2028 is a continuation of current policies and objectives of the current LAP that are not of a nature, which could have a likely significant effect on the Natura 2000 Network. In-combination effects from interactions with other plans and projects were considered in this assessment.

The conclusion of the AA Screening Process is “This Screening for AA report has determined that there is no potential for significant direct, indirect or cumulative impacts which could affect the qualifying interests/special conservation interests of the European sites within the study area. It is therefore

concluded, beyond reasonable scientific doubt, that the proposal will not give rise to significant effects, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, within the identified European Site(s)." As such, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment / Natura Impact Report is not required.

The undersigned, having carefully considered the information referred to above agrees with and adopts the reasoning and conclusions presented.

Signed:



Position: Director of Services

Date:



STRATEGIC
ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT
SCREENING REPORT OF
THE PROPOSED
EXTENSION OF THE
CROOM LAP
2020-2026

November 2024

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1 Introduction

1.1 Requirements for SEA

The European Union Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) requires an environmental assessment be carried out for all plans that are prepared for certain specified sectors, including landuse of which the proposed extension of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 by four years until 2028, prepared by Limerick City and County Council potentially relates. The following Regulations transpose this Directive into Irish law:

- The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004),
- The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004) and further amended by
- S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011) and S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011).

The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004 (as amended) state that SEA is mandatory for certain plans while screening for SEA is required for other plans that fall below the specified thresholds. The purpose of this screening report is to determine whether the making and implementation of the plan will or will not, lead to significant environmental effects for the plan area and if it will require a full Strategic Environment Assessment.

In deciding whether a particular plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, regard must be had to the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive - which is reproduced in the Schedule 2A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as inserted by article 12 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004.

The approach to this screening assessment is to assess the overall Aims and Actions contained in the proposed extension to the Croom LAP (the previous iteration of which, Croom LAP 2020-2026 has also been screened for SEA) against the criteria contained in Schedule 2a of the Regulations (known as a Screening Table). To ensure this SEA Screening is consistent with the statutory landuse framework, the assessment has been undertaken against the Strategic Environmental Objectives of the SEA Environmental Report of the LCCC County Development Plan 2022-2028. Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level and are used as standards against which the provisions of the plan can be evaluated in order to help identify which provisions would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and where such effects would be likely to occur, if - in the case of adverse effects - unmitigated.

An assessment under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive has also been undertaken in conjunction with this SEA Screening report and should be read in tandem with this report.

Following a four week consultation period with statutory environmental authorities, a final SEA Screening Determination has been made that the proposed extension to the Croom LAP, does not require full SEA.

For a summary of submissions on the SEA Screening and the response to same please see Section 3.2 of this report. A SEA screening determination has been prepared by Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) and will be published on the council website.

1.2 Description of the proposal and the context of the Croom LAP 2020-2026

The Croom Local Area Plan (LAP) 2020–2026 is the public statement of planning policies and objectives for future growth and development of the town. The Croom LAP was adopted by the Elected Members of the Adare - Rathkeale Municipal District the 3rd March 2020 and came into effect 14th April 2020. The Croom LAP was screened for SEA and AA in 2020. The LAP is due to expire in 2026. The total lands zoned is 158.17 hectares in the Croom LAP. According to the 2022 Census the population of Croom town is 1240 persons.

Fig. 1. Croom LAP Area 2020 – 2026 adopted April 2020 by Elected Members, Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District



Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides for the extension of the valid lifespan of a Local Area Plan, from a maximum of 6 years to an effective maximum of 10 years in total. The extension of the Local Area Plan timeframe is sought in order to provide certainty and opportunity to realise the objectives of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 which are in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Refer to the Director General Report dated November 2024 to be considered by the Elected Member of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District which outlines the rationale for the extension of duration of the LAP and the consequent deferral of making a new LAP for Croom. The CE Report should be read in tandem with this report and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report that accompanies the CE Report to be considered by the Elected Members.

1.3 Overview of Croom LAP 2020- 2026

The LAP must be consistent with the objectives of the higher-level spatial plans, including the NPF, RSES and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 as varied.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040. The purpose of the NPF, together with the National Development Plan (NDP), form 'Project Ireland 2040' to enable all parts of Ireland, rural and urban, to successfully accommodate growth and change, shifting population and economic growth towards Ireland's regions and cities other than Dublin, whilst recognising Dublin's ongoing key role.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region provides a long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic and social development of the Southern Region. The RSES includes Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) to guide the future development of the Region's three main cities and metropolitan areas – Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 as varied sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Limerick over a 6-year period to 2028. It is informed by the policy and objectives of the RSES and NPF, a public consultation process, collaboration with other agencies including Statutory Bodies and Government Departments, local level strategies, Ministerial Guidelines issued pursuant to Section 28 of the Act, together with EU requirements, regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA). The Limerick Development Plan was adopted as a Reserved Function of the Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council on 17th June 2022 and came into effect 29th July 2022. Variation No. 1 to the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 was adopted by the Elected Members on the 22nd April 2023 comprising an amendment to Policy TR P11 Road Safety and Carrying Capacity of the non-national Road Network and Objective TR O37 Land Uses and Access Standards.

Informed by the RSES and the NPF, the Limerick Development Plan identifies Croom as a Level 4 Large Village (>500 population) which cater for the daily and weekly needs of its inhabitants and the needs of the surrounding wider catchment area. Level 4 settlements provide a range of employment opportunities and services appropriate to their size and function, such as secondary and primary schools, childcare facilities, sports grounds/complexes, libraries, Garda stations, medical centres and a good range of local services including shops, pubs, post offices and banks/credit unions.

The Croom LAP 2020 – 2026 as amended sets out a land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town of Croom, complying with the provisions of higher-level spatial plans. The LAP consists of a written statement and maps indicating objectives for zoning of land, residential development, economic development, community infrastructure, built and natural heritage, vacancy, regeneration, open space and recreation, active travel and transport, environmental protection and climate action. The total area of lands zoned in the Croom LAP is 158.17 hectares. This Plan also includes a Serviced Land Assessment, which informed the quantum and location of the land zoned in the Plan. The adoption of the LAP, and the proposed extension to the duration of the timeframe is a reserved function of Elected Members of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District. The Croom LAP underwent an AA, SEA and Flood Risk assessment in 2020. All the Plans in the hierarchy of spatial plans have undergone SEA and AA processes by the relevant competent authorities for each level of plan.

1.4 Local Area Plan 2020-2026 Proposed Extension

The proposed extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020– 2026 as amended to 2028 is a temporal expansion of the LAP. The main aim of this extension is to align the LAP with the wider County Development Plan.

2 Summary of Environmental Baseline

2.1 Introduction

Croom LAP is designed in a sensitive manner that incorporates the numerous factors considered pertinent to the continued use and development of modern village. This section provides a short summary of key environmental topics relevant to the Croom LAP.

2.2 Biodiversity, flora and fauna

The Croom Local Area plan is concerned with the village of Croom and its immediate surrounds in central Co. Limerick (See Fig. 1). The LAP covers an area of approximately 170 hectares, of which a total of 158.17 of lands are zoned. The town itself is an urban area that is surrounded by rural land. The landscape within the town is largely urban in nature with residential and commercial buildings as well as the associated infrastructure of roads, footpaths and amenity features. The town is situated in a lowland area surround by agricultural pasture land. The Maigue River flows through the town. The Maigue continues north before joining the Shannon near Kildimo. There is an amenity park within the town situated on the banks of the Maigue.

Man-made habitats within the Plan area are also important biodiversity areas. Gardens provide habitats for a range of wildlife including various floral species, birds, amphibians, invertebrates and mammals.

The footprint of the LAP area overlaps with no European site. However, as described above there is a hydrological connection to the Lower River Shannon SAC and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA through the Maigue.

There are records for a number of protected fauna species within the LAP area. Terrestrial mammal species such as Otter *Lutra lutra* and Badger *Meles meles* have been observed within the LAP area. There are also records for bat species such as Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu stricto*, Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii*, Leisler's Bat *Nyctalus leisleri* and Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*. Numerous bird species have also been recorded using habitats within the LAP boundary. Of these Barn Owl *Tyto alba*, Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* and Whooper Swan *Cygnus Cygnus* are listed as Annex 1 of the birds directive.

2.3 Population and Human Health

In the 2022 Census the total population of Croom was 1240 persons. This represents an increase in total population in the village by approximately 81 persons over a 6-year period from 2016 (no. 1159).

The Croom Area LAP 2024-2028 will interact with various environmental components. Potential interactions include:

- Increase in demand for wastewater treatment at the municipal level;
- Recreational and development pressure on habitats and landscapes;
- Increase in demand for water supply and associated potential impact of water abstraction from the rivers;

- Potential interactions in flood-sensitive areas; and
- Potential effects on water quality

2.4 Soil

The urban area of Croom village is dominated by heterogeneous urban soils. The agricultural landscape in the immediate surrounds of the village are comprised mainly of limestone till subsoil overlain by Luvisol, well drained mineral soils. Other types include Alluvial soils found in the vicinity of the Maigue and its tributaries.

2.5 Water

The Croom LAP area is located within the catchments of the River Maigue (Maigue_SC_040 and Maigue_SC_050). The Maigue River (EPA Code -24_12986) and its tributary the Laskiltagh stream (EPA Code-24_1120) are the main waterbodies that drain the area.

The quality status as measured under the Water Framework Directive of the River Maigue and the Laskiltagh stream are “poor”.

Agricultural intensification and wastewater treatment are significant water quality pressures in this area.

TABLE 1. WFD RIVER AND COASTAL WATERBODIES STATUS¹

Waterbody Name	(EPA Identification Code)	WFD Surface Waterbody Status (2013 -2018)
The Maigue River	SC_040	Poor
the Laskiltagh stream	24_1120	Poor

Bathing waters

There are no designated bathing waters in the area.

Flooding

Certain areas within the village and the wider LAP are at risk from riverine flooding. The village straddles the banks of the River Maigue which is subject to periodic flooding.

The Croom LAP 2020-2026 was subject to a Flood Risk Assessment. There have been no changes or replacement of these national guidelines on flooding since the adoption of the LAP and there have been no significant flood events since the adoption of the Plan.

2.6 Air and Climatic Factors

The Climate Change Advisory Council’s Annual Review 2019 identifies that the most recent projections demonstrate that, under different assumptions, Ireland will not meet its emissions reduction targets, even with the additional policies and measures included in the National Development Plan. The projections also show that progress on reducing emissions is sensitive to the future path of fuel prices. A significant and sustained rate of emissions reduction of approximately -2.5% per year is required to

meet our objectives for 2050. However, it must be noted that additional measures within the recent Climate Action Plan are not included in the analysis to date.

2.6.1 LCCC Climate Change Action Plan 2024-2029

The Climate Change Action Plan for LCCC (2024-2029) sets out the following four targets:

- A 50% improvement in the Council's energy efficiency by 2030;
- A 51% reduction in the Council's greenhouse gas emissions by 2030;
- To make Limerick and Croom as a part of Limerick, a climate resilient region, by reducing the impacts of future climate change-related events
- To actively engage and inform citizens on climate change

2.6.2 Air Quality

The EPA's (2020) Air Quality in Ireland 2019 identifies that:

- Air quality in Ireland is generally good however there are localised issues;
- There was one exceedance of the EU annual average legal limit values in 2019 at one urban traffic station in Dublin due to pollution from transport;
- Ireland was above World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guideline value levels at 33 monitoring sites – mostly due to the burning of solid fuel in cities, towns and villages
- LCCC and the EPA have partnered to organize and facilitate the "Clean Air Together" initiative. The aim of this initiative is to use citizen science to help the measuring of air quality around Limerick City. Though Croom is not within the city, the results of the measurement and monitoring should be useful in extrapolation of air quality in the Croom area.

¹Source: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> and <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water>.

³ EPA Report (2020) on Bathing Water Quality in Ireland for the year 2019

2.7 Material Assets

Green Infrastructure

Parks and open space promote health and well-being, provide recreational facilities and a range of habitats for various species. Green infrastructure is also a crucial component in building resilient communities capable of adapting to the consequences of climate change with trees, woodlands and wetlands providing carbon capture and slowing water flows while improving air quality. Croom currently has a 13 acre public amenity park and the continued use and maintenance of this is considered in the LAP.

Land

The Plan seeks to assist with the reuse and regeneration of brownfield sites within and adjacent to the existing built-up footprint of the village thereby contributing towards sustainable mobility and reducing the need to develop greenfield lands and associated potential adverse environmental effects.

Forestry

There are no areas of commercial forestry within the Croom LAP.

Coastline

There is no coastline within the area of the Croom LAP. The River Maigue does provide the opportunity to undertake aquatic amenities such as angling. The relatively new slipway enables kayaking on the river also.

Renewable Energy Potential

There is currently no land zoned for renewable energy development in the Croom LAP area.

Minerals and Aggregates

There is currently no land zoned in the Croom LAP area for extractive industry. There is agricultural land within the LAP. While agricultural land is considered as “open for consideration” with regard to extractive industrial pursuits, all the agricultural land in the LAP area is currently in agricultural use.

Transport

The Government’s policy Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future, the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended) and the 30 year Mid – West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) all point in the direction of improving existing transport infrastructure and designing new infrastructure that will make non car transport modes more attractive.

In Croom, circa 60% of the population travel to work, school or college by car. Given the location of the village and access The reduction of this figure to align with government led climate change objectives will be challenging in Croom for a number of reasons.

Croom is serviced by the N20 which provides access to the village to the north and west. The maintenance and enhancement of the Bus Routes on the N20 to provide access to the village is listed as a priority in the LAP.

Water Services

The provision of adequate water supply and wastewater treatment utilities is crucial to the continued development and enhancement of Croom. The plant is operating effectively and currently compliant and but lacks the capacity to facilitate further connections. It has been included on a programme for the installation of a storm tank by Irish Water.

Waste Management

Limerick City and County Council in collaboration with adjoining local authorities prepared the Southern Regional Waste Management Plan 2014 – 2020. The plan incorporates policies and objectives for waste management in the region. In Croom there is a public waste recycling facility located in the grounds of St Marys Church. The nearest civic recycling centre is located in Limerick City providing recycling facilities for a comprehensive range of waste materials.

⁴ THMs are chemicals which may be found in water treated with chlorine. The concentration of THMs in drinking water varies according to the level of organic material in the water, the amount of chlorine required to treat the water, and the temperature of the water being treated. Some water supplies have reported levels of THMs which are higher than the recommended levels. Irish Water is developing a National THM plan, in order to deal with this issue.

2.8 Cultural Heritage

2.8.1 Archaeological Heritage

The town of Croom is designated as an Historic Town and is entered on the Record of Monument and Places (LI030 – 025). As a Recorded Monument, it is protected under the National Monuments Act (1930 – 2004). It is the Council's policy to safeguard the value and setting of archaeological sites in Croom and to seek their preservation in situ or, and only where appropriate through advance archaeological excavation. In so doing the Council will liaise with the National Monuments Service, DEHLG, where any planning application is received within the Historic Town area or in the vicinity of the other Recorded Monuments.

2.8.2 Architectural Heritage

In the interest of safeguarding the cultural and built heritage, 26 structures have been identified for their contribution to the architectural heritage in the area and have been designated as 'protected structures' under Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000(Amended). These structures are included within the Record of Protected Structures (R.P.S) set out in the LAP.

2.9 Landscape

Croom possesses a varied landscape which is important not just for its intrinsic value and beauty, but also because it provides for local residents and visitors, both in terms of a place to live and for recreational and tourism purposes. The landscape of the area is taken into account and is protected by the LAP in the measures designed to protect archaeological, built and natural heritage.

2.10 Key Interactions and inter-relationships

There is a recognized interaction between the various parameters considered by SEA e.g. SEA parameters including biodiversity, water quality data and vulnerability, soil and geology, cultural heritage and landscape issues. These issues are dealt with individually and in tandem at a planning level and are considered broadly as part of SEA. The LAP and the proposed extension of the LAP aims to protect and where possible enhance each of these features individually and so any potential impact on any of these features arising due to development supported by the LAP will likely be positive.

3 SEA Screening Assessment

3.1 Introduction to Assessment

The following section and table below present the SEA Screening assessment of the proposed extension of the Croom LAP against the criteria provided in Schedule 2a of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2001-2011. These provide the basis for determining whether a plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The Screening assessment should be read in conjunction with the Croom LAP, supporting baseline documentation and the accompanying Habitats Directive Screening report.

TABLE 2. SEA SCREENING TABLE

Criteria for determining whether the proposed extension of Croom LAP is likely to have significant effects on the environment
<p>1. <i>The characteristics of the Plan having regard, in particular, to:</i></p> <p><i>The degree to which the Plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,</i></p> <p>The Croom LAP is supported by a set of aims, actions and outcomes centered around a vision of promotion and enhancement of Croom and the interests of Croom as a village. The characteristics of the Plan do not set a framework for projects with a land use effect such as location, nature, size or operating conditions. The plan is a statutory plan. The aim is to establish a framework for the continued development of the Croom area as a high-level plan. However, the LAP cannot on its own, be used as a permission or be taken as contributory factor when assessing a planning permission request. As such no material change will occur as a direct result of this plan.</p> <p>Actions arising from the Plan will comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, and other licencing requirements as appropriate).</p>
<p><i>the degree to which the Plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy,</i></p> <p>The Croom LAP 2020-2026 is published for the entire Croom area and in particular those places contained within which are considered to be special or distinctive and the lived environment of all residents. It seeks to guide the work of the LCCC Heritage Office and LCCC cross-department activities that include heritage as well as setting out a framework for heritage activity across the community, volunteer and NGO sectors and for state agencies with a role in the heritage of the Croom area within Limerick.</p>
<p><i>the relevance of the Plan in the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,</i></p>

The overall aim of the original LAP extension is to provide a framework for coordinated development planning of the Croom area. The vision of the Plan involves the inclusion of all residents and tourists, safeguarding and building capacity.

The key objectives and underlying goals and actions in the LAP are positive in relation to developmental, cultural heritage, population and human health, biodiversity, flora and fauna, soil and landscapes.

The extension of the LAP to 2028 is a temporal expansion of an extant plan. The main aim of the extension is to bring the LAP into alignment with the wider County Development Plan.

Therefore, the plan and the proposed extension of the plan is relevant in relation to contributing to and promoting sustainable development.

Environmental problems relevant to the Plan

There are no key environmental problems identified as relevant to the Plan.

The ultimate goal of Croom LAP 2020-2026 is to promote the development and enhancement of Croom village for its residents while seeking to preserve and augment all natural and cultural heritage by guiding planning decisions and relevant sector investors in making decisions. This is in alignment with the Strategic Environmental Objectives under LCCC County Development Plan 2022-2028, and the LCCC Climate Change Action Plan 2024-2029.

The relevance of the Plan in the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection).

The Croom LAP and the proposed extension to the LAP focuses on development of the Croom area in a sustainable and legally compliant way. The plan complements EU legislation such as Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive. It enables clear decision making at planning level with regard to the relevant environmental legislation.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard to:

the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,

The Croom LAP 2020-2026 and the proposed extension to 2028 sets out specific aims, actions and outcomes for the coordinated management of the development of the Croom area until 2028. There are no specific land use effects identified through the aims and actions, with all of them generating positive, long-term and synergistic effects across a range of SEA parameters. Should conflicts arise from the Croom LAP, these will be subject to full planning and environmental assessment consent.

the cumulative nature of the effects,

At this point the action measures are not spatially specific and direct land use effects are not identified. Should projects arise from the proposed extension to the Croom LAP they will be subject to more detailed project level assessment and in compliance with the statutory planning and environmental consenting regime. At this strategic, county scale no potential for adverse cumulative effects is identified as a result.

the trans boundary nature of the effects

At this point the action measures are not spatially specific and direct land use effects are not identified. Should projects arise from the proposed extension to the Croom LAP they will be subject to more detailed project level assessment and in compliance with the statutory planning and environmental consenting regime. At this strategic scale no potential for transboundary effects are identified for the proposed extension to the Croom LAP.

the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),

No such risks are identified as arising from the plan. Actions relating to public are positive in relation to human health and wellbeing as it aims to enhance the living conditions and services accessible to the citizens of Croom. Any other actions linked through the proposed extension of the Croom LAP to the improvement of other SEOs such as biodiversity and landscape would benefit population and human health more broadly.

the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).

The Croom LAP and the proposed extension to that plan is small in scale, only taking into consideration the village of Croom and its immediate surrounds. The aim of the Croom LAP is to establish a framework for the continued development of the Croom area as a high-level plan. However, the LAP cannot on its own, be used as a permission or be taken as contributory factor when assessing a planning permission request. As such no material change will occur as a direct result of this plan.

the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage

The proposed extension of the Croom LAP has the same objectives and ideals as the original plan. It is a temporal expansion of this plan aimed at bringing the LAP into alignment with the wider county development plan. There is no change to land zoning and therefore no direct landuse implications will arise as a result of this plan. The plan does not directly impact any Natura 2000 sites, pNHAs or locally important biodiversity sites and other important areas such as rivers, streams, and wildlife corridors, but aims to broadly ensure the status of Strategic Environmental Objectives relating to biodiversity, flora and fauna are protected and considered through sustainable development.

Archaeological or built heritage sites associated with the rivers, lakes and coastal waters are afforded protection for cultural heritage namely through the record of protected structures or sites and monuments record. A screening statement in support of Appropriate Assessment has also been prepared for this plan in line with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). A finding of no likely significant effects has been concluded as part of this screening statement in support of Appropriate Assessment.

(b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,

The Croom LAP and the proposed extension of the plan does not provide consent, for planning permission requests. Any plan/project arising as a result of this plan will be subject to appropriate assessment and environmental impact assessment as the plans for these projects are developed.

In order to be realised, potential projects or proposals arising from the Croom LAP will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent granting framework.

(c) intensive land-use,

No specific areas are identified for landuse effects or development activities in the plan. No change in land current land uses are forthcoming as a result of the proposed extension to the currently in use Croom LAP. A number of actions in the Croom LAP and the proposed extension to the plan may have implications for soil or landscape. Such actions are positive in relation to planning and conserving heritage and generating positive interactions with SEOs, including biodiversity, water and soil.

(d) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.

A screening statement in support of Appropriate Assessment has been prepared in tandem with this SEA Screening and the following conclusion has been provided:

The Screening of the proposed extension of the Croom LAP as set out above shows that the plan will not result in land use activities that have the potential to result in negative impacts to the qualifying features of interest of European Sites occurring within or surrounding the plan area and will not have the potential to compromise the achievement of the conservation objective of these European Sites.

In light of the findings of this report it is the considered view of the authors of this Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment that it can be concluded that the Plan is not likely, alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, to have a significant effect on any European Sites in view of their Conservation Objectives and on the basis of best scientific evidence and there is no reasonable scientific doubt as to that conclusion.

3.2 Summary of Consultation with Environmental Authorities

In accordance with Article 14A of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive and the SEA Planning Regulations Limerick City and County Council invited environmental stakeholders to make a submission or observation in relation to whether or not the deferral of making a new LAP for Croom would be likely to have significant effects on the environment, prior to the Council making a determination.

A notice via email to the Environmental Authorities including; The EPA, The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications and The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, under Article 14 A (4) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) was issued by Limerick City and County Council on 17th September 2024 inviting written submissions on the proposed extension of duration for the Croom LAP. Contained within the notice, the deadline for submissions was by 15th October 2024.

A submission was received from the EPA in relation to the proposed extension of Croom LAP. A number of points were outlined in this submission. These points are outlined in the below table. No other submissions were received from any other stakeholders by the deadline, October 15th 2024 in relation to the extension of duration of the Croom LAP.

Table 3- Summary of consultation with EPA

Name/Group:	Environmental Protection Agency
Submission:	Response
<p>1. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promotes the full and transparent integration of the findings of the Environmental Assessment into the Plan and advocates that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are considered and addressed, as relevant and appropriate to the Plan.</p> <p>2. The EPA's guidance document "SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources", assists Local Authorities to incorporate relevant recommendations as relevant and appropriate to the Plan.</p> <p>3. SEA Determination If an SEA determination hasn't been made regarding the plan or programme a determination should be made on whether implementing the plan or programmes would be likely to have significant effect on the environment. Guidance documentation on the</p>	<p>1. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026.</p> <p>2. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026.</p> <p>3. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 and is accompanied by a SEA screening carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance.</p>

<p>SEA process is available on the EPA website and it is recommended that this is taken into account in the making of the SEA Determination.</p> <p>4. EPA SEA Screening Guidance EPA recommends the use of Good Practice Guidance for Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening.</p>	<p>4. Noted – this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 and is accompanied by a SEA screening carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance.</p>
<p>5. Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Planning Authorities: EPA recommends the use of The Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities.</p>	<p>5. Noted – as above.</p>
<p>6. Sustainable Development The Council should ensure that the implementing of the Plan or programme is consistent with the need for proper planning and sustainable development and national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Local Area Plan is required to be consistent with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes and consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.</p>	<p>6. Noted</p>
<p>Compliance is also required with the OPW's The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.</p> <p>7. State of the Environment Report – Ireland's Environment 2024 The recommendations of the State of the Environment Report <i>Ireland's Environment</i>, due to be published in October 2024 should be integrated into the plan over its lifetime.</p> <p>Available guidance and resources are outlined for the assistance of the Local Authority, including an SEA WebGis Tool.</p>	<p>7. Noted</p>

Any future amendments to the Plan should be screened for likely significant effects, using the same method as applied to the environmental assessment carried out to inform this plan.

The Local Authority are required to ensure that the plan complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive and where an Appropriate Assessment is required the findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the plan or programme. The EPA AA GeoTool is referenced here as a resource.

8. Environmental Authorities

Under the SEA Regulations, the Council should consult with: the Environmental Protection Agency; Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications; Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and any adjoining planning authority, whose area is contiguous to the area of the Planning Authority, which prepared the proposed plan, proposed variation or local area plan.

9. SEA Determination

After the making of a determination on whether SEA is required or not a copy of the decision including reasons shall be made available for public inspection and a copy sent to the relevant environmental authorities.

8. Noted – The Planning Authority have consulted with the Environmental Authorities and adjoining counties in the preparation of this report.

9. Noted – this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026. This Mayor's Report and associated screening document will be made available to view on the Council's website.

3.3 SEA Screening Determination

Section 9 (1) of the (2004) Regulations (S.I. No. 435) (as amended) states “*subject to sub-article (2), an environmental assessment shall be carried out for all plans and programmes*

(a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning or land use, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or ”

(b) which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site.”.

The proposed extension of the Croom LAP aims to provide a roadmap for guiding the development in a sustainable manner of the Croom village and its surrounds.

The overarching aim of this plan is to provide a framework for the continued sustainable development of Croom village and its immediate surrounds. In order to be realised, potential projects or proposals arising from the Croom LAP and the proposed extension to the same will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent granting framework, of which the plan is not part and does not contribute towards.

In relation to Section 9 (1) of the (2004) Regulations (S.I. No. 435) (b) which relates to the findings of the Screening Statement in support of Appropriate Assessment, a finding of no likely significant effects on the conservation management objectives of European Sites has been determined.

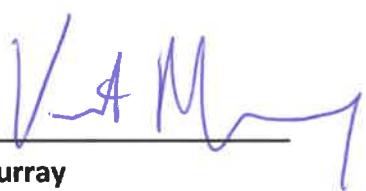
Therefore, LCCC, informed by the conclusions contained in the attached report, conclude that the proposed extension of the Croom LAP does not give rise to significant adverse environmental effects, and the proposed extension to the Croom LAP does not require full SEA.

3.3.1 Consultation with specified environmental authorities

In line with SI 435 of 2011, the plan and accompanying SEA Screening reports were issued to the statutory consultees for a four-week period as described above in this report.

These submissions have been noted in the SEA Screening Determination and in summary a final determination has been made following consultation that full SEA is not required. This is the final determination of the SEA Screening of the proposed extension to the Croom Local Area Plan.

Signed:



Vincent Murray

Director of Services – Planning and Place-making

Date: 29/11/2024

Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026

Mayor's report submitted to Elected Members in accordance with Section 19 (1)(d) and 19(1)(e) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) in relation to the deferral of making a new Local Area Plan

29th November 2024

Limerick City and County Council
Forward Planning
Planning and Place-making Directorate,
Merchants Quay
Limerick



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Part 1 – Introduction

1.1 Background

The Croom Local Area Plan (LAP) 2020 – 2026 is the public statement of planning policies and objectives for the town of Croom. The Plan was adopted by the Elected Members of the Adare - Rathkeale Municipal District on the 3rd March 2020 and came into effect 14th April 2020 and is due to expire in April 2026. There have been no amendments to the plan, since its adoption.

Section 19 (1) (c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out that where a Local Area Plan is made it shall be done at least every 6 years after the making of the previous local area plan. However, the Planning and Development Amendment Act 2010 introduced a new provision whereby a Planning Authority may, if considered appropriate, by resolution extend the life of an existing local area plan for a further period not exceeding 5 years. The extension of duration of the current LAP for 4 years is sought in order to provide certainty and opportunity to realise the objectives of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 which is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

The LAP must be consistent with the objectives of the higher-level spatial plans, including the National Planning Framework(NPF), Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy(RSES) and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 as varied. All plans in the spatial plan hierarchy are subject to the SEA and AA assessment. When interpreting the objectives of the Plan for Croom, it is essential that both the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 and the Croom LAP are read together.

The NPF is the Government’s high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of our country out to the year 2040.

The RSES for the Southern Region provides a long-term, strategic development framework for the future physical, economic and social development of the Southern Region including the future development of the Region’s three main cities and metropolitan areas – Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 as varied sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Limerick City and County over a 6-year period to 2028. It is informed by the policy and objectives of the RSES and NPF. The Limerick Development Plan was adopted by Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council on 17th June 2022 and came into effect 29th July 2022. Variation No. 1 to the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 was adopted by the Elected Members on the 22nd April 2023 comprising an amendment to Policy TR P11 Road Safety and Carrying Capacity of the Non-national Road Network and Objective TR O37 Land Uses and Access Standards.

Informed by the RSES and the NPF, the Limerick Development Plan identifies Croom as a Level 4 Large Village (>500 population) which cater for the daily and weekly needs of its inhabitants and the needs of the surrounding wider catchment area. Level 4 settlements provide a range of employment opportunities and services appropriate to their size and function, such as secondary and primary schools, childcare facilities, sports grounds/complexes, libraries,

Garda stations, medical centres and a good range of local services including shops, pubs, post offices and banks/credit unions.

The Croom LAP 2020 – 2026 sets out a land use strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the town of Croom, complying with the provisions of higher-level spatial plans. The LAP consists of a written statement and maps indicating objectives for zoning of land, residential development, economic development, community infrastructure, built and natural heritage, vacancy, regeneration, open space and recreation, active travel and transport, environmental protection and climate action. The total area of lands zoned in the Croom LAP is 158.17 hectares. This Plan also includes a Serviced Land Assessment, which informed the quantum and location of the land zoned in the Plan. The adoption of the LAP, and the proposed extension to the duration of the timeframe is a reserved function of Elected Members of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District. The Croom LAP underwent an AA, SEA and Flood Risk assessment in 2020.

The structure of this report is as follows:

- Part 1 includes a general introduction, outlines the statutory procedures and identifies the purpose of the report.
- Part 2 lists and summarises submissions received from the Environmental Bodies and Prescribed bodies.
- Part 3 outlines compliance with the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan in terms of projected population growth for the town, and the quantum of units and lands zoned for residential use to accommodate the population growth.
- Part 4 outlines the progress of securing the objectives of the Croom LAP.
- Part 5 outlines the environmental considerations the Council is obligated to address to inform the proposal to extend the lifetime of the LAP and defer the making of a new LAP.
- Part 6 contains the Executive's recommendation to the Elected Members of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District.
- Appendix 1 contains the current land-use zoning map in the Croom Local Area Plan.

1.2 Statutory Procedure

The Planning Authority may, if considered appropriate, by resolution, defer the sending of notices to commence the review of a local area plan. No resolution shall be passed until such time as the members of the Authority notify the Mayor of the decision of the Authority to defer the sending or publishing of the notices, giving reasons, and having sought and obtained opinion from the Mayor:

- An opinion that the LAP remains consistent with the objectives and the core strategy of the relevant Development Plan, and/or
- An opinion that the objectives of the LAP have not been substantially secured, and confirmation that the sending and publishing of the notices be deferred and the period for which they may be deferred.

If the Elected Members of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District accept the Mayor recommendation, that the current Croom Local Area Plan is consistent with the objectives of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and its core strategy, and are in agreement that the objectives of the plan have not been substantially secured within the life time of the plan, they may determine by resolution, that it would be appropriate to defer the process for making a new plan, for an agreed time period.

Following the making of any such decision, a public notice to this effect is required to be published in a newspaper circulating in the area of the local area plan not later than 2 weeks after the resolution is passed by Elected Members of the Adare - Rathkeale Municipal District.

1.3 Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to set out the opinion of the Mayor that:

- a) The Croom Local Area Plan (LAP) 2020 – 2026, remains consistent with the objectives and the core strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028;
- b) The objectives of the LAP have not been substantially secured to date; and
- c) The sending and publishing of notices to make or review the plan may be deferred and the period for which it may be deferred.

Part 2 - Submissions received from the Environmental Bodies and Prescribed Bodies

A notice to the Environmental Authorities under Article 14 A(4) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) was issued by Limerick City and County Council on 17th September 2024 inviting written submissions to the extension of duration for the Croom LAP by 15th October 2024. One submissions were received from the EPA in relation to the extension of duration of the Croom LAP.

	Name/Group:	Environmental Protection Agency
	Submission:	Response
	<p>1. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promotes the full and transparent integration of the findings of the Environmental Assessment into the Plan and advocates that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are considered and addressed, as relevant and appropriate to the Plan.</p> <p>2. The EPA's guidance document "SEA of Local Authority Land Use Plans – EPA Recommendations and Resources", assists Local Authorities to incorporate relevant recommendations as relevant and appropriate to the Plan.</p>	<p>1. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026.</p> <p>2. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026.</p>

<p>3. SEA Determination</p> <p>If an SEA determination hasn't been made regarding the plan or programme a determination should be made on whether implementing the plan or programmes would be likely to have significant effect on the environment. Guidance documentation on the SEA process is available on the EPA website and it is recommended that this is taken into account in the making of the SEA Determination.</p>	<p>3. Noted - this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 and is accompanied by a SEA screening carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance.</p>
<p>4. EPA SEA Screening Guidance</p> <p>EPA recommends the use of Good Practice Guidance for Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening.</p>	<p>4. Noted – this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 and is accompanied by a SEA screening carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance.</p>
<p>5. Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Planning Authorities:</p> <p>EPA recommends the use of The Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities.</p>	<p>5. Noted</p>
<p>6. Sustainable Development</p> <p>The Council should ensure that the implementing of the Plan or programme is consistent with the need for proper planning and sustainable development and national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Local Area Plan is required to be consistent with key relevant higher-level plans and programmes and consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.</p>	<p>6. Noted</p>
<p>Compliance is also required with the OPW's The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities.</p>	
<p>7. State of the Environment Report – Ireland's Environment 2024</p> <p>The recommendations of the State of the Environment Report <i>Ireland's Environment</i>, due</p>	<p>7. Noted</p>

<p>to be published in October 2024 should be integrated into the plan over its lifetime.</p> <p>Available guidance and resources are outlined for the assistance of the Local Authority, including an SEA WebGis Tool.</p> <p>Any future amendments to the Plan should be screened for likely significant effects, using the same method as applied to the environmental assessment carried out to inform this plan.</p> <p>The Local Authority are required to ensure that the plan complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive and where an Appropriate Assessment is required the findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the plan or programme. The EPA AA GeoTool is referenced here as a resource.</p> <p>8. Environmental Authorities Under the SEA Regulations, the Council should consult with: the Environmental Protection Agency; Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications; Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine; and any adjoining planning authority, whose area is contiguous to the area of the Planning Authority, which prepared the proposed plan, proposed variation or local area plan.</p> <p>9. SEA Determination After the making of a determination on whether SEA is required or not a copy of the decision including reasons shall be made available for public inspection and a copy sent to the relevant environmental authorities.</p>	<p>8. Noted – The Planning Authority have consulted with the Environmental Authorities and adjoining counties in the preparation of this report.</p> <p>9. Noted – this report relates to the extension of duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026. This Mayor’s Report and associated screening document will be made available to view on the Council’s website.</p>
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Part 3- Compliance with the Core Strategy of Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and Population Growth

3.1 Introduction

In accordance with the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended), the Croom LAP must demonstrate consistency with the hierarchy of spatial plans consisting of the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF, the Regional Planning Guidelines (RSES for the Southern Region), and Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 as varied. LAPS must also align with current Government policies and Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines, circulars and EU Directives.

The core strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, (as varied) is a transparent evidence-based rationale for the quantum of land proposed to be zoned for new residential development and for mixed-use development in Limerick City and County based on the proposed population growth of Limerick over the lifetime of the Plan period. Based on the population target the core strategy has allocated a specific population target for each settlement, including Croom.

The Core Strategy is developed around a framework of high-level population and household targets that are set out in the NPF, the NPF Implementation Roadmap, the RSES for the Southern Region and Section 28 guidance document Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning, (DHLGH, December 2020).

3.2 Settlement Strategy, Population and Zoned Land Requirements

Croom is designated as a level 4 Large Village (>500 population) in the settlement hierarchy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. Level 4 settlements provides a wide range of services for its inhabitants and its hinterland.

The total projected population across the Level 4 settlements is 16,620 persons to 2028 requiring an additional 1286 residential units across the Level 4 Large Villages.

Table 1: Projected population and household growth per settlement hierarchy, Limerick Development Plan 2022- 2028 as varied

Settlement Hierarchy	2016 population (CSO census)	Settlement population totals 2028	Additional households forecasted 2022-2028
Level 1 Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungrat and Annacotty	92,878	127,570	11,442
Level 2 Key Town	6,619	8,607	706
Level 3 Towns (>1,400 population)	8,715	11,080	850
Level 4 Large Villages (>500 population)	12,964	16,620	1,286
Level 5 Small Villages	5,913	7,216	340
Level 6 Rural clusters	1,882	2,165	105
Level 7 Open Countryside	65,928	70,863	862
Total Limerick	194,899	244,121	15,591

As a Level 4 Large Village the Limerick Development Plan acknowledges that Croom provides a wide range of services and functions for its inhabitants and the surrounding hinterlands including housing, employment services and retail and leisure opportunities. Table 2 below contains the spatial strategy objectives of the Limerick Development Plan for Level 4 Large Villages such as Croom.

Table 2: Objectives for Level 4 Large Village, Section 2b Limerick County Spatial Strategy-Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 as varied

Relevant Objectives of the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 as varied			
Objective No:	Title	Objective content	Relevance of objective
CGR O15	Requirements for Developments within Level 4 Settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the scale of new housing developments, shall be in proportion to the pattern and grain of existing development generally. No one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 10 – 15% within the lifetime of the Plan. • Provide Serviced Sites • Commercial development within the core of the village • Community and social infrastructure a requirement in tandem with new residential development. • Treatment of effluent in serviced sites in line with EPA guidelines. 	Objective CGR 015 remains relevant. This report is a review of the consistency of the LAP with higher-level spatial plans.
CGR O16	Local Area Plans in Level 4 Settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor/review existing Local Area Plans to align with the Limerick Development Plan. 	Objective CGR 016 remains relevant.
Conclusion			Objective CGR O15 and CGR O16 of the Limerick Development remain relevant in Croom.

3.3 Population and zoned land requirement

The population target for Croom in the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan, projecting from the 2016 Census is a total population of 1484 persons resident in the town by

2028. This equates to a requirement for an additional 104 residential units to accommodate the additional 325 persons. The zoned land requirement to accommodate this is 5.84 hectares, with a total of 12.45ha zoned in total as per the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan. Refer to Table 3 below.

Table 3: Population projections and quantum of residentially zoned lands to accommodate the projected population increase, Core Strategy, Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

Level	Settlements	Census 2016 population	Population totals 2028	Population growth as % of 2016 base ¹	Additional households forecasted 2022-28	Target residential density ranges (UPH) ²	Zoned land Required (hectares)	Existing zoned land available (hectares)	Infill or brownfield as % of total zoned lands ³	Shortfall (-) or excess (+) of zoned land (hectares)
Level 4 Large Villages	Adare	1,129	1,455	29%	122	10 or 22+	6.88	5835		51.48
	Askeaton	1,137	1,455	28%	119	10 or 22+	6.72	2354		16.82
	Ballingarry	521	667	28%	55	10 or 22+	3.08	5.89	29.71%	2.81
	Bruff	803	1,043	30%	83	10 or 22+	4.68	5.52	12.30%	0.84
	Bruree	580	740	28%	39	10 or 22+	2.21	213	65.49%	See Footnote ⁴
	Cappamore	820	794	28%	65	10 or 22+	3.56	332	17.62%	See Footnote ⁵
	Croom	1,159	1,484	28%	104	10 or 22+	5.84	1245		6.61

During 2016 – 2022 the Census records a population increase of + 6.98% for the town of Croom. The population trend experienced by the town since 1991 is summarised in table 4 below. Since 2011 there has been consistent population growth in the town.

Table 4: Population change Croom 1991-2022

Census Year	Population	Population change %
1991	1090*	
1996	1009*	-7.4
2002	1056*	4.7
2006	1045*	-1.04
2011	1157*	10.72
2016	1159	0
2022	1240	6.98

* Population was gathered for the Settlement of Croom as collected by the CSO. This boundary is larger than the LAP boundary and includes a number of additional houses to the west of the town.(excerpt taken from Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026)

The projected increase of 325 persons equates to 27 additional people per annum (325/12 years). Given that the total population increase in the town according to the Census between 2016 – 2022 was an additional 81 persons over the 6 year period (13.5 persons per annum), Croom is performing below the projected population increase to 2028 as contained in the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan.

Therefore, given the calculations above Croom is under performing by circa 50% below the projections of the Core Strategy having an additional 13.5 persons per annum during the 2016 – 2022 Census period compared to 27 persons per annum envisaged by the Core Strategy. Refer to Table 5 below.

Table 5: Comparative Analysis of population growth performance of Croom with the growth projected for the town by the Core Strategy

Census 2016 total population	Census 2022 total population	Total additional projected population by Core Strategy 2016-2028	Pro-rata growth (persons per annum) 2016 – 2028 by Core Strategy	Total additional Census 2016 - 2022	Pro-rata growth (persons per annum) Census 2016 - 2022
1159	1240	325	27 persons per annum	81	13.5 persons per annum

3.4 Housing growth, zoned land requirements and capacity of existing zoned land to accommodate growth

The Core Strategy set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 states 104 residential units are required in Croom for the 2022 – 2028 period with a land requirement of 5.84 hectares to accommodate the additional people. The LAP 2020-2026 zoned 13.47 ha for residential development, comprising residential development area (10.42) and residential serviced sites (3.05). Based on national policy 90% of units are expected at a minimum density of 22 units per hectare and given the established number of low density serviced sites in the town 10% of units are expected at a density of 10 units per hectare. 6.8ha are committed to permissions granted for residential developments since the adoption of the LAP in April 2020, with 5.9 ha of that development on residentially zoned lands, the remainder being on town centre and education and community zoned lands. Therefore circa 7.57ha of residentially zoned lands are available for development which is in line with the requirements of the Core Strategy (5.84ha) of the Limerick Development Plan until 2028.

Croom is under performing in terms of the residential units committed to by planning applications granted. Table 6 below demonstrates that 17 new residential units are required per annum to achieve the population growth of the Core Strategy. To date only 13.5 new residential units have been granted permission per annum over the period March 2020 to October 2024. 16 of these applications have been permitted on Town Centre zoned lands which is in line with Objective H3: Infill Development, Restoration and Renewal of the Croom LAP which promotes living in the centre of the town and the use of infill, vacant and backland sites. It also aligns with Objective CGR O3 Urban Lands and Compact Growth of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 which promotes 30% of new homes within the existing built-up footprint of settlements.

Since the adoption of the 2020 LAP national policy on town centre vacancy, dereliction and regeneration was published in 2022 as The Town Centre First Policy. The Planning Authority considers current residential vacancy in the town when considering the quantum of lands to be zoned for residential use. Aligned to the NPF the Planning Authority promotes compact settlement and the re-use of underused or vacant sites/buildings for new residential units. To provide robust local information on vacancy the Planning Authority undertakes surveys of vacancy in settlements. These were undertaken by the Council in Croom in 2020. Vacant buildings and sites can also provide opportunities for the residential development, often

ideally located sequentially to the town core, accessible to its services and the amenities within walking distance within the town.

Table 6 below sets out the residential development permissions granted by land use zoning types in the town since March 2020, when the LAP was adopted.

Table 6: Comparative analysis of the residential units required by the Core Strategy and the total new residential units committed to through planning applications March 2020 – October 2024

Total residential units required by LAP 2020 - 2026	Pro-rata no. of units required per annum 2020 – 2026 required by LAP	Total units required by Core Strategy 2022 - 2028	Pro-rata no. of units required per annum 2022-2028 required by Core Strategy	Total residential units permitted since adoption of LAP (March 2020-October 2024) per land use zone
273	45.5	104	17	113 - Residential Development Area 2 – Serviced Sites 4 – Existing Residential 16 – Town Centre 91 – Community and Education(Nursing Home beds) 226 residential units

There have been a number of planning applications for housing developments permitted on lands zoned for new residential development, serviced sites and Town centre, since the adoption of the Local Area Plan. Refer to Table 7 and 8 below.

Table 7 – Planning permission granted for residential development in Croom March 2020- October 2024

Land use zoning	Ref:	Description	Location	No of units	Area (ha)	Commenced (Sept 24)
New Residential	21/7031	Extension of Duration of application 16/244 amended under 19/717	Skagh	46	2.037	Y
	19/8005	Part 8	Tower-field	16	.46	Y
	21/630	Construction of dwellings and demolition of existing house and garage	Skagh	51	2.007	N
	21/649	Permission consequent 18/38	Skagh	1	.1835	Y

	20/1219	Permission consequent 18/38	Skagh	1	.181	Y
Serviced Sites	20/79	Permission consequent 13/148 extended 17/7003	Skagh	2	.222	Y
	21/131	Permission consequent 13/148 extended 17/7003	Skagh	2	.2	Y
Town Centre	20/525	Construction of dwellings on town centre zoned lands	Skagh	14	.357	N
	21/76	Construction of townhouses	11 Main St	2	.031	Y
	21/395	Change of use of commercial building	47/48 Main St	5	.0575	Y
	21/1000	Part retail part residential development	43/44 Main St	1	.017	Y
	23/60064	Renovation of building	Bridge St	3	.2	N
	21/1198	Change of use of 2 retail units	High St	4	.7	N
	24/60522	Change of Use health/medical use at ground floor – former AIB building	High St	1	.108	Y
Education and Community Facilities	22/410	Nursing Home	Skagh	91	1.66	N

Table 8 – Residential zoned lands required per DP, lands zoned in the LAP and lands developed/developing since the adoption of the 2020-2026 LAP

Land use zoning	Required Ha per DP '22-'28	Zoned lands per LAP '20-26	Lands developed since '20	Balance
New Residential	5.84	10.42	2.86	7.56
Serviced Sites	-	3.05	.42	2.63
Town Centre*	-	8.04	.22	7.83

*Town Centre zoned lands will protect and enhance the character of Croom's Town Centre and provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the centre, while guiding development of an expanded consolidated town centre area. It is worth noting that much of the 7.83 hectares identified as a balance for Town Centre zoned lands have already been development however opportunities exist in small parcels for infill style developments.

Based on the above table there was 10.42 hectares of land zoned for new residential development in the Croom LAP with development commenced on 2.86 hectares. In this respect there is 7.56 hectares available for residential development, though a further 2.37 hectares have been granted permission for residential developments that have not yet commenced. A further .42 hectares has been developed for serviced sites in the town with 3.05 designated in the Local Area Plan 2020-2026. Therefore, there is sufficient land zoned in the Croom Local Area Plan for residential use (residential development and serviced sites) and the current zoning allocations continue to satisfy the core strategy requirements of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

Part 4 - Progress of securing the objectives of the Croom LAP

Chapter 1 Introduction, Chapter 2 Development Strategy and Chapter 3 Plan Strategy

The table below outlines the key policies and objectives set out in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 and considers their consistency with the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 as varied and the higher level plans. It concludes that the LAP aligns with these plans.

Goal/Objective/Policy	Title	Summary	Relevance to extensions of duration of LAP
Policy SS P2	Development of Tier 2 – 6 settlements:	Support sustainable development within settlements Tiers 2-6	This policy remains relevant and is supported in the higher level plans
Obj SS 01	Scale of Development	Ensure that the scale of new housing developments both individually and cumulatively shall be in proportion to the pattern and grain of existing development. Generally no one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 10-15% within the lifetime of the plan.	Objective SS 01 remains relevant in Croom. Planning applications are assessed according to the criteria of the Development Management Standards set out in the Limerick Development Plan '22-'28.
Obj SS 011	Zoning on land for Tier 3 settlements	Monitor/review existing Local Area Plans to align	Objective SS 011 remains

		with the Limerick Development Plan	relevant and is supported in the higher level plans.
Goal	Long term vision for Croom	Consolidate the role of Croom as a town serving a wide agricultural hinterland.	The goal of the Croom LAP remains relevant.
Policy SS 1	Consistency of the Croom Local Area Plan with the hierarchy of statutory plan	To ensure that the Croom LAP is consistent with the hierarchy of statutory plans.	Policy SS 1 remains relevant and is supported in the higher level plans.
Conclusion: The goal, objectives and policies set out in Chapter 1,2 and 3 of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 are consistent with the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan and the higher level spatial plans.			

Chapter 4: Housing

Since the adoption of the LAP in 2020 there have been a number of permissions granted and commenced for residential development on lands zoned New Residential Development, Serviced Site and Town Centre in Croom. Table 7 above sets out the individual application details. 10.19 hectares of land remains available for new residential development on lands zoned New Residential Development and Serviced Sites with an objective that 30% of new residential shall occur on lands within the Town Centre. This is above the requirement in the Core Strategy of the Limerick Development Plan of 5.84 hectares as referenced in Section 3.4 previously. Given the amount of available residentially zoned lands in the town it is considered that there is sufficient lands zoned for residential use for a further four years. Therefore the LAP remains consistent with the Core Strategy and the objectives of the Core Strategy have not been substantially secured to date.

Objective/Policy	Title	Summary	Relevance to extension of duration of LAP
Policy H1	Adequately zoned lands	Appropriately zoned lands to cater for the sustainable growth of Croom	Policy H1 remains relevant
Policy H2	Quality shall underpin all new development	Creating and maintaining a sense of place and local distinctiveness in any new development areas.	Policy H2 remains relevant
Objective H1	New Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate residential development in 	10.19 hectares

		<p>accordance statutory guidelines and the Limerick County Plan or any amendment to it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the provision of community and other facilities such as childcare as an integral part of new developments. 	residentially zoned lands remain available for residential development in Croom. Objective H1 remains relevant
Objective H2	Residential density, design and mix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the use of master plans for larger landholdings. Promote appropriate densities Minimum net density of 22 units to the hectare on residentially zoned sites and 10 units per hectare on lands zoned for Serviced Sites. Density of housing in any location is appropriate to its setting. Wide range of house types, sizes and tenures are provided Variety of building heights at appropriate locations. Compliance with the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan Policy SS P1 and SS P6. 	The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) has been replaced by the Limerick Development Plan '22-'28(as varied) and the contents of Objective H2 remains relevant.
Objective H3	Infill Development, Restoration and Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage living in the centre of Croom Emphasise the town centre as the primary retail centre Promote sensitive infill sites on vacant sites Consider development of rear plots Ensure that at least 30% of all new housing 	Planning applications are assessed to the criteria of the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan.

		development is delivered within the town.	Objective H3 remains relevant.
Objective H4	Social Housing and Joint Housing Strategy	<p>Compliance with Objective HOU 02 of the Development Plan,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require that developers comply with Part V 	Objective has been updated in the Limerick Development Plan 22-28 HO 013—objective remains relevant.
Objective H5	Traveller Accommodation Programme	Provide accommodation for the Traveller Community, in accordance with the existing Traveller Accommodation Programme and any subsequent programme formally adopted by the Council.	Objective H5 remains relevant.
Objective H6	Vacant Sites	Identify vacant sites in the Local Authority's area that are suitable for housing. These sites will be entered on a vacant sites register and accordingly will be levied as per the requirements of the Act.	The Vacant Sites Register has been superseded by the Residential Zoned Land Tax. The Council have prepared maps across 17 settlements. No lands have been identified in Croom.
Objective H7	Housing on Agriculturally zoned lands	Permit housing on agriculturally zoned land for the long term habitation of farmers and the sons and daughters of farmers only and subject to the terms and conditions of rural housing policy as set out in the	A new Development Plan has been adopted for Limerick since the making of the Croom LAP

		Limerick County Development Plan.	with updated housing need polices, which remain relevant.
Conclusion: The objectives of Chapter 4 remain relevant and are consistent with the Limerick Development Plan and higher level spatial plans.			

Chapter 5: Economic Development

Croom operates as a service centre for its own community and the wider hinterland with a range of businesses and services across the town. Since the adoption of the LAP the supermarket on Main St has undergone a renovation and extension, permission has been granted for renovation of buildings on Main St to provide 3 new retail units with residential accommodation overhead and Boyle Sports have opened a shop in the town.

Permission has also been granted for two two storey office development at the site of the Croom Enterprise Centre which is yet to commence. The Council granted planning permission to Croom Medical Precision in July 2024 for a 3,050sqm extension of the existing facility to consist of light industrial manufacturing areas and a two storey office building. The application was made across lands with a dual zoning, Enterprise and Employment and Education and Community Facilities and was granted by means of a material contravention to the plan. The application was subsequently appealed to An Bord Pleanala in August 2024, with a decision pending.

A total of 7.51 hectares of land was zoned for Enterprise and Employment use in the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026. Permission has been granted for telecommunication structures on some of this lands with sufficient lands remaining for further enterprise development within the town.

Objective/Policy	Title	Summary	Relevance to extension of duration of LAP
Policy ED1	Facilitate and encourage appropriate, industrial, enterprise and commercial development in Croom	In accordance with the principles of sustainable development and to strengthen the viability of the town centre as the focal point of commercial activity.	Policy ED 1 remains relevant
Policy ED2	Croom as a main centre on the transport corridor	Recognise Croom as a main centre on the transport corridor, which will be promoted as a centre for future development and an important regional	Policy ED 2 remains relevant

		employment function within the surrounding area	
Policy ED 3	Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan	All proposals for economic development shall comply with the policies, objectives and Development Management Standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended).	The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) has been replaced by the Limerick Development Plan '22-'28(as varied) and the contents of Policy ED 3 remains relevant.
Objective ED1	Economic Development Proposals	Permit proposals where they are located on appropriately zoned land, to an appropriate scale without adverse effects to transport, the amenity of adjoining properties, can be serviced and accommodates landscaping on site boundaries.	7.51 hectares of lands are zoned for Enterprise and Employment purposes in the Croom Local Area Plan and Objective ED1 remains relevant.
Objective ED2	Small-Scale Businesses in Residential Area	Permit home based economic activities where they can be accommodated without detriment to the amenities of residential areas and where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of the house for business purposes is secondary to its use as a dwelling and the floor area of the business should reflect this; and • Adequate parking requirements are met; 	Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan apply. Objective ED 2 remains relevant.

		Permit non-residential uses in established and proposed residential areas, where they comply with necessary standards.	
Objective ED 3	Retail Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasise the town centre as the primary retail centre Encourage new retail development to locate in the town centre by applying a sequential test Promote sensitive infill developments on sites in the town centre Proposals at ground floor level in the town centre restricted to active retail, commercial, service, artisan workspace active use. Storage use is not permitted on ground floor street frontage Consideration to conservation, restoration and reconstruction, where it would affect the settings of protected structures and the (ACA) Seek high quality shop front design, with emphasis on traditional shop fronts Encourage the use of upper floors for commercial or residential use Discourage expansion or new build retail/service use outside the Croom LAP boundary 	Objective ED 3 remains relevant.

Objective ED 4	Town Centre/Out of Centre Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New petrol stations with an ancillary shop with a maximum net retail floor area of 100sqm will be considered on town centre zoned lands; • No further retail on out of centre locations 	<p>Planning applications are assessed to the criteria of the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan</p> <p>Objective ED 4 remains relevant.</p>
Objective ED 5	Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the tourism potential of the Croom area • Enhance the tourism potential of the town, such as the association with the Maigue Poets • Facilitate the provision of tourism information signage in the town centre. • Enhance existing open spaces in the town centre • Encourage new development for the tourist industry to be located near existing services and infrastructure • Protect the natural, built and cultural heritage features from unsuitable development. 	<p>Objective ED 5 remains relevant.</p>

Conclusion: The policies and objectives of Chapter 5 remain relevant and are consistent with the Limerick Development Plan and the higher level spatial plans.

Chapter 6: Transport

Since the adoption of the LAP work has been ongoing on the delivery of significant transport and accessibility infrastructure in Croom. The town has benefitted from a total of €782,500 funding from the NTA for Active Travel Projects over the lifetime of the Plan.

This funding under Minor Footpath Improvements works has seen:

- (i) footpath extension, drainage and public lighting together with a new pedestrian crossing to the GAA pitch on Ballingarry Road
- (ii) footpath extension from Garda Station out to new Distributor Road on old N20 together with drainage works and new public lighting
- (iii) footpath upgrade from Garda Station and public lighting upgrade on Crecora road to roundabout on new Distributor Road via St. Senans Terrace
- (iv) widened and footpath upgrade works, drainage and new public lighting from Distributor Road Roundabout towards Orthopaedic Hospital on Honeybound road – work is ongoing and will be completed before end of 2024.

Further works include a traffic management plan, the construction of a roundabout at the Garda Station and improvement works to the junction of Main St and High St.

In 2020, Croom was approved for funding of €100,000 under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme and has since developed a car park with 18 spaces in the town which also provided for drainage, surfacing and road markings.

Objective/Policy	Title	Summary	Relevance to extension of duration of LAP
Policy T1	Integrated Transport system	Provide for an integrated sustainable transport system in Croom that facilitates the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic.	Policy T1 remains relevant.
Policy T2	Accessibility	Improve accessibility and encourage alternatives to the private car	Policy T2 remains relevant.
Policy T3	New development on suitably zoned lands	Permit development on suitably zoned lands, where infrastructure is available.	Policy T3 remains relevant.
Policy T4	Compliance with the standards set out in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended)	Proposals shall comply with the standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended) in relation to transport and infrastructure.	The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) has been replaced by the Limerick Development Plan '22-'28(as varied) and the

			contents of Policy T4 remains relevant.
Objective T1	M20	Accommodate the proposed M20 route, where required, within the plan boundary.	Objective T1 remains relevant.
Objective T2	Movement Accessibility	<p>To support the provision of a distributor road network through the plan area, as indicated on the Land Use Zoning Map.</p> <p>Encourage the development of safe and efficient movement and accessibility networks that will cater for the needs of all users and encourage priority for walking and cycling and public transport provision. Future development proposals will demonstrate at design stage that consideration of Smarter Travel, mobility and connectivity has been considered;</p> <p>All future development proposal shall incorporate the relevant objectives of the Mid West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP 2011 – 2030), the Smarter Travel Strategy and the promotion of enhanced public transport facilities and services;</p> <p>Ensure that facilities and access are provided for</p>	<p>A distributor road has been constructed and is in operation which provides access to Colaiste Chiarain.</p> <p>Junction improvement works have taken place at High St and Main St.</p> <p>Planning applications are assessed on the principles of Smarter Travel; and the Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan (as varied) 2022-2028</p> <p>Objective T2 remains relevant.</p>

		<p>those with disabilities in the community.</p> <p>Improve the efficiency of junctions as identified on land zoning map in the town</p> <p>Only permit development, where a safe and secure access can be provided;</p> <p>Require roads provided to serve private housing developments are designed to a high standard;</p> <p>Provision of clear and unambiguous carriageway markings and directional signage</p> <p>Safeguard the N20, national road.</p>	
Objective T3	Car parking and traffic management	<p>Provision of off-street public parking areas as part of any application for development;</p> <p>Preparation of a Traffic Management Plan for the Main Street of Croom</p> <p>Ensure that adequate car parking and access provision are provided for those with disabilities in the community.</p>	<p>An off-street car park has been provided along Main St.</p> <p>A traffic management Plan has been developed for the Main St of Croom and has seen the rationalisation of parking. This objective has been substantially completed however it remains relevant.</p>

Objective T4	Noise mitigation	<p>Adopt a strategic approach to managing environmental noise. Developers will be required to ensure that appropriate noise assessments are carried out and the principles of good acoustic design are applied in line with "Professional Practice Guidance on Planning & Noise" (2017) and that predicted internal and external noise levels are in keeping with WHO recommendations and guidance.</p>	Objective T4 remains relevant.
<p>Conclusion: The policies and objectives of Chapter 6 remain relevant and are consistent with the Limerick Development Plan and the higher level spatial plans.</p>			

Chapter 7: Infrastructure

The Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 identified that the wastewater treatment plant was operating effectively and currently compliant with treatment capacity for a further 500 population equivalent. Updated information from Uisce Éireann in June 2024 has identified that there has been a significant level of population growth as well as offers issued in recent times and connection applications and enquiries currently under assessment has had the effect of reducing available capacity. As a result of the above, there is insufficient capacity in the Croom WWTP, however following engagement with UÉ they have outlined that a strategic assessment is proposed under the Small Towns and Villages Programme to scope the works required to upgrade the plant for consideration in future investment planning.

In the interim, arrangements will be made to facilitate development in the town and continued engagement will take place between the Local Authority and UÉ to promote additional capacity to the town.

There is a public water supply to Croom which is managed and delivered by Uisce Éireann. The UÉ water supply capacity register June 2023 identifies that there is potential water supply available to Croom but that capacity constraints may exist and connection applications will be assessed on an individual basis considering their specific load requirements. Improvement proposals will include but are not limited to leakage reduction and/or capital investment. These proposals will be required to maintain/improve levels of service as demand increases. These proposals will be developed and prioritised through the National Water Resources Plan and investment planning process. In the interim, arrangements will be made to facilitate development in the town and continued engagement will take place between the Local Authority and UÉ to promote additional capacity to the town.

The Council is committed to managing flood risk in accordance with the principles set out in the ministerial guidelines The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Nov 2019 and the OPW CFRAM informed the land use zoning in the 2020 LAP. The Croom LAP 2020-2026 was subject to a Flood Risk Assessment. There have been no changes or replacement of these national guidelines on flooding since the adoption of the LAP and there have been no significant flood events since the adoption of the Plan.

Objective/Policy	Title	Summary	Relevance to extension of duration of LAP
Policy IN 01	Provision of water and sewerage facilities	Co-operate with Irish Water to provide adequate water and sewerage facilities in Croom and raise awareness of energy efficiency, and waste management	Policy IN 01 remains relevant.
Policy IN02	Compliance with standards of the Limerick County Development Plan	Ensure all proposals shall comply with the standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended) in relation to infrastructure.	The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) has been replaced by the Limerick Development Plan '22-'28(as varied) and the contents of Policy IN 02 remains relevant.
Objective IN 01	Water supply and storage	Facilitate improvements to the existing water supply system Ensure that development proposals provide adequate water infrastructure Reserve land for future expansion of the water services infrastructure.	Objective IN 01 remains relevant
Objective IN 02	Water Conservation	Promote awareness of sustainable water use and to encourage water	Objective IN 02 remains relevant.

		conservation, metering, leakage control, SUDS	
Objective IN 03	Sewerage facilities	Ensure that adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided for further development to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters.	Objective IN 03 remains relevant.
Objective IN 04	Surface Water disposal	Ensure adequate surface water disposal including SUDS and green infrastructure solutions where feasible. Ensure the efficiency of the N20 national road drainage scheme is not compromised.	Objective IN 04 remains relevant.
Objective IN 05	Flood Management Risk	Implement the Flood Risk Guidelines 2009 and OPW Technical Specifications and Guidance including the development management justification tests for zoning and assessing planning applications. Preserve riparian strips free of development and ensure adequate width to permit access for river maintenance All flood risk assessment should have regard to national flood hazard mapping	Objective IN 05 remains relevant.
Objective IN 06	Shared bin spaces	Require all commercial and residential developments to be provided with adequate space for storage of waste and recyclable materials. Adequate space for waste segregation in apartment developments and a designated ventilated waste storage area for multi-occupancy development.	IN 06 remains relevant.

		Waste collection for new and re-designed commercial buildings and apartment to be collected directly from them on the street or at the front of the premises.	
Objective IN 07	Broadband	Ensure that all new development proposals, incorporate communications service infrastructure broadband including ducting on an open access basis	Objective IN 07 remains relevant.
Objective IN 08	Broadband, Smart Homes and Smart Buildings	Support the principles of the Limerick Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020 Ensure that new development proposal incorporate modern communications infrastructure such as Broadband, including ducting on an open access basis	Objective IN 08 remains relevant.
Objective IN 09	Telecommunications	Facilitate proposals for telecommunications masts antennae and ancillary equipment.	Objective IN 09 remains relevant.
Objective IN 10	Charging Points for Electric Vehicles	Facilitate recharging points for electric powered vehicles within public car parks, new residential development and at other appropriate locations	Objective IN 10 remains relevant.
Conclusion: The policies and objectives of Chapter 7 remain relevant and are consistent with the Limerick Development Plan and the higher level spatial plans.			

Chapter 8: Environment and Heritage

The Croom Local Area Plan was subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Local Area Plan incorporated appropriate land use zoning, policies and objectives to ensure that implementation of the Local Area Plan will not result in significant effects on the environment in accordance with the SEA Directive and Regulations and in compliance with the associated objective of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 (as varied). Given the scale of development since the adoption of the LAP it is considered that the extension of duration of the LAP will not result in significant effects on the environment in accordance with

the SEA Directive and Regulations. This report is accompanied by appropriate screening documents.

There are 26 Protected Structures within the LAP boundary. There has been 1 Protected Structure removed from the RPS through the Development Plan process, since the LAP was adopted. This structure was identified as RPS 1130 Sean de Cregg's which is identified by the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage with the same reference number as RPS 1129 R.Creggs Shop and is attached to this premises. There are 18 structures on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage list in Croom which are also on the Record of Protected Structures List.

There are 12 Recorded Monuments located within the LAP boundary. These include an enclosure, a Mill, a holy well, burial ground, a Castle and Fulacht Fia. The list of the Record of Monuments and Places is maintained and updated by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. There are no new Recorded Monuments identified within the boundary since the adoption of the 2020-2026 LAP.

Objective/Policy	Title	Summary	Relevance to extension of duration of LAP
Policy EH 1	Archaeology and architectural heritage	Ensure that the archaeological, architectural, natural and the built heritage of Croom is protected.	Policy EH 1 remains relevant.
Policy EH 2	Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended)	Ensure that all proposals shall comply with the standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended)	The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) has been replaced by the Limerick Development Plan '22-'28(as varied) and the contents of Policy EH 2 remains relevant.
Objective EH 01	Protected Structures	Protect structures on the RPS or listed to be entered onto the Record. Resist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demolition in whole or in part 	Objective EH 01 remains relevant.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal or modification of features or development that would adversely affect the setting of the protected structure. 	
Objective EH 02	Architectural Conservation Area	<p>Protect, conserve and where appropriate enhance the ACA</p> <p>Reflect and respect the scale and form of existing structures within the ACA</p> <p>Retain/incorporate/replicate exterior features.</p> <p>Appropriate improvements to public realm in the ACA.</p>	Objective EH 02 remains relevant.
Objective EH 03	Archaeology	<p>Seek the preservation of known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest.</p> <p>Protect and preserve all sites and features of historical interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.</p> <p>Ensure that any proposed development shall not have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument.</p> <p>The area of a monument and the associated buffer areas shall not be included as part of the open space requirement.</p> <p>Where a monument lies within a development, a conservation and/or management plan shall be submitted as part of the landscape plan.</p> <p>Safeguard the value and settings of archaeological remains.</p> <p>Where it is deemed necessary archaeological assessments/investigations will be required prior to a decision on a planning application.</p> <p>Where deemed necessary, archaeological monitoring,</p>	Objective EH 03 remains relevant.

		maybe required outside the area of the RMP.	
Objective EH 04	Upgrade/Renovation of Croom Mill	Promote the sensitive conservation, restoration, reconstruction and upgrade of the Mill.	Objective EH 04 remains relevant.
Objective EH 05	Croom's Protected Views	Safeguard scenic views and prospects within the viewshed of Croom Castle. In particular, maintain views from the roundabout on Bridge Street to the Castle. No development shall be provided within 20m of the exterior face of the Castle wall and no upright development shall be provided within 30m of this wall.	Objective EH 05 remains relevant.
Objective EH 06	Special Control Area	Maintain the integrity of the Special Control area within the plan boundary.	Objective EH 06 remains relevant.
Objective EH 05	Trees on zoned lands	Incorporate trees on lands zoned for development in the townland of Croom and a comprehensive tree survey to be carried out by a suitably qualified person when submitting any future planning applications.	Objective EH 05 remains relevant.
Objective EH 06	Tree Protection and Nature Conservation	Protect natural stone boundary walls, mature trees, woodlands and hedgerows. Felling of trees will require a survey report carried out by a suitably qualified person establishing that the subject trees are of no ecological or amenity value.	Objective EH 06 remains relevant.
Objective EH 07	Climate Change and Adaptation	Support the National Adaptation Framework 2018, the National Climate Change Strategy (or any updated/superseding document) including the transition to a low carbon future.	Objective EH 07 remains relevant.
Objective EH 08	Compliance with the Water Framework Directive	Development activities governed by the plan shall be carried out in accordance with	Objective EH 08 remains relevant.

		the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive and associated regulations and guidance documentation.	
Objective EH 09	Compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive	Developments that fall within the ambit of the EU EIA Directive and associated regulations shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment/Strategic Environmental Assessment and the contents of the revised directive and the updated regulations.	Objective EH 09 remains relevant.
Conclusion: The policies and objectives of Chapter 8 remain relevant and are consistent with the Limerick Development Plan and the higher level spatial plans.			

Chapter 9: Community and Recreation

Since the adoption of the Local Area Plan in April 2020 a new school building has been opened for Colaiste Chiarain and accommodates 750 students. Funding has been secured for resurfacing and landscaping works of the Riverside Walk from Croom Mill towards Islandmore. A Pain Management Centre has opened at the Croom Orthopaedic Hospital and monies have been allocated through the Local Community Development Committee for play equipment and signage.

Planning permission has been secured for a 91 bed nursing home on Community and Education zoned lands within the town.

In 2021 €198,000 was approved under Measure 2 of the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme for the Croom Riverside Walk. The project was undertaken by the Adare/Rathkeale Municipal District with the support of Croom Development Association and allowed for the upgrade of the riverside walk (approx. 1km) including resurfacing and landscaping from Croom Mills towards Islandmore/Anhid, adjacent to the River Maigue, improving connectivity to Cois Sruthain Housing Estate with a new universal access ramp with handrail and public lighting. Overgrown hedges/grass verges were cut back/trimmed, new landscaping provided where needed and a number of park benches were installed at strategic locations where the views of the River Maigue could be enjoyed. A new sign was also installed at the entrance to the Riverside Walk.

The Rural, Community and Culture Development Directorate have also purchased the Old Post Office in Croom. Presently there are no plans for its repurposing.

Objective/Policy	Title	Summary	Relevance to extension of duration of LAP

Policy C1	Community infrastructure	Ensure that community infrastructure and a range of open space opportunities for passive and active recreation contribute to a vibrant, prosperous settlement.	Policy C1 remains relevant.
Policy C2	Compliance with Limerick Development Plan	Ensure that all developments in relation to community infrastructure, education, childcare, health facilities, open space, and recreational facilities comply with the standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended).	Since the adoption of the LAP in 2020 the Limerick Development Plan '22-'28(as varied) was adopted. The LAP aligns with the policies and objectives of the Development Plan Policy C2 remains relevant.
Objective C1	Protection of lands zoned for open space	Protect existing open space, semi natural open space from encroachment and inappropriate development Develop active and passive recreational amenities as opportunities arise	Objective C1 remains relevant.
Objective C2	Improve Open Space Provision and encourage active and passive open space use	Co-operate with local groups to provide quality sports and recreational facilities Ensure residential development incorporates appropriate provision of quality public open space and playlots.	Objective C2 remains relevant.
Objective C3	Open space hierarchy and playground provision	Require residential development to adhere to the requirements	Objective C3 remains relevant.

		<p>regarding open space within housing estates in accordance with Table 10 Open Space Hierarchy in Residential Estates.</p> <p>Require applications for residential developments to demonstrate that consideration has been given to the provision of functional open space as per DEHMG 2009 guidelines on Design of Urban Residential Development.</p> <p>Seek to ensure that every new residential unit in new housing developments is located within 100m walking distance of a pocket park / play lot, small park, or local park.</p>	
Objective C4	New amenity areas walkways, allotments and community gardens	<p>Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map.</p> <p>Any proposed development adjacent to walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the walkway in their design.</p> <p>Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties overlook proposed walkways.</p> <p>Co-operate with other agencies to provide recreational and amenity facilities in the area.</p> <p>Facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens.</p>	Objective C4 remains relevant.
Objective C5	Educational Facilities/Community	Ensure that there are sufficient educational	Planning permission has

	& Education zoned lands	<p>places to meet the needs generated by proposed residential developments by requiring the completion of a Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment for residential development of 5 or more dwellings. Ensure that all proposals for childcare facilities shall comply with the standards of the Development Plan or any subsequent plan.</p> <p>Allow for the provision of a nursing home/elderly accommodation on the lands identified on the land use zoning map marked with * on Map Cr-20/26-01. This shall not apply to other lands zoned Education and Community Facilities.</p>	<p>been granted for a Nursing Home and a number of independent living units on lands zoned for Community and Education purposes as identified on the land use zoning map marked with * on Map Cr-20/26-01. Objective C5 remains relevant.</p>
Objective C8	Provision of Healthcare Facilities	Support the HSE and other healthcare providers in the provision of appropriate healthcare facilities in the community	Objective C8 remains relevant.
<p>Conclusion: The policies and objectives of Chapter 9 remain relevant and are consistent with the Limerick Development Plan and the higher level spatial plans.</p>			

Chapter 10: Urban Design

Chapter 10 of the Croom Local Area Plan identifies good urban design as essential for attractive places to live in, work in and relax in. It provides guidance to assist prospective applicants to address aspect of planning and design that the planning authority will be taking into account when assessing applications for future developments. The area along Main St and High St has been identified in the town as an opportunity area, where transformation could occur and the role and key enabling works along these streets have been outlined in the LAP.

These enabling works included rationalise parking in the town and carrying out junction improvement works, challenging vacancy and dereliction, encouraging the reuse of the existing building stock, promoting infill and ensuring all developments are of a high quality

design. To date a traffic management plan has been developed for the village and a roundabout has been installed at the Garda Station. A number of planning permissions have been granted for the reuse of buildings along Main St for commercial and residential purposes and the supermarket has been redeveloped and extended to a high standard.

Potential still exists for the use of the Market Square as a Civic Plaza and gathering space and the Plan will continue to support this.

Funding allocated in Croom since the adoption of the Local Area Plan in April 2020

Location	Cost	Source of Funding
Croom Riverside Walk	€220,000	€198,000 funded from the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Fund
Car Park in Town Centre	€125,000	€100,000 funded from the Town and Village Renewal Scheme
Active Travel Schemes	€782,500	National Transport Authority
47/48 Main St -5 units	€1,693,171.	DHLG Capital Assistance Scheme
Towerfield – 16 units	€4,661,410.	€340,309
Elm Park Drive		€746,599
St Senans Terrace		€167,152
Main Street, Croom		€137,655
		€123,500

The Government's Housing For All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland proposed a new tax to activate vacant land for residential purposes as a part of the Pathway to Increasing New Housing Supply. The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) was introduced in the Finance Act 2021. It is intended that the RZLT will replace the Vacant Site Levy in the future. The objective of the tax is to activate land that is serviced and zoned for residential use or mixed use, including residential use, in order to increase housing supply and to ensure regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. The tax will be administered by the Revenue Commissioners. However, as part of the RZLT process, Limerick City and County Council prepares annual Draft and Final Maps of the land considered to be in scope for the RZLT. Draft maps have been prepared for 17 settlement across the City and County. Currently, given the capacity constraints in the water services infrastructure in Croom, the settlement has not been included in the RZLT maps. The availability of infrastructure will be kept under review annually through the preparation of the RZLT Draft Maps.

There are 9 sites however in Croom entered by the Council on the Derelict Sites Register, under the Derelict Site Act 1990. One property has been compulsory acquired under the Act and vacancy remains an issue in the town. Geo Directory analysis reports a commercial vacancy rate of 13.1% in Croom in Q2 2024 when the national average commercial vacancy rate was 14.4%. Residential vacancy is recorded on Geo Directory as 3.1% in Q2 of 2024, while the national vacancy rate is recorded as 3.9%. Local authorities administer the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant and prioritise applications in areas where the level of vacancy or dereliction is high. 2 applications have been approved for Vacant Property Refurbishment Grants in Croom with one application in progress.

Rural Limerick Housing Development Project (RLHDP) is a pilot project funded under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF). A successful application was made to the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) in 2020 with €2.5m of funding awarded towards the regeneration of 5 no. towns - Askeaton, Ardagh, Abbeyfeale, Bruff and Rathkeale. In 2022, 7 no. additional towns - Ballingarry, Croom, Cappamore, Hospital, Kilfinnane, Kilmallock and Newcastle West were included. The project allows for LCCC to refurbish properties and offer them for sale on the open market. To date no properties have been added in Croom.

Objective/Policy	Title	Summary	Relevance to extension of duration of LAP
Policy UD1	Urban Design	Promote high quality design through the LAP area and ensure that future development in Croom is guided by principles of best practice and sustainability	Policy UD1 remains relevant
Policy UD2	Compliance with Limerick County Development Management Guidelines	Determine applications for development in accordance with the standards set out in the Croom LAP and the Limerick Development Plan	Policy UD2 remains relevant and the Standards set out in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028
Conclusion: The policies of Chapter 10 remain relevant and are consistent with the Limerick Development Plan and the higher level spatial plans.			

Part 5 – Environmental Consideration

The Council has prepared an Environmental Screening Reports to accompany this Report to address the environmental obligations of the Council for the extension of duration of the LAP in terms of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA). The Council invited submissions from the Environmental Bodies regarding the proposed extension of the lifetime of the LAP. This is set out in Part 2 of this Report.

Limerick City and County Council is satisfied that the proposed extension of duration does not have the potential to give rise or contribute to negative impacts on any European Sites. Accordingly, it is determined that there is no requirement for the proposed extension of the Plan to be subject to Appropriate Assessment. Equally, the proposed extension of duration does not give rise to any strategic environmental concerns and having consulted with the Environmental Authorities it is determined that the proposal does not give rise to significant

adverse environmental effects, and the proposed extension to the Croom LAP does not require full SEA.

Part 6 - Conclusion and Recommendation

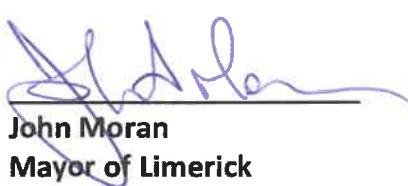
In order to sustainably strengthen Croom's position as a settlement that functions efficiently, capitalising on infrastructure, and the town's inherent strengths, there are a number of policies and objectives in the 2020-2026 Local Area Plan that remain relevant and have not been secured.

In summary, it is the opinion of the Mayor that:

- The Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026, is consistent with the objectives and core strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the higher level spatial plans.
- The objectives of the Croom Local Area Plan have not been substantially secured.
- The Council is satisfied following the environmental screening process for SEA and AA that the proposal to extend the duration of the LAP and the deferral of making a new LAP does not have negative strategic environmental consequences.
- The sending and publishing of notices to review the existing LAP may be deferred for a period of 4 years. Therefore, the lifespan of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026 should be extended for a further four years.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the following resolution be approved by the Elected Members of the Adare-Rathkeale Municipal District:

'Having considered the Mayor's report, the Planning Authority resolves to extend the life of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020 – 2026, by a further 4 years, from the date of the resolution in accordance with the provisions of Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), which provides for the extension of the valid life of a Local Area Plan'.



John Moran
Mayor of Limerick

Appendix 1

Croom
Local Area Plan
2020-2026

down quark

