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# Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026

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**March 2020**

Extended to December 2028



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnígh**  
Limerick City  
& County Council

**In accordance with the provision of the Planning and Development Act (as amended) Section 20(3)(d)(ii) this Local Area Plan came into effect on the 14 of April 2020, 6 weeks from the date of its adoption by the Elected members of the Adare Rathkeale Municipal District of Limerick on the 3 of March 2020.**

On the 10th of December 2024 the Elected Members of the Adare Rathkeale Municipal of Limerick City and County Council extended the duration of the Croom Local Area Plan 2020-2026 for a further 4 years until December 2028.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 What is the Croom Local Area Plan (LAP)?

The Local Area Plan (LAP) is the legal document consisting of a public statement of Limerick City and County Council's planning policies for the Croom area. This plan, as adopted will replace the Croom LAP 2009-2015 (as extended). The aim of the LAP is to establish a framework of the planned, coordinated and sustainable development of the Croom area, including the conservation and enhancement of its natural and built environment over the next six years and beyond. The LAP provides guidance as to how this development can be achieved, what new developments are needed, where public and private resource inputs are required and guidance for development proposed in the plan area for the next 6 years.

The plan includes the review of the Croom LAP 2009-2015 (as extended), taking into account recent key development trends and national, regional and local policy developments.

All development in the Croom area will be assessed against the contents of this LAP and the current Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended).

The Croom LAP should be read in conjunction with the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended) and any subsequent review thereof. Unless otherwise stated, the general development plan policies, objectives and development management standards still apply to the area.

### 1.2 Plan Area

The Croom LAP covers approximately 170.93 hectares in area and is partially contained within 5 small areas (SAPS) as set out in the Census of Population. It is also contained with the Electoral Division of Croom. The town is located on the western bank of the River Maigue, off the N20 national road between Limerick City and Charleville at a distance of approximately 22km south of Limerick. The town comprises of two principal streets, Main Street and Bridge Street, with a smaller network of streets branching off. The street plan is linear with Main Street running parallel to the river and Bridge Street running perpendicular to the south.

#### 1.2.1 Historical Context

Evidence has been found of pre-Christian and early Christian settlement in Croom. In 1215 the castle of Croom was granted to the Fitzgerald's of Kildare and subsequently became one of their principal manors. The settlement may have acquired borough status at this date. The earliest reference to burgesses, occurs in 1295 and to a grant for murage in 1310. The site of

the borough is uncertain. Croom Castle is located on the west bank of the River Maigue. Following the rebellion of Silken Thomas, the castle passed in 1547 to the Earls of Desmond only to revert to the Earls of Kildare in 1610. There are several mentions of the castle during the upheavals of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Civil Survey (1654-56) describes “Mannor of Crom” as consisting of: a castle, a bawn, an orchard and a mill out of repair and two eel weirs, with a broken bridge near the Castle.

By the eighteenth century, the function of Croom was changing from that of servicing the castle to servicing its fertile agriculture hinterland referred to as the Golden Vale. Influential buildings representing the developments of the time were constructed in Croom, such as the Mill buildings, the railway station and the courthouse. The layout of the town is strongly influenced by the River Maigue with the majority of the towns development concentrated on the East Bank consisting of Main Street running parallel to the river and Bridge Street crosses the river, creating a predominately T-shaped pattern. The river acts as an important central feature in the town by creating a natural amenity in the town. The West Bank contains many of the early structures, which were constructed in the town.

### **1.3 Legal Status of the Plan**

This LAP has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000(Amended).

The Planning and Development Act requires local area plans to be consistent with the objectives of the Development Plan, its core strategy and any regional planning guidelines that apply to that area. These national, regional and local strategies and policies assist in the identification of the most appropriate location of land uses, bearing in mind the principles of sustainable development, value for money and maximising resources, whilst aiming to reduce dependency on private motorised transport and greenhouse gas emissions. Examples of these influential documents are; Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future: A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2012 by the Department of Transport, National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 for the Southern Region.

The Croom Local Area Plan, when adopted should be read in conjunction with the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended).

### **1.4 The Review Process**

#### **1.4.1 Steps involved in the preparation of the plan**

The review of the Local Area Plan commenced in February 2019 with the publication of an issues paper entitled “Review of Croom Local Area Plan – Issues Paper”. Its intention was to

prompt discussion on local issues at pre-draft stage. The issues paper was on public display for a period of 4 weeks. Copies of the issues paper and an invitation to make a submission were sent to local community and voluntary agencies in the area. 26 No. submissions were received in total.

At the end of the public consultation period a report was prepared on issues arising during the public consultation period and a number of meetings were held with internal and external stakeholders.

#### **1.4.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment**

The EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment(SEA) requires all European Union member states to systematically evaluate the likely significant effects of implementation of a plan or programme prior to its adoption. An SEA screening exercise was carried out in line with “Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment - Guidelines for Regional Authorities and the Planning Authorities”. This concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the review of the Croom LAP at this stage in the plan process.

#### **1.4.3 Appropriate Assessment (AA)**

In accordance with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, the Planning Authority undertook an AA Screening as part of the review process on the plan which assessed the effects of the Plan on the nearby Natura 2000 sites. This concluded that effects will be localised in the plan area and involve the development of appropriately zoned land and will not impact adversely on the Natura 2000 sites, therefore, not proceeding to carrying out a full Appropriate Assessment.

#### **1.4.4 Flood Risk Assessment**

A Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken of the overall lands within the plan boundary, in support of the Croom LAP and a specific flood risk assessment was carried out for lands identified as being in need of further detailed assessment. The information gathered has informed the Land Use Zoning Map included in this LAP. The LA has adopted the precautionary approach and lands, which have been identified, as potentially at risk to flooding have generally been zoned for agricultural purposes.

### **1.5 National Planning Context**

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000(Amended), the LAP has been informed by a hierarchy of national, regional and local spatial planning policies.

A summary of some of the provisions of relevant guidelines and policy documents are outlined below.

**Figure 1: Development Plan – hierarchy of plans**



#### **1.5.1.1 National Planning Framework**

The National Planning Framework for Ireland (NPF) is a twenty-four year planning framework designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development and population growth between regions. Its focus is on people, places and building communities. The NPF will guide at a high-level strategic planning and development for the country over the next 20+ years, so that as the population grows, that growth is sustainable (in economic, social and environmental terms).

#### **1.5.2 Regional Planning Context**

##### **1.5.2.1 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy**

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies will provide a long-term regional level strategic planning and economic framework in support of the implementation of the National Planning Framework.

##### **1.5.2.2 Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022**

This document was prepared in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy (NSS), providing key mechanisms responding to the NSS in respect of a vision, connectivity, world class places and products, enterprise enablers, balanced development and sustainability within the region.

#### **1.5.2.3 Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP)**

MWASP proposes that in order for the region to develop its economic strength, it needs to generate export-led growth in goods and services, promote innovation through research and development and secure long-term sustainability and growth.

#### **1.5.2.4 Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010 – 2016 (as extended)**

This strategy, which was incorporated into the County Development Plan, was prepared in 2010 on behalf of Limerick City and Counties Limerick and Clare. It addresses the retail needs, opportunities and issues of the Mid-West region and sets out an integrated strategic framework for retail planning in the Mid-West.

#### **1.5.2.5 Joint Housing Strategy 2010 – 2017 (as extended)**

The Housing Strategy has been prepared in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) and covers the functional areas of Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council. A critical objective of the Housing Strategy is to ensure the provision of housing for the existing and projected future populations, in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The housing strategy also aims to provide an equitable level of social housing and social integration.

#### **1.5.2.6 Shannon Integrated Framework Plan**

The Shannon Integrated Framework Plan (SIFP) for the Shannon Estuary is an inter-jurisdictional land and marine based framework plan, to guide the future development and management of the Shannon Estuary. It was commissioned by Limerick City and County Councils, Clare County Council, Kerry County Council, Shannon Development and the Shannon Foynes Port Company. The project was overseen by a multi-agency steering group comprised of the above and other key stakeholders with an interest in the Estuary.

### **1.5.3 County Planning Context:**

#### **1.5.3.1 County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 (as extended)**

The Limerick CDP 2010 – 2016 sets out the Council’s policy to steer future development in the County based on a settlement hierarchy reflecting settlement function and outlines population targets for settlements between 2010 and 2016 as extended. Within the County Development Plan, Croom is designated ‘Tier 3: Centres on Transport Corridors’. These

centres will be promoted as secondary development centres for significant future development and play a complementary role to the Limerick Gateway.

#### **1.5.3.2 Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016 – 2021**

The LECP sets out the objectives and actions needed to support economic and local community development of the City and County. It is the primary mechanism at local level to bring forward the actions arising from measures in the Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan to 2020 and the Report of the Commission for the Economic Development of Rural Areas. It aims to co-ordinate local economic and community development programmes into a coherent strategic framework which is action orientated and identifies named lead agencies for implementation of the plan.

#### **1.5.3.3 Age Friendly Programme 2015 - 2020**

The first Age Friendly Strategy for Limerick gives commitments to improving key areas of infrastructure, services, information and overall social response to older people's issues in Limerick.

#### **1.5.3.4 Limerick Heritage Plan 2017 - 2030**

This plan highlights the rich heritage of Limerick and offers a partnership process within which communities and individuals can engage with the Council to assist in the delivery of heritage objectives.

#### **1.5.3.5 Limerick Cultural Strategy 2016 - 2030**

This aims to grow Limerick's cultural capacity by retaining and attracting creative practitioners to live and work in Limerick, to place culture at the heart of the economic growth and regeneration of Limerick; to engage citizens through involvement in culture growth and regeneration of Limerick and to increase and support the role of the creative industries in Limerick.

#### **1.5.3.6 Rural Development Strategy 2014 – 2020**

The Rural Development (LEADER) Programme 2014-2020 aims to improve the quality of life in rural areas and to encourage diversification of the rural economy. Limerick Local and Community Development Committee (LCDC) is the Local Action Group (LAG) for County Limerick and is responsible for the management of the LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS) in the County. Ballyhoura Development and West Limerick Resources are its implementation partners and will deliver the majority of project and animation related actions associated with the implementation of the LDS including managing calls for proposals. Limerick City and County Council are the financial partner and secretariat.

### **1.5.3.7 Limerick Sports Partnership 2016 - 2020 Strategic Plan**

The role of Local Sports Partnerships is to increase participation in sport by encouraging and enabling people to become involved in sport at a level of their choosing, regardless of their ability, gender or background. This Plan aims to serve the people of Limerick with the intention of fulfilling the mission of “Getting Limerick Active Together”. The Strategic Plan is underpinned by six guiding principles: equality, partnership, capacity, evidence base, sustainability and accountability. The commitment to increasing participation in Sport and Physical Activity remains the key outcome sought from the Strategy. The Strategy is guided in developing a more robust monitoring and evaluation framework to inform, support and demonstrate the impact of the work undertaken.

### **1.5.3.8 Limerick Digital Strategy**

Limerick’s Digital Strategy enables the development of a smart, sustainable, city and region where digital technologies improve quality of life, empower communities and enable economic growth.

Limerick is the first city, which Ireland to appoint a Chief Digital Officer to lead the development of digital strategy, which lays the foundation for the Smart Limerick Region. This programme sets out €4m to be invested in technology and research with the aim that by 2020 citizens and businesses will be better engaged in the city life using digital channels while locals and visitors to Limerick will be able to access information on some 2,000 attractions, new online services provided by the council and over 1,000 events each year in a single digital experience platform: Limerick.ie.

There will be 6 programmes for digital skills and culture & inclusion. Public WiFi deployed in 17 towns will enable the public to access this wealth of digital content and associated services.

### **1.5.3.9 Corporate Plan for Limerick City and County Council 2019 - 2024**

This identifies the local authority as “ambitious” in relation to its strategy and vision for the local authority area and Limerick’s role in the region. As well as promoting Limerick as a location for investment, business, education and as a place to live, the Corporate Plan places a strong emphasis on “inclusive participation of all citizens in the development of their community” and community empowerment.

## **1.5.4 Other Planning Guidelines**

Planning Authorities are required to take account of any policies and guidelines issued by the Minister. For a comprehensive list of other policy documents taken into account in preparing this plan refer to Chapter 1 in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended) and the DoECLG on

<http://www.housing.gov.ie/search/archived/current/category/planning/sub-type/guidelinesstandards/type/publications>



## CHAPTER 2: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### 2.1 Policy Context

The development strategy contained within this Local Area Plan (LAP) has been informed by a hierarchy of national, regional and local spatial planning policy documents as outlined in Chapter 1.

In accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended), a local area plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan, its core strategy and any regional planning guidelines that apply to the area of the plan. This LAP must take cognisance of its relationship with the County Development Plan (CDP) and relevant aspects of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region; including population projections, housing strategy, settlement strategy, economic development, flood risk assessment, climate change and biodiversity strategies. Furthermore, the core strategy of the LAP should reflect the role and function identified for the LAP area as identified in the settlement hierarchy in the CDP.

#### 2.1.1 Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended)

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended) is the ‘parent’ document for this Croom Local Area Plan.

Croom is designated a Tier 3 settlement, identified as a centre on a transport corridor in the County Development Plan. The main centres on the transport corridors will be promoted as secondary development centres for significant future development. They provide a wide range of services and their functions are complementary to Limerick, the Key Service Centre and each other. They also have an important regional employment function within their surrounding catchment areas.

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended) sets out the overarching policies for the development of the Croom area.

Table 3.1 of the CDP outlines the settlement structure for the County with Croom designated as a Tier 3 settlement in the settlement hierarchy.

**Table 1: Croom within the Settlement Hierarchy for County Limerick**

Settlement Structure for County Limerick	
Tier 3: Centres on Transport Corridors	Abbeyfeale, Adare, Askeaton, Castleconnell, Croom, Foynes, Patrickswell and Rathkeale.

The County Development Plan further specifies the Council's policies and objectives with regard to Tier 2-6 settlements as follows:

**Policy SS P2: Development of Tier 2 - 6 settlements:**

**It is policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of settlements within Tiers 2-6.**

**Objective SS O1: Scale of development within Tiers 2-6**

To ensure that the scale of new housing developments both individually and cumulatively shall be in proportion to the pattern and grain of existing development and to ensure that the expansion of towns and villages shall be in the form of a number of well integrated sites within and around the core area rather than focusing on rapid growth driven by one very large site. In this regard and without prejudice to other development plan policies or development management best practices, there will be a positive presumption for housing developments of the following scale or smaller within each tier, as appropriate:

- Tiers 2– 4:** Generally no one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 10-15% within the lifetime of the plan.
- Tier 5:** Generally no one proposal for residential development shall be larger than 10-12 units. A limited increase beyond this may be permitted where demonstrated to be appropriate.
- Tier 6:** Generally development shall be in the form of single units on infill or brownfield sites within the core centre, except where there is a public sewer and water supply with capacity where up to 4-5 houses per application shall be considered. A limited increase beyond this may be permitted where demonstrated to be appropriate.

**Policy SS P8 of the County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) further supports the development of Croom:**

**It is policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate where possible, the sustainable, balanced development of existing settlements along the strategic national roads and rail corridors. In this regard the Council will seek to ensure that sufficient land is zoned within these settlements so that they will act as the primary focus for investment in infrastructure, housing, transport, employment, education, shopping, health facilities and community.**

**Objective SS O11: Zoning of land for Tier 3 settlements**

To support this policy it is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Monitor and review the local area plans for Abbeyfeale, Adare, Askeaton, Castleconnell, Croom, Patrickswell and Rathkeale in accordance with the relevant legislation.
- b) Zone land within the town of Foynes.
- c) To address the unique development patterns within the town of Rathkeale and stem the existing decline.
- d) Prepare a village design statement or local development framework plan for Foynes, subject to available resources.

## **2.2 Geographical Context**

The town is located on the western bank of the River Maigue, off the N20 national road between Limerick City and Charleville. The town comprises of two principal streets, Main Street and Bridge Street, with smaller streets branching off. The street plan is linear with Main Street running parallel to the river and Bridge Street running perpendicular to the south. The surrounding rural hinterland is agricultural land which, is relatively flat and open countryside and is defined by the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended) as an area of Strong Agricultural Base. The construction of a by-pass has improved the town's environment by reducing through traffic, however the Main Street still suffers from traffic congestion.

## **2.3 Function**

Croom performs an important market and service function for the resident population and for the surrounding hinterland. This is evident by the range of services and businesses operating in the area. These include: a supermarket, a pharmacy, a car sales premises, a bakery, butchers, a number of public houses and restaurants/takeaways along with beauticians and hairdressers etc. There is scope to enhance the town centres service base through the redevelopment of a number of underutilised and derelict buildings along the Main Street.

There is also a wide range of amenity facilities in the area serving the local population and further afield. In recent times, the recreational value of the River Maigue has been enhanced through the provision of a linear walkway/cycleway, which runs parallel to the river. The recent addition of a slipway allows access to water sports along the river such as kayaking. The adjacent 13 acres of parkland is filled with woodland paths, seating, picnic areas and a children's playground. The adjoining Civic Centre serves as a meeting and restaurant space for the local community. Further sporting and meeting room facilities are available at the Croom Sports Complex and Croom Enterprise Centre.



**Figure 2: Croom Civic Centre**

## **2.4 Demographic and Socio-economic Context**

### **2.4.1 Population**

The total population of the area covered by the Croom Local Area Plan, according to the 2016 Census and cross referenced with the Geodirectory was 1,157 people. The population figures recorded for Croom in the previous Local Area Plan corresponded to the recorded figure in the Census for the Settlement of Croom. Unfortunately, this or none of the other geographical units used by the Central Statistics Office match the Local Area Plan boundary.

**Table 2: CSO Geographical units for collection of population data for Croom 2006-2016**

<b>Croom</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Croom (Settlement of Croom)</b>	1,045	1,157	1,159
<b>Electoral Division of Croom</b>	1,597	1,690	1,692
<b>Croom SAPS Area ID (within or crossing plan boundary 127054001,127054002,127054003,127054004,127054006)</b>	SAPS not collected in 2006 census	1,508	1,517

However, using the CSO data (SAPS number 127054006 lies entirely within the plan boundary, all other SAPS cross the Plan boundary), cross-referenced with GeoDirectory data, the estimates of 2016 population and housing stock within the plan area are as follows:

**Table 3: Population covered by the Croom LAP**

	Existing Population	Existing Housing Stock
<b>2016</b>	<b>1,157</b>	<b>463</b>

Note – Average household size has been taken at 2.5 persons per household.

**Table 4: Population growth in Croom 1981-2016**

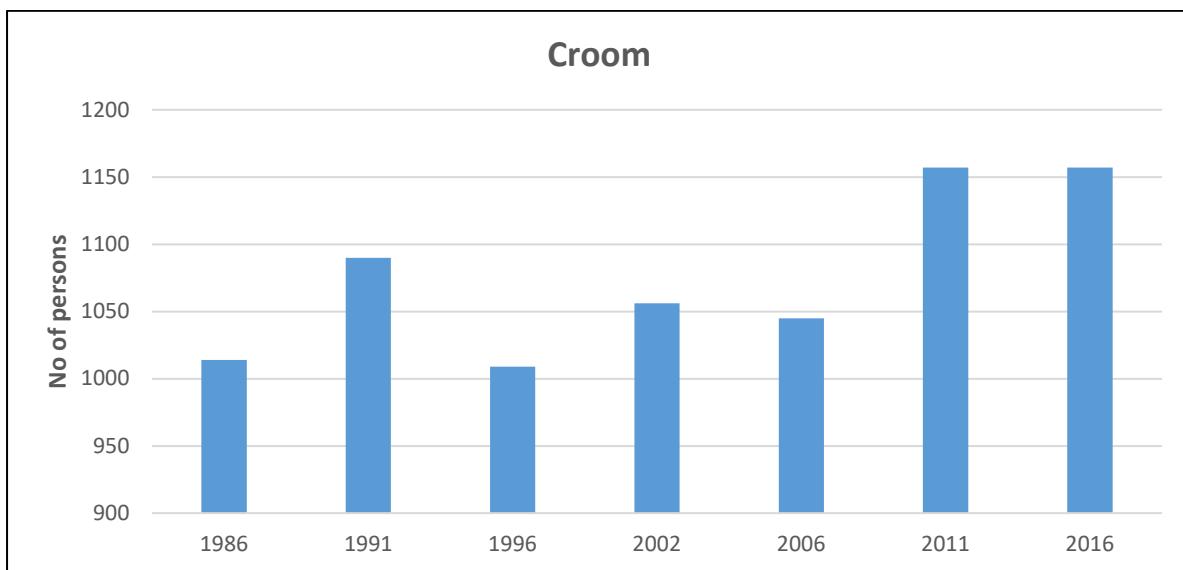
Year	Croom Population	Population Increase/Decrease	% Increase
<b>1981</b>	1,090*	-	-
<b>1996</b>	1,009*	-81	-7.4%
<b>2002</b>	1,056*	47	4.7%
<b>2006</b>	1,045*	-11	-1.04%
<b>2011</b>	1,157*	112	10.72%
<b>2016</b>	1,157	0	0%

Source: CSO Census

\*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.

The graph below indicates the trends in population growth and decline experienced in Croom over the period 1986 to 2016. The population of Croom town has remained relatively static with some minor decreases and increases between 1986 and 2006. The greatest population increase was experienced in the inter censal period 2006 - 2011, where an increase of 112 people was recorded, an increase of 10.72%. The growth of the area is confirmation of the attractiveness of the area as a place to live.

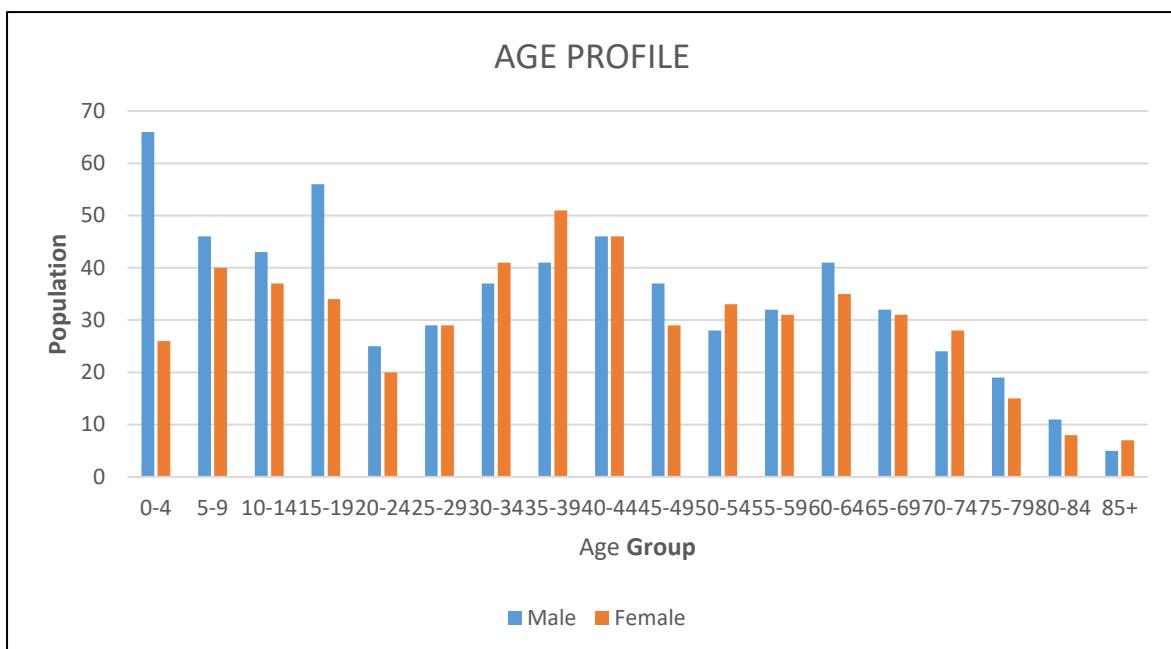
**Figure 3: Population trends experienced in the Croom Area 1986-2016**



#### 2.4.2 Age profile

The graph below depicts the age structure in Croom in 2016. From analysis 30% of the population of the town are under the age of 20, with a further 15% between the age of 35 and 44. This is significant in terms of service provision and has implications for housing provision, the size of the workforce and demand for education, recreation amenities and health services.

**Figure 4: Age profile, Croom, Census 2016**



**Figure 5: Age profile trends, Croom, County and State, Census 2016**

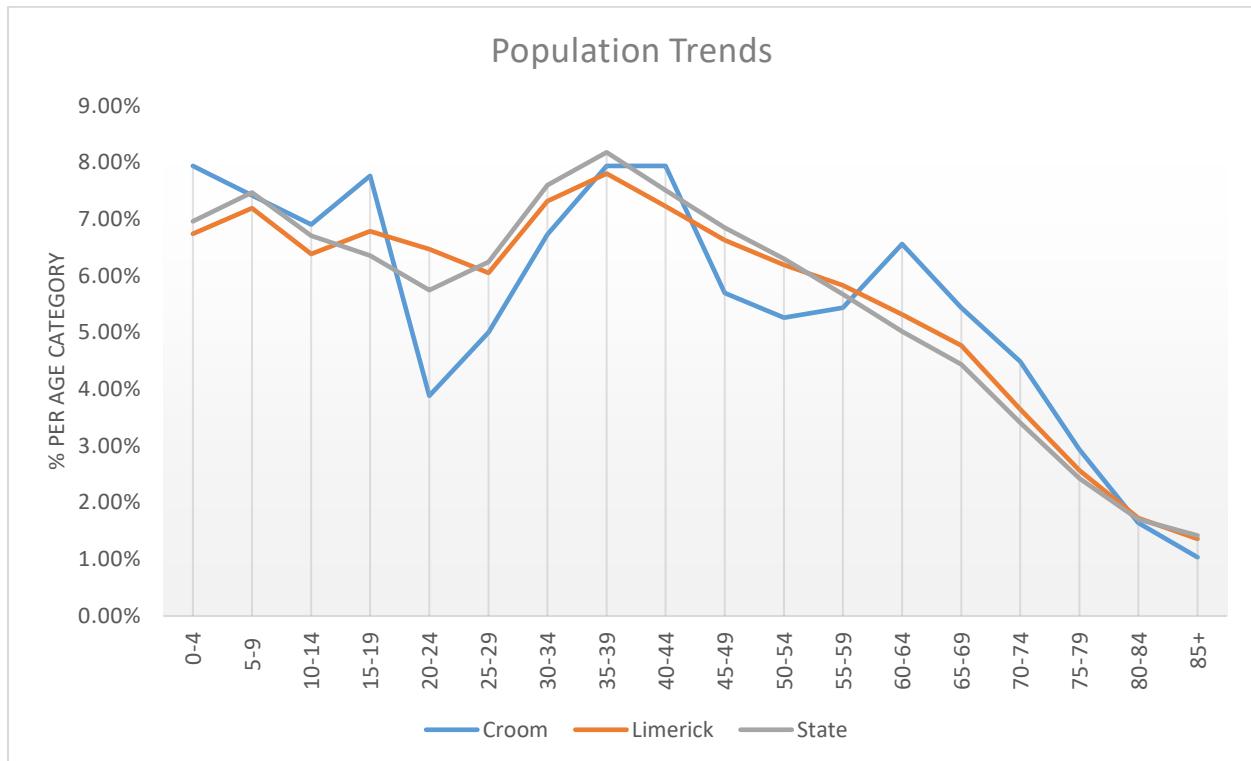
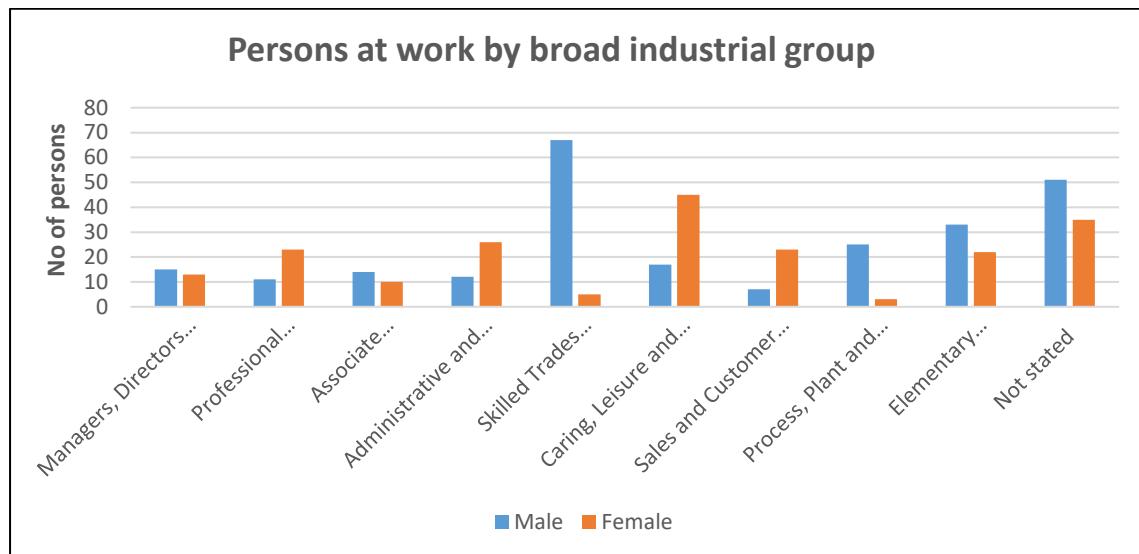


Figure 5 above depicts a comparison of the percentage in each age category as set out in the Census data collected in 2016 between Croom, Limerick and the State. What is evident from the graph is the percentage in the 20-24 year old age bracket is substantially lower in the Croom area, than in the County and State as a whole. In general, the remainder of the age categories follow the County and State profile, with the exception of the 60-64 age category, where the profile in Croom is some 1.2-1.5% higher than the County and State average.

#### 2.4.3 Employment

Figure 6 below depicts the employment in the different broad industrial groups in 2016. The greatest number of people are employed in Skilled Trades Occupations, which accounts for 15.8% of the total employed. This is followed by Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations, which account for 13.6% of the workforce. Areas such as skilled trades occupations, process plant and machine operatives and elementary occupations, show a strong bias toward males whilst the caring, leisure and other services and administrative and secretarial occupations have a female bias.

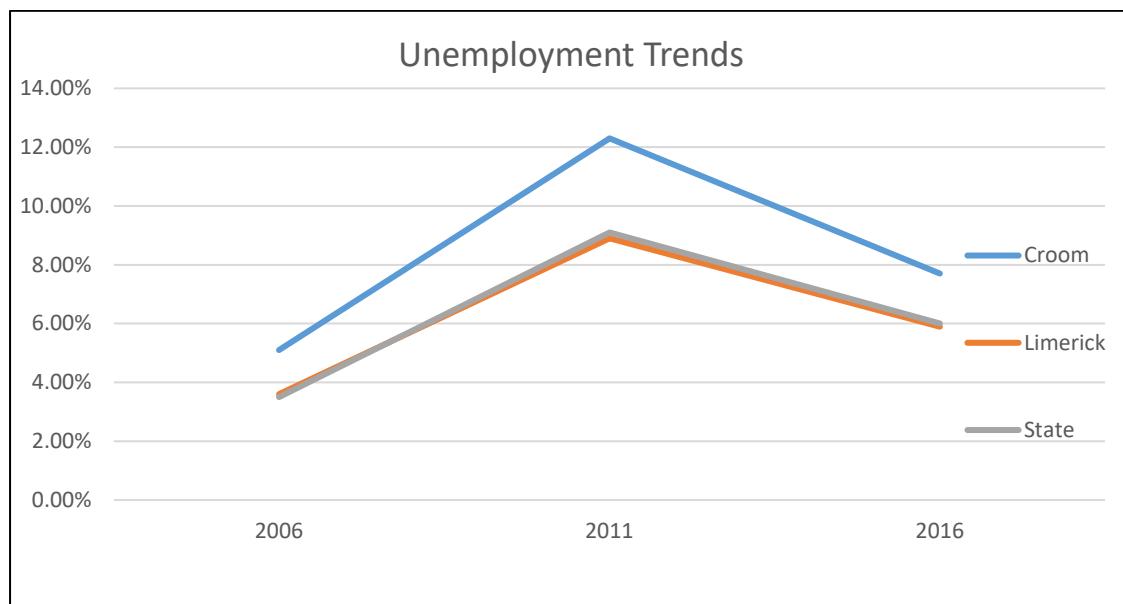
**Figure 6: Persons at work by sex and broad industrial group, Croom, Census 2016**



#### 2.4.4 Unemployment:

According to the 2016 Census, the unemployment rates in the Croom area as a percentage of those aged 15 years and over and who were unavailable for work was 7.9%. This was above the national unemployment rate of 6.1%, which was the most up to date actual figure released by the CSO in January 2018. Figure 7 below illustrates the unemployment trend in Croom compared to Limerick City and County and the national trend from 2006 to 2016. It is clear that from 2006, the unemployment rate in Croom has always been higher than the county and national average. The numbers out of work have dropped from 2011 - 2016, but still remains higher than the rate in 2006.

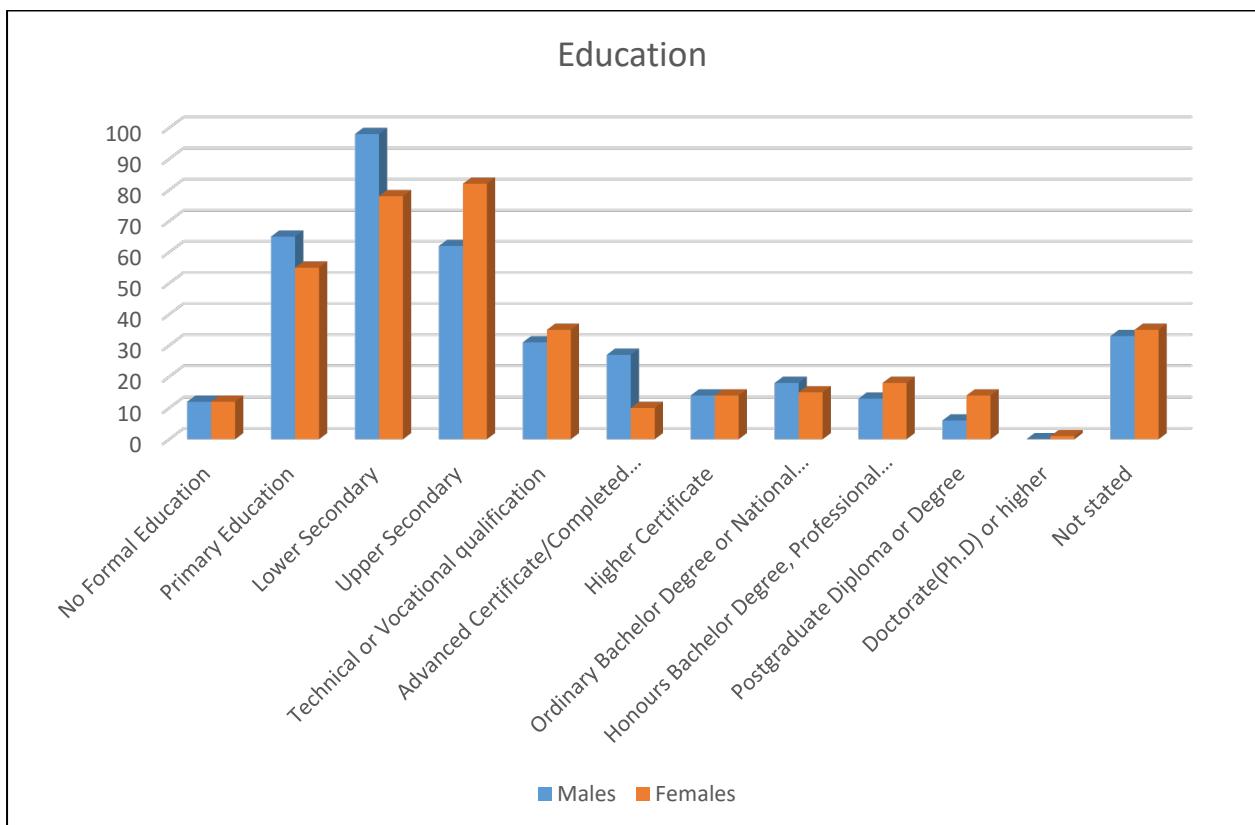
**Figure 7: Unemployment trends, Croom, County and State, Census 2016**



#### 2.4.5 Education:

Analysis of the 2016 Census data in relation to education achievement, indicates that the highest educational attainment is at Lower Secondary School level, accounting for nearly 23.5% of those aged over 15 years. This is followed closely by those with Upper Secondary Level education, which account for 19.3%. Largely there is an even split between the level of male and female attainment across the various educational categories.

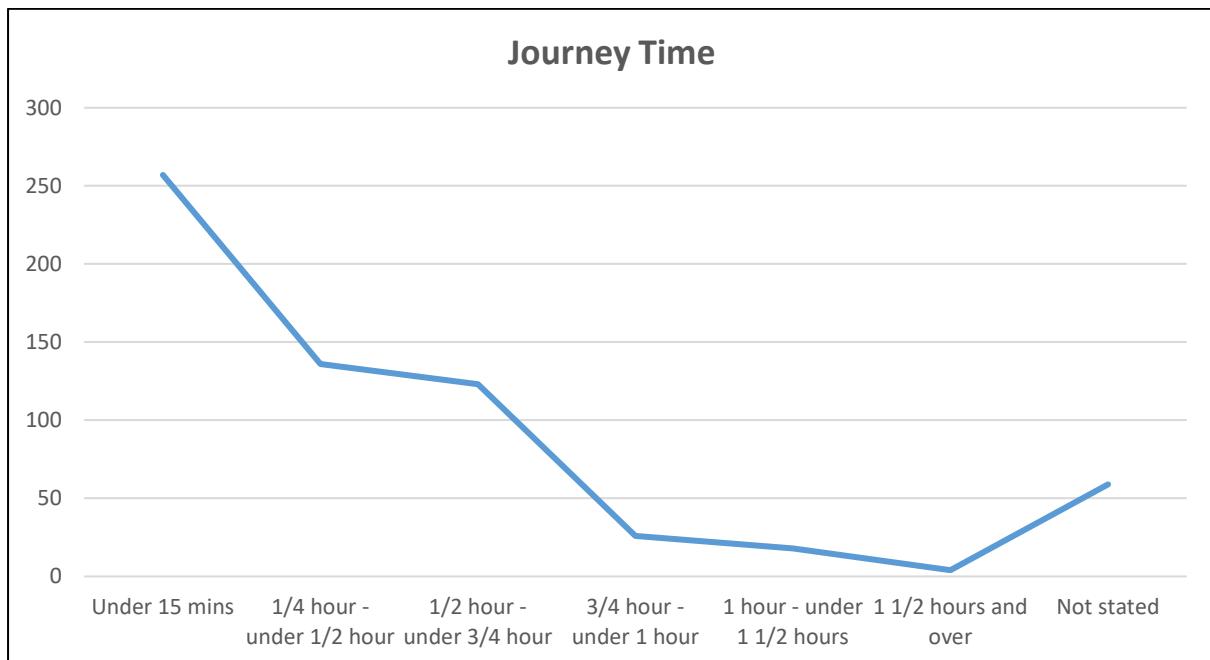
**Figure 8: Persons aged 15 years and over by sex and highest level of education completed, Croom, Census 2016**



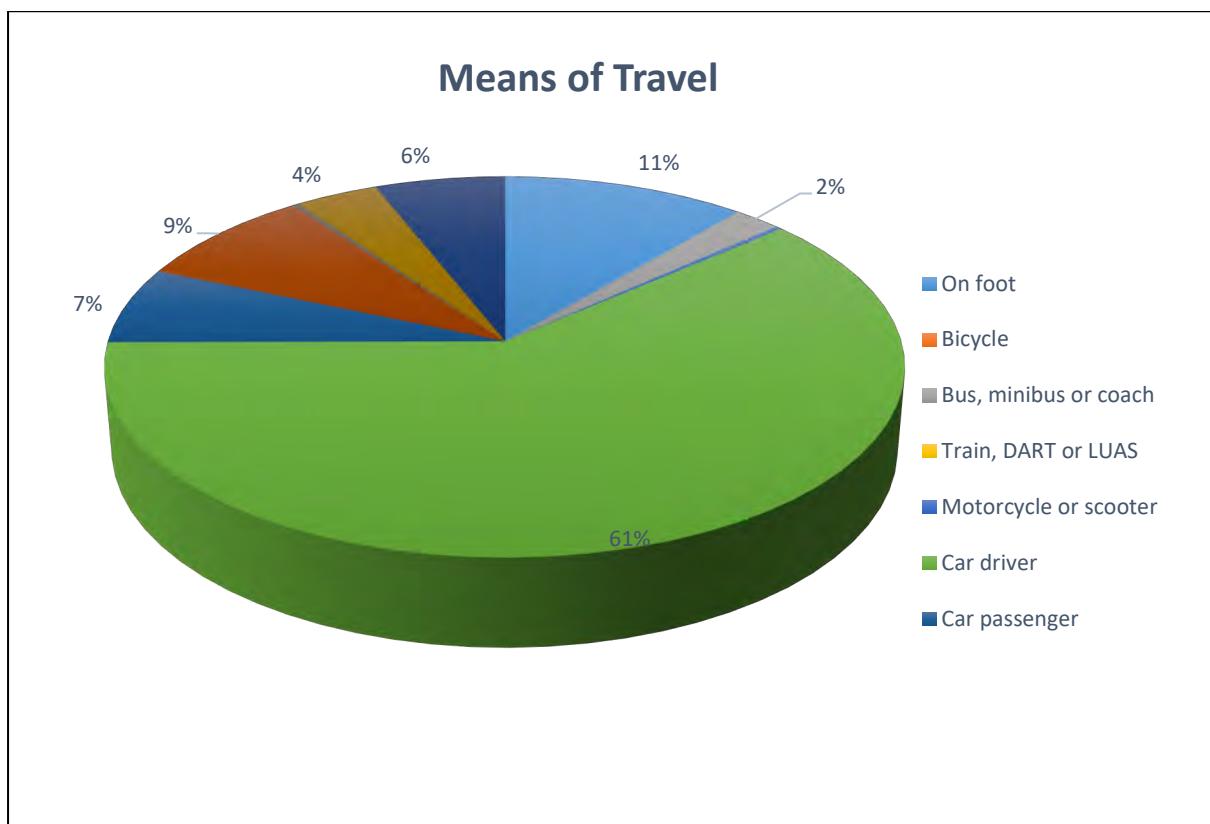
#### 2.4.6 Travel Patterns

Figure 9 shows the travel time to work, school or college by people aged 5 years and over living in the Croom area. According to the 2016 Census, the majority of people, 41.3% have a travel time of less than 15 minutes and 21.8% have a travel time of between 15 and 30 minutes. This is accounted for by the presence of a primary school, a secondary school and employers such as the Orthopaedic Hospital. There is a strong preference (61%) towards the use of the private car for travel to work, school or college in the area, which is followed by travel on foot which stands at 11%. This is re-enforced in the number of car ownerships per household, which identifies that the majority of households in the Croom area own one car as illustrated in Figure 11.

**Figure 9: Persons aged 5 years and over and travel time to work**

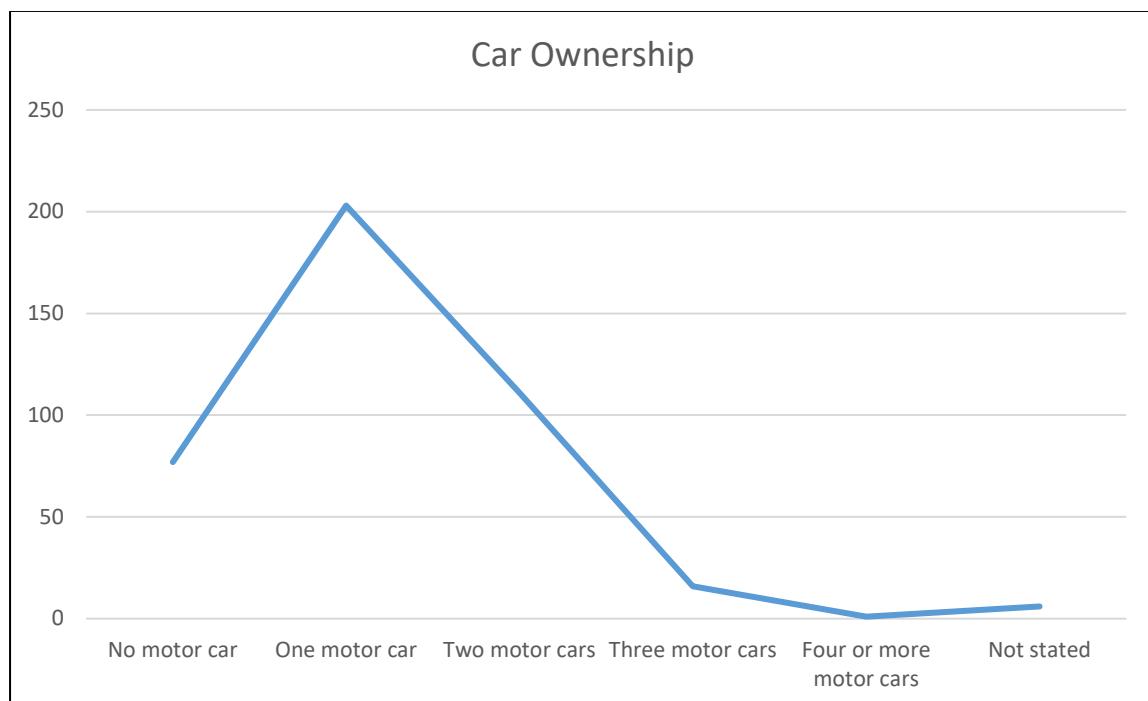


**Figure 10: Persons aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work, school or college, Croom, Census 2016**



\*Actual figures recorded for Bicycle, Motorcycle or Scooter, Train, Dart or Luas and Other (incl Lorry) were too small to represent as a percentage in the above pie chart for Croom.

**Figure 11: Car ownership, Croom, Census 2016**





### 3.1 Context

As set out in the Chapter 2, the Croom LAP is made in accordance with the objectives set out in the Limerick County Development Plan (CDP) 2010 - 2016 (as extended), or any subsequent development plan, following the adoption of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

### 3.2 Demographic Trends

The population target for Croom must comply with the settlement strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan, the provisions of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF and the forthcoming Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES). Central to the CDP strategy is the planned expansion of towns, appropriately, sustainably and sequentially around the town centre and avoid the creation of urban sprawl. Croom town is a Tier 3 settlement as set out in the CDP. The town is likely to continue to grow.

Each settlement is allocated a specific population target in the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended), Limerick City and County Council have considered the National Planning Framework and the Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework and the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern region, in terms of population allocation and have allocated population accordingly to each settlement in the County including Croom.

### 3.3 Vision Statement

*It is the long term vision for Croom to consolidate the role of Croom as a town serving a wide agricultural hinterland by facilitating the improvement of the built fabric and natural amenities of the town, promoting sensitive infill development and facilitating new development in a planned and sustainable manner.*

To achieve this vision Croom needs to be supported and promoted as a self-supporting community and must develop in a manner that enhances, its physical and natural environment, consolidates its town, builds a strong local economy and provides convenient local services and amenities.

Good transport links are important, including improvements to public transport services to provide a genuine alternative to the car. Building on the existing strengths of the town, it is

imperative that all stakeholders maximise any development opportunities in the area to secure progressions and improved quality of life.

### **3.4 Strategic Policy**

#### **S1 Consistency of the Croom Local Area Plan with the hierarchy of statutory plans.**

**It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the Croom Local Area Plan is consistent with the hierarchy of statutory plans. The LAP will be subject to a review in the context of its consistency with the Limerick City & County Development Plan, when adopted following the making of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Assembly Region.**

#### **S2: Sustainable Development**

**It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of Croom.**

#### **S2: Compliance with the Limerick County Development Plan**

**It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended), any subsequent City & County Development Plan and the objectives of this Plan.**

In order to achieve strategic policy S2, this LAP focuses on:

- a) Rationalising the residential land use in the area to comply with the population targets as set out in the County Development Plan core strategy and the anticipated growth of the area as proposed in the National Planning Framework, the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.
- b) Ensuring development accommodates envisaged housing need and diversity to sustain vibrant and socially balanced communities.
- c) Ensuring the revitalisation of the town centre commercially and socially by securing sustainable residential and commercial development for vacant and underutilised sites and buildings. Central to the above is the issue of design and quality in respect of both individual buildings and of the general layout of any proposal. The Planning Authority will require that proposed developments display a high quality of design that reflects the setting of the development.
- d) Ensuring that land use zonings and objectives guide all development in Croom to appropriate locations and provide for adequate social and recreational facilities, in tandem with the growth of Croom.

- e) Enhancement and development of the area as a local service centre for the surrounding area and encourage the enhancement of the existing public transport facilities serving Croom.
- f) Ensuring that the area develops in a way that protects and enhances the richness and integrity of the area's natural and built heritage.
- g) Ensuring that the growth of the area is accompanied by adequate infrastructure to serve the needs of the town and to facilitate expansion.
- h) Ensuring that land use zonings and objectives provide proposals for traffic management and improvement in the town centre.

### **3.5 Evaluation of the 2009 – 2015 (as extended) Croom LAP**

It is important to assess the strengths and limitations of the 2009 - 2015 Croom LAP (as extended) and to determine what planning policies are relevant to the future development of the area.

The 2009 LAP made generous provision for new housing. This was reflective of the demand for residential development, that was evident at the time of the preparation of the 2009 plan. In total over 31.6 hectares were zoned for residential development, on which housing would generally be permitted. A number of permissions for residential development have been granted since the adoption of the 2009 plan and there has been uptake of serviced sites in the townland of Skagh. It should be noted, that construction activity in the area was lower in recent years than it was in the years preceding the plan. There are currently a number of residential developments, with the benefit of live planning permissions, which could yield additional residential development, including a housing development of 46 houses, in the townland of Skagh.

There is evidence of investment in the town, including a new Civic Centre and linear walk and parkland, which experiences great usage. The local community continue to invest their resources and volunteerism into community development in the town such as litter collections and other Tidy Town initiatives.

Croom is diverse in character and offers an abundance of opportunities for the future development of the town. Significant development is underway to the north of the town in the construction of a new 850 student post primary school. However, as with all settlements there are also challenges which may hinder the competitiveness of the town as a desirable place to live, work in, and visit. Some of these are considered in the SWOT analysis below.

### 3.6 SWOT Analysis

The following table sets out the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as identified through public consultation at the pre-draft stage and the site appraisals undertaken as part of the plan preparation process.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Croom is a service centre for a large agricultural hinterland;</li> <li>Proximity to Limerick City allows the town to act as a residential centre for the city;</li> <li>Accessible to national road network;</li> <li>Buildings of architectural and historic interest;</li> <li>Strong archaeological and historical association;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic volumes passing through the Main St results in congestion especially at peak times;</li> <li>Lack of investment has led to a high rate of vacancy and dereliction with a number of vacant buildings at prominent locations</li> <li>Perception of the town;</li> <li>Limited public transport links to Limerick City and elsewhere;</li> <li>Poor social mix due to over concentration of local authority housing in the town;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Croom Castle, old mills and historic church buildings offer potential for tourism;</li> <li>Availability of lands with development potential;</li> <li>Good sense of community responsibility for development and improvement of the town;</li> <li>Existing amenity along the river and the potential to further develop this amenity;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncertainty in relation to the release of zoned lands;</li> <li>Worsening of traffic congestion;</li> <li>Implications of flooding on developable lands;</li> <li>Lack of progress in relation to addressing traffic congestion;</li> <li>Population growth placing pressure on environmental quality, and pressure for housing;</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of lands for development;</li> <li>• Good range of public and private amenity facilities;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proximity to Limerick City may act as a deterrent to investment;</li> <li>• Competitive disadvantage due to poor broadband capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of community facilities to support the local community;</li> <li>• Development potential for downsizing units within the town centre;</li> <li>• Provision of usable green space within residential developments to be a priority;</li> <li>• Rivers provide opportunities for development of green corridors supporting sustainable travel and active lifestyles, linkage and biodiversity value, eg. River Maigue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions, and fears regarding anti-social behaviour</li> </ul>
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### 3.7 Population Targets and Zoning Requirements

#### 3.7.1 Population targets

The National Planning Framework was published for Ireland in February 2018 and will govern, where development takes place in the country to 2040. The plan will be implemented through the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies. In the absence of the adopted RSES for the

Southern Region, population growth for Limerick has been calculated based on the NPF strategy and Implementation Road Map for the NPF published in July 2018.

Limerick City & County Council have considered the population growth of the City and County. The anticipated population in Croom expects the town's population to grow in the range of 585 to 659 additional people by 2031. Applying these targets to the new Croom Plan, there is an anticipated growth of an additional 439 persons by 2026. This equates to 43.9 persons per annum over ten years (2016 – 2026).

**Table 5: Population growth based on the NPF and draft RSES of the Southern Region**

Census 2016	Population increase to 2026 Low range	Population Increase to 2026 High range	Population Increase to 2026 + 25% headroom (high range)	Total population 2026 (excluding headroom and Using high range projections)
1,157	390	439	549	1,596

Such a scale of growth is considered appropriate given the towns strategic location relative to Limerick and Cork, the availability of serviced lands and the range of services available to sustain a growing population. It is noteworthy, that objective SS01 of the CDP requires the town to grow sequentially from the town centre, maintaining a compact urban settlement and avoiding leap-frogging of development. Proposals for infill development, particularly in town core are encouraged and are necessary given the level of vacancy in the town. The NPF seeks that at least 30% of all new homes nationally are provided within the built-up footprint of existing settlements. Additional population growth in Croom will lead to increased service demand and a critical mass for the provision of additional services.

### 3.7.2 Land zoning requirements

The residential zoned land requirement is calculated having regard to the projected population growth outlined above and the guidance contained in the *"Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Area – Guidelines for Planning Authorities"*. In accordance with these guidelines 90% of the projected housing units will have a density of 22 units per hectare, while the remaining 10% of housing units will be in the form of serviced sites at a density of 10 units per hectare. In accordance with the National Planning Framework Implementation Road Map 2018, 25% headroom is also included and an allowance is also made for social housing

requirements in line with the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

**Table 6 - Residential units required to accommodate projected population growth to 2026**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<b>2026 Pop Increase including headroom</b>	<b>No. of houses required at 2.5 average household size</b>	<b>Vacant residential Units (geo directory)</b>	<b>No. of Units required excluding vacant units (B-C)</b>	<b>Social Housing Units required (50% of overall required)</b>	<b>Total Units required D+E</b>	<b>Residential units required (90% at 22 units per hectare)</b>	<b>Serviced Site units required (10% at 10 units per hectare)</b>
549	220	15	205	68	273	246	27.3

**Table 7 – Residential zoned land requirements based on Table 6 above**

Residential Units Required	Residential Zoned land required based on 22 units per hectare	Services Site Units Required	Serviced Site zoned land required based on 10 Units per hectare
246	11.2 hectares	27.3	2.7 hectares

A detailed serviced lands assessment matrix was compiled as part of the plan preparation process in line with the requirements of the NPF to establish the suitability of the land for development within the plan boundary. This has been included in the plan by way of an Appendix (Appendix 4). All the lands zoned for residential development have been zoned on the basis that adequate services are available to facilitate the development of each of the sites. In addition to the serviced lands and implementation an infrastructural delivery schedule has been included in Appendix 5 to outline the schedule of development of infrastructure to enable the development of this residential development.



## Strategic Policy for Housing

**Policy H1: It is the policy of the Council to provide appropriately zoned lands to cater for the sustainable growth of Croom and to ensure that all residents can enjoy a safe and accessible environment.**

**Policy H2: It is the policy of the Council that quality shall underpin all new development by creating and maintaining a sense of place and local distinctiveness in established any new development areas.**

### 4.1 Introduction

Based on the population and household projections in Chapter 3, 13.45 hectares of lands are zoned for residential use and can sustain the anticipated population growth in Croom over the plan period to 2026. Chapter 3, Policy SSP2 of the County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) Development of Tier 2 - 6 settlements sets out that it is policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of settlements within Tier 2 - 6.

Furthermore, it seeks to ensure that consideration is given to the capacity of the existing town/village core to absorb development.

### 4.2 Residential density, design, mix

Future residential development is required to be of a good quality design, accommodate a mixture of house types, which will serve all stages of the lifecycle and integrate with the existing development. To assess future proposals for residential development, developers will be required to submit as part of the planning application, detailed design briefs, sustainability statement and social infrastructure assessment (SSSIA) as required by the County Development Plan. As part of public consultation in the town, there was an identified need for a mixture of house types ranging from smaller downsizing units to larger family homes. With this in mind objective H2 has been included to promote a mix of house types to meet all stages of the lifecycle.

#### Objective H1: New Housing

- (a) It is an objective of the Council on serviced land that is zoned for residential use, to facilitate residential development in accordance with the principles and guidelines of the Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2018), the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013), the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Area (2009), the accompanying Urban Design

Manual, Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (2007) and the policies, objectives and Development Management Standards contained in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended) and any subsequent plan.

(b) It is an objective of the Council to promote the provision of community and other facilities such as childcare as an integral part of new developments.

#### **Objective H2: Residential density, design and mix:**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Ensure that proposals for residential development are planned coherently through the use of master plans for larger landholdings, where proposals involve the partial development of landholdings if appropriate, sustainability statements and social infrastructure assessments and any other supplementary documents deemed necessary by the Council.
- (b) Promote the concept of a compact town by encouraging appropriate densities in suitable locations and by resisting sporadic isolated developments.
- (c) Require a minimum net density of 22 units to the hectare on residentially zoned sites and 10 units per hectare on lands zoned for Serviced Sites.
- (d) Ensure that the density of housing in any location is appropriate to its setting.
- (e) Ensure a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures are provided to meet varying population requirements at all stages of the life cycle. A statement to identify how this has been considered shall be submitted as a requirement to demonstrate that consideration has been given to meeting this requirement in all residential applications.
- (f) Ensure that a variety of building heights is incorporated into residential development proposals to ensure that optimum use is made of residentially zoned lands at appropriate locations.
- (g) Ensure compliance with the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan Policy SS P1 and SS P6.

**Figure 12: Existing housing developments in Croom**



#### **4.3 Infill Development**

The Council will encourage infill development in the Croom area and the adaptation of existing vacant and under-used buildings. Any proposed alterations will require the retention of features of special interest and respect for the structures fabric, form and setting.

#### **Objective H3: Infill Development, Restoration and Renewal**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Encourage living in the centre of Croom by the promotion of residential use over businesses;
- (b) Emphasise the town centre as the primary retail centre of the town and ensure retail proposals comply with the Mid West Retail Strategy and any subsequent revised document and the Retail Planning Guidelines;
- (c) Promote sensitive infill sites on vacant sites, which would not be required for access to backlands;
- (d) Consider on their merits proposals for residential development of rear plots where they can be adequately accessed and they would not affect existing or proposed private amenities, storage or parking requirements. Such proposals should in general be part of larger masterplans involving contiguous plots;
- (e) In line with the requirements of the National Planning Framework, ensure that at least 30% of all new housing development is delivered within the existing built up area of towns and villages on infill and or brownfield sites.

#### **4.4 Social Housing**

The Council seeks to provide social housing to meet the needs identified in the Joint Housing Strategy for the administrative area of Limerick City and County Council and Clare County

Council. All relevant lands zoned for residential development or a mix of uses, including residential will be subject to the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) in relation to the provision of social housing. The Council will engage in discussions with developers, prior to the formal planning process to negotiate details of the operation of Part V. In this regard the Council will take into account the needs and preferences for housing in this area, but will ensure there is not an over-supply of social housing in any one development area.

#### **Objective H4: Social Housing and Joint Housing Strategy**

It is an objective of the Council in compliance with Objective HOU 02 of the County Development Plan, to

- (a) Require that developers comply with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended)
- (b) Require developers to provide social housing on all lands zoned for residential use, in accordance with the "Joint Housing Strategy for the Administrative Areas of Limerick City & County and Clare County Council" and any subsequent document.

#### **4.5 Traveller Accommodation**

Limerick City and County Council has a Traveller Accommodation Programme, which is currently under review and the new programme will run from 2019-2024 which will meet the existing and projected needs of travellers in the City and County. Objective HOU 09 of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended) outlines Limerick County Councils' objectives to provide housing accommodation for the Traveller Community in accordance with the Joint Traveller Accommodation Programme and any subsequent documents.

#### **Objective H5: Traveller Accommodation Programme**

It is the objective of the Council to provide appropriate housing accommodation for the Traveller Community, in accordance with the existing Traveller Accommodation Programme and any subsequent programme formally adopted by the Council.

#### **4.6 Derelict and Vacant Sites**

According to the most recent Geodirectory figures, there are currently 15 vacant dwellings within the town centre of the LAP boundary. In 2015 the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act required Local Authorities to provide a register of vacant sites suitable for residential development across its functional area. To date no sites have been included on the vacant sites register in Croom, however, this will be reviewed periodically and sites will be added as

necessary. In relation to derelict sites, the general approach is to seek timely actions and improvements of sites, through positive engagement with landowners, using powers under the Derelict Sites Act only where necessary and taking into account:

- Outstanding planning permissions;
- Evidence of efforts to address vacancy and dereliction;
- Security, safety to the public and condition of the site;
- The conservation value of the building and requirement for remedial restoration works and
- The feasibility of various actions to make good the site and find viable uses for the site.

To date two sites in the town have been included on the Derelict sites register and the register will be reviewed and supplemented on an ongoing basis as necessary.

#### **Objective H6: Vacant Sites**

It is the objective of the Council in line with the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 to identify vacant sites in the Local Authority's area that are suitable for housing, but not coming forward for development. These sites will be entered on a vacant sites register and accordingly will be levied as per the requirements of the Act.

#### **4.8 Housing on Agriculturally zoned lands**

Part of the Croom area is zoned for Agricultural purposes in the Plan. In these areas, it is a priority to retain the rural character of the area

#### **Objective H7: Housing on Agriculturally zoned lands**

It is the objective of the Council to 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 Limerick County Development Plan.



### Strategic Policy for Economic Development

**Policy ED 1: It is the policy of the Council to 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 2: It is the policy of the Council to complement the aims of the County settlement hierarchy in a mutually reinforcing and sustainable manner through the recognition of Croom as a main centre on the transport corridor, which will be promoted as a secondary development centre for significant future development. It will also serve an important regional employment function within the surrounding catchment area.**

#### **Policy ED 3: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan**

**It is the policy of the Council to ensure 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) and the objectives outlined below.**

#### **5.1 Introduction:**

Croom is a service centre for its own community and its wider hinterland. There is a range of businesses and services in the area, as previously detailed in Section 2.3 of this Plan. Services include retail, food and drink sectors, community services and professional services. The largest employer in the town is the Orthopaedic Hospital. There is limited industrial development in the town. The service and retail sectors, therefore provide the majority of employment opportunities in Croom. The proximity of the town to Limerick City and Charleville impacts on the potential of the town to develop as a significant employment base resulting in likely commuting to these employment centres. However improved accessibility from the proposed M20 motorway and the rezoning of additional lands for Enterprise and Employment use are envisaged to improve the town economic situation.

Having regard to the desire to promote Croom as a sustainable settlement, additional enterprise and employment zoned lands are zoned in the Local Area Plan. The location of the proposed “enterprise and employment” zoning has been chosen for a number of reasons;

- Access to the existing N20;
- Potential access to proposed M20 and
- Access to the local infrastructure.

Given the existing traffic congestion problems within the town centre, it is considered necessary to avoid channelling further potentially heavy goods vehicles through the town centre.

The economy of the area is largely geared around the provision of services and facilities for the local residents, but it also serves the hinterland and the wider catchment. It is vital to the long-term development of the area, that economic activity is encouraged, maintained and enhanced through diversification with a strong emphasis on a high quality environment and high skilled employment.

Croom's location allows it to provide the critical mass to attract such economic activity and provide the services and amenities for employers and employees to locate in this area. It is an objective of this plan to facilitate new employment through the provision of a choice of adequately zoned lands, encourage high quality design and layout and the provision of appropriate infrastructure to ensure their development.

Existing retail businesses range from small shops to a large convenience supermarket. There is a wide range of amenity servings in the area, including Croom Park and the Croom Sports Complex and a number of food outlets and public houses.

Policies and objectives in the County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended) of relevance to land use planning in relation to economic activity in Croom include:

- A general policy to complement the aims of the settlement strategy by facilitating a hierarchy of employment centres;
- An objective to take a pro-active approach to the protection and improvement of town and village centres to serve their local catchment areas;
- A commitment to work pro-actively with development agencies to secure an adequate range of locations for enterprise at key locations throughout the County;
- Encourage the development of appropriate light industry and enterprise development;
- An objective to assist in area based renewal projects in urban and rural areas selected for their potential for renewal and sustainable development;
- Facilitate the development/expansion of local enterprise centres, so that local and indigenous industries have the opportunity to develop;
- Facilitate the continuity and encourage the expansion of existing enterprises, having regard to the protection of the amenity value of neighbouring properties;
- Support the development of sustainable development of tourism facilities.

**Table 8: % of population employment by broad industrial group in Croom**

Type of Activity	Percentage
Managers, directors & senior officials	7.9%
Professional occupations	10.7%
Associate professional & technical	7%
Administrative, secretarial occupations	11.5%
Skilled trades occupations	5.6%
Caring, leisure & other service occupations	16.9%
Sales & customer service occupations	10.7%
Process, plant & machine operatives	5.1%
Elementary occupations	10.4%
Not stated	14.1%

## 5.2 Employment Land Availability and Zoning

A total area of 7.9 hectares of 'Industrial' zoned land was available for development in Croom under the 2009 – 2015 plan. The Croom LAP 2009 made no provision for Enterprise and Employment uses and it is proposed that the Industrial land zoning shall be replaced by Enterprise & Employment use in this plan, which allows for a greater mix of uses and further potential.

It is envisaged that these lands will facilitate economic development uses including production and office development. Development at these locations should refer to the Development Management Guidelines for Industrial/Commercial Development in Section 10.6 of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended). The form and scale of developments on these sites shall be appropriate to their location, having regard to surrounding land uses and scale.

The Croom LAP 2009 was adopted prior to the Guidelines for Planning Authorities on The Planning System and Flood Risk Management. The availability of up to date flood mapping has identified that part of the lands, along the north of town fall into areas at risk of flooding. This encompasses all the Industrial lands zoned within the 2009 plan boundary and remains undeveloped to this day.

The Council will continue to facilitate enterprise investment in the area and will work in co-operation with all concerned development and employment agencies and community groups. The main objective of this co-operation is to encourage the provision of employment, developing local resources and promote Croom as an investment location.

A high standard of design and layout will be required for new commercial/industrial developments. The principle aims for these areas are to achieve high quality design and visual continuity, whilst ensuring the functioning of business and industrial locations. They should not function as retail centres. It is envisaged that these lands will accommodate high quality and sensitively designed enterprise and employment development and complementary uses as indicated in the zoning matrix.

#### **Objective ED 1: Economic Development Proposals**

It is the objective of the Council to permit proposals for new industrial and enterprise development or extensions to existing industrial development in appropriately zoned areas, where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal:

- (a) Is located on appropriately zoned land;
- (b) Is appropriate to the respective area in terms of size and type of employment generating development to be provided;
- (c) Would not result in adverse transport effects;
- (d) Would have no significant detrimental effect on the surrounding areas or on the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupiers; and
- (e) Can be serviced efficiently and economically; and
- (f) That sufficient lands are reserved around site boundaries, in both individual sites and industrial parks to accommodate landscaping to soften the visual impact and reduce the biodiversity loss of the development, thereby improving the quality of the environment.

#### **5.3 Small-Scale Businesses in Residential Area**

Proposals for planning permission for small-scale business from people working in their own homes will be considered, based on the scale and nature of operations. Uses that might negatively impact on residential amenity such as the repair of vehicles will not be permitted in a residential area. The level of customers/callers will also be taken into account.

#### **Objective ED 2: Small-Scale Businesses in Residential Area**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Permit home based economic activities where, by virtue of their nature and scale, they can be accommodated without detriment to the amenities of residential areas and where:
  - 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;

(b) Permit non-residential uses in established and proposed residential areas, where they comply with the zoning matrix and are of an appropriate nature and scale for the location proposed. In general, such uses will only be considered, where they serve the needs of the neighbourhood within which they are situated.

## 5.4 Retail & Commercial Development

The proximity of Croom to Limerick City, allows for easy access to the retail and commercial facilities within the City Centre, but the area itself is also home to a range of retail services, which serve the local population and the larger hinterland.

### 5.4.1 Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010 - 2016 (as extended)

Colliers CRE Consultants prepared a 'Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region. The Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016(as extended) incorporates the policy recommendations from the Retail Strategy as they apply to County Limerick.

The Strategy's primary purpose is to ensure that adequate provision is made for new retail development in the most appropriate locations and that excessive provision of retail space is avoided. The central key objective arising from the Retail Strategy is to support the "town centre first" approach in the context of the retail hierarchy, and to promote the vitality and viability of existing centres. The strategy notes that it is important for Limerick City Centre to maintain its dominant retail function at the top of the Mid-West hierarchy and to recapture some of the market share it has lost to other retail destinations. The town centre has a very important strategic, cultural, economic and societal role in sustainable communities.

Unfortunately, there is an issue of vacancy of both commercial and residential units in Croom's town centre. GeoDirectory figures for the last quarter (Q4) in 2018 indicate that of the 36 commercial units in the town centre 8 are vacant, representing a commercial vacancy rate of 22.2%, which is high. When compared with the GeoView Commercial Vacancy published by GeoDirectory the national commercial vacancy rate is 13.2% and it fell by 0.1% from 2017. GeoView reports a commercial vacancy rate for County Limerick of 15.2% with a decline of 0.1% from 2017. This is affecting quality of life, amenity, public realm and streetscape. The issue easily exacerbates, as vacancy tends to have a contagion effect as adjoining premises are also at risk of becoming vacant.

In terms of residential vacancy in the town centre, GeoDirectory records of the 81 residential units, 15 units are vacant which is an 18.5% vacancy rate. GeoDirectory records a category of units with a residential and a commercial postal address. There are 7 of these combined units and 2 of these are vacant accounting for a 28.6% vacancy rate.

**Table 9: Comparative analysis of Croom's vacancy with county, province and national levels of vacancy**

	Average Commercial Vacancy % Q4		Average Residential Vacancy % Q4	
	2017	2018	2017	2018
Croom town centre	25.9*	22.2*	16*	18.5*
Limerick County**	15	15.2	5.1	4.9
National**	13.3	13.2	4.8	4.8

\*Extracted from GeoDirectory and confined to town centre zone of this plan.

\*\*GeoView Commercial and Residential Reports Q4 2017 and 2018

Since 2014, the Council provides grants through the Limerick Enterprise Office towards the fit-out costs for re-use of vacant properties in town centres through the Business & Retail Incentive Scheme. The intention is to address vacancy, improve streetscapes and support the business community. To date there has been no uptake in Croom.

Current retail activity has a weak comparison element (car sales - only) and has some convenience element (grocery, bakery and pharmacy) and some hospitality (restaurant) and take-away. Croom needs a new retail landscape to counteract the challenge of modern retailing including e-commerce. Ideally, some small independent retailer presence would contribute to the vitality and variety to the retail experience of the town (example clothing, giftware, furniture, books, boutique/bespoke style business). Creative spaces for artisan/crafts people may also be suitable for the town centre development and reuse of existing vacant units. Local indigenous craftspeople and artisan niche business provide a unique experience in town centres and enhance the resident and visitor experience in the town.

Given the strong built heritage value and the Architectural Conservation Area designation of part of the streetscape, the Council will require proposals to demonstrate adequate consideration is given in the design of new buildings to conservation, restoration and suitable reconstruction if required, whilst respecting the integrity of traditional plots and street frontage including quality traditional signage.

The Council encourages property owners to consider conversion of the former commercial units to residential, subject to compliance with regularity obligations, in the interest of re-use of vacant property in the town centre.

Future applicants for planning permission for business proposals in the town centre are advised to avail of pre-planning application discussions with the Council, prior to making their submission

### **Objective ED 3: Retail Development**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Emphasise the town centre as the primary retail centre of the town and ensure retail proposals comply with the Mid West Retail Strategy and any subsequent revised document and the Retail Planning Guidelines;
- b) Encourage new retail development to locate in the town centre by applying a sequential test on all lands outside town centres zoning;
- c) Promote sensitive infill developments on sites in the town centre, that are not developed and are not required for access to backlands;
- d) Ensure that proposals at ground floor level in the town centre are restricted to active retail, commercial, service, artisan workspace active use. Storage use is not permitted on ground floor street frontage;
- e) Ensure that in any proposed alterations to the streetscape of the town centre, adequate consideration is given to conservation, restoration and reconstruction, where it would affect the settings of protected structures and the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), or the integrity of the streetscape;
- f) Seek high quality shop front design, with emphasis on traditional shop front design, including appropriate material and scale contributing to the built heritage of the streetscape. Internally illuminated signs will not be permitted;
- g) Encourage the use of upper floors for commercial or residential use; and
- h) Discourage expansion or new build retail/service use outside the Croom LAP boundary



**Figure 13: Donal Daffy's Car Sales Croom**

**Objective ED4: Town Centre/Out of Centre Locations**

it is an objective of the Council:

- (a) On town centre zoned lands, to consider new petrol stations with an ancillary shop with a maximum net retail floor area of 100sqm;
- (b) In relation to Out of Centre locations, not to permit any more retail floor space;

## 5.5 Tourism

The development of the tourism offer is a magnet to promote and support the future development of Croom. Nationally tourism is considered vital to both urban and rural regeneration and job creation under the Programme for Government. In terms of branding, Croom is included in the Failte Ireland national marketing initiative – Ireland’s Ancient East. It is also one of the 74 villages supported and promoted by the Ballyhoura Development Association. The Council is guided by the national tourism policy outlined in the Tourism Action Plan 2019 – 2021 by Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and at a local level by the Limerick Tourism Strategy 2017 – 2023. The Tourism Strategy seeks to capture opportunities for tourism development in Limerick City and County. The town is well known for the School/ Court of Gaelic Poetry, which flourished here in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These Gaelic poets were known collectively as *Fili na Maighe* “The Poets of the Maigue”. Glenogra Castle outside of the town is also known as the home of the Colleen Bawn. Other features of tourism potential include the two large Mills, either side of the River Maigue and Croom Castle, which is a private residence. One of the Mill buildings has been renovated and operates as a business location in the town, while scope exists to develop the other Mill building, potentially for tourism uses.

Of crucial importance to the development and sustainability of tourism in Croom is the safeguarding of the natural, archaeological and built environment, encouraging the re-use of vacant or under used buildings and sites in the town centre and protection of the integrity and views of many of the historical structures and buildings in the town. Development management tools including the listing of Protected Structures, the Architectural Conservation Area, the inclusion of a Special Control Area and the objectives regarding public realm and shopfront design are mechanisms designed to protect the integrity of the tourism product the town has to offer.

The river amenity within Croom offers potential for tourism development and works to the walkway along the river bank has facilitated access to this great amenity. Tourism has the potential to make a significant contribution to the economy of the area and it is important that this resource is harnessed in a sustainable manner. Sustainable tourism development will not only increase revenue for the area, but will also deliver on conservation, environmental and social goals.



**Figure 14: Croom Town Park**

**Objective ED 5: Tourism**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Enhance the tourism potential of the Croom area on appropriately zoned lands, including the promotion of new environmentally sustainable tourism products and visitor accommodation, including co-operation with the relevant bodies in the marketing and promotion of tourism in the area;
- (b) Enhance the tourism potential of the town, including the promotion of appropriate tourism products in the town, such as the association with the Maigue Poets in an environmentally sustainable manner;
- (c) Facilitate the provision of tourism information signage in the town centre in accordance with guidelines, outlined in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) or any subsequent plan;
- (d) Continue to facilitate the enhancement of existing open spaces in the town centre, in accordance with guidelines outlined in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016(as extended) or any subsequent plan;
- (e) Encourage new development for the tourist industry to be located near existing services and infrastructure to support the general economic vitality of the settlement.
- (f) Protect the natural, built and cultural heritage features from unwarranted encroachment or unsuitable development.



### **Strategic Policy for Transport**

**Policy T1: It is the policy of the Council to provide for an integrated sustainable transport system in the town of Croom, that facilitates the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic. This system should be integrated into existing proposed land uses to provide an adequate and safe transport network.**

**Policy T2: It is the policy of the Council to improve accessibility; reduce dependency on private car transport and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport and alternatives to the private car, including walking, cycling and public transport.**

**Policy T3: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all new development will only be permitted on suitably zoned lands, where the infrastructure can be provided or existing infrastructure is not at capacity.**

**Policy T4: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended) in relation to transport and infrastructure and the objectives outlined below.**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

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.

At a national level, Smarter Travel has a target that by 2020, the percentage of those travelling to work by car will decrease from 65% to 45%. It recommends a range of actions. This is a challenge in Croom, where although below the national average, circa 60% of the population travel to work, school or college by car. Bus Eireann run a three times daily bus services through the area to Limerick City and to Cork City. Maintaining and improving this service remains a priority in this plan. This will ensure that the area develops in an efficient and sustainable manner and an alternative to the car as a choice of travel is promoted. It is noteworthy that the route for the M20 has yet to be selected and as such cannot be included in this plan however, in time there may be impacts to the town from the final selected route.

There are other issues relating to the effectiveness and uses of the existing transport infrastructure in the area. The Main Street suffers from traffic congestion as a result of the parking of cars on both sides of the street. Provision will be made in this plan for the

preparation of a Traffic Management Plan, which will look to allowing the free flow of two-way traffic along the Main Street. Additionally, it is noted that there are a number of junctions within the village where improvements are required. These include the junction adjoining the Garda Station and the junction of Main Street and High Street. This plan will support improvement works to these junctions.

This plan supports the principle of modal shift away from the private car to walking and cycling for journeys in the town, through appropriate land use zoning and promoting a compact settlement with a complementary range of land uses throughout the town, which are easily accessible by walking, cycling and the car. Taking a holistic approach, increasing the use of sustainable transport modes would improve the quality of life, contributing to promoting Croom town as a desirable place to live, work in, and invest in. Future development proposals for residential development should demonstrate compact walkable/cyclable communities and neighbourhoods with the shortest linkages to community facilities, open space and the town centre making walking and cycling more attractive for local trips. At the design stage, consideration should be given to the national guidance documents including Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities DECLG (2009); National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020 as part of Smarter Transport – A Sustainable Transport Future DTTS (2009); and Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTS and DoECLG, March 2013; and Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines, DoECLG and DTTS. These should be submitted in the design brief as part of the planning application process. Any proposals on the indicative distributor road should ensure that the frontage of buildings address the road as 'frontage-free' roads often result in a hostile environment for both pedestrian and cyclist.

As the electric car market develops, it is imperative that, in tandem with house construction, suitable home charging infrastructure are provided in all new residential development. At present home charging of electrical vehicles is the most effective, economical and eco-friendly means to refuel low emission electric cars in Ireland. In 2015, it was estimated that the private car accounted for 52% of the Irelands transport carbon dioxide emissions. Provision of charging infrastructure in the building of new homes assists implementation of national policy in relation to climate actions, clean air and low carbon economy.

There are a number of roads converging in Croom:

- R516 from Bruff – Regional Road
- L1410 from Fedamore – Local Road
- L1419 from Ballingarry – Local Road
- L1408 from Crecora – Local Road
- L1478 downgraded section of old N20 on the northern approach to the town, which links to the existing N20 – Local Road

The overall volume of traffic on these roads is not considered to be significant. Their existence provides ready access from the adjacent hinterland and is therefore viewed as an opportunity to consolidate the role of Croom in the County as a service centre.

Proposals are currently being progressed to advance a motorway connection between Limerick and Cork, which has potential to have impacts on Croom town. Until a decision is made on a preferred route for this roadway, it is considered prudent to include an objective to support the advancement of this scheme.

#### **Objective T1: M20**

It is an objective of the Council to accommodate the proposed M20 route, where required, within the plan boundary.

#### **6.2 Movement and Accessibility:**

The Council is committed to the development of a network of access routes reflecting the requirements of personal safety, choice and convenience to services and amenities. The access network should facilitate access to all and should be socially inclusive. These requirements and the desire to minimise dependence on the car for short journeys, means that a matrix type network is preferable to a network with long cul-de-sacs. Future development of residential and education and community zoned lands in the vicinity of Orthopaedic Hospital and the new school shall provide pedestrian/cycle connections through the residential estates along the Crecora Road and into the town centre. The indicative link roads shown on the zoning map will help open up lands for development and will improve connectivity, accessibility and movement.

#### **Objective T2: Movement and Accessibility**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) To support the provision of a distributor road network through the plan area, as indicated on the Land Use Zoning Map. The alignment of the road is indicative only and will be defined at detailed design and construction stage. Junction locations are also indicative;
- (b) 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 for new residential, serviced sites, community and recreation and enterprise lands will demonstrate at design stage that consideration of Smarter Travel, mobility and connectivity with the town centre and community infrastructure has been considered;

- (c) 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;
- (d) Ensure that adequate facilities and access provisions are provided for those with disabilities in the community. The Council will strive to ensure that the provision of such facilities will be in line with current best practice;
- (e) Improve the efficiency of junctions as identified on land zoning map in the town to enhance the free flow of traffic through the area;
- (f) Only permit development, where a safe and secure access can be provided;
- (g) Require that roads provided to serve private housing developments are designed to a high standard;
- (h) Provision of clear and unambiguous carriageway markings and associated directional signage, indicating directional priorities for traffic.
- (i) Safeguard the strategic function, capacity and safety of the existing N20, national road.

The issue of traffic congestion is a concern in terms of the viability of the town centre and car parking currently takes place in a haphazard manner along the Main Street. To address this concern, this plan makes provision for a Traffic Management Plan, which will look to rationalize the parking along Main Street and make improvement to allow for the free flow of two-way traffic.

#### **Objective T3: Car parking and traffic management**

It is an objective of the Council to support:

- (a) The provision of off-street public parking areas as part of any application for development;
- (b) The preparation of a Traffic Management Plan for the Main Street of Croom to allow for the free flow of two-way traffic and explore the potential for the development of a public carpark within the town;
- (c) To ensure that adequate car parking and access provision are provided for those with disabilities in the community.



**Figure 15: Cycleways**

### **6.3 Noise:**

The Council is committed to ensuring residents of new housing developments can enjoy the amenity of their dwelling, without undue interference from noise. The noise levels from roadways can be significant with the result that houses in the area may suffer from unsatisfactory noise environments. To safeguard this amenity, all new residential planning applications in noise sensitive areas will be required to carry out a noise assessment in line with the principles of "Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise" (2017). Predicted noise levels will need to be in keeping with the World Health Organisation recommendations and guidance.

#### **Objective T4: Noise Mitigation**

It is an objective of Limerick City and County Council to adopt a strategic approach to managing environmental noise within its functional area, which will aim to prevent members of the population in new residential and other noise sensitive developments being exposed to undesirable noise levels. 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 World Health Organisation recommendations and guidance.



## **Strategic Policy for Infrastructure**

**Policy IN 01:** It is the policy of the Council in co-operation with Irish Water to provide adequate water and sewerage facilities in Croom and raise awareness of energy efficiency, and waste management including the minimisation, re-use, recycling/recovery of waste.

**Policy IN 02:** It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended) in relation to infrastructure and the objectives outlined below.

### **7.1 Introduction**

A key consideration for the development of this area is the availability and quality of infrastructure. Infrastructure and land use should be managed and developed together, while protecting the environment for future generations. The responsibility for water service provision now rests with Irish Water. However, the Local Authority remains closely involved in the sector acting as an agent of Irish Water in relation to the operation and maintenance of services.

Water supply in Croom is limited, there are two sites currently supplying water to the town Croom. One at the Croom Bypass site, which is on the EPA's Remedial Action List with new borehole been recently constructed and is awaiting testing. The project is due for completion by the end of 2019 and while the capacity of the borehole is not confirmed it will provide some additional capacity. The second site is located at Skagh Well, and a second well recently drilled borehole found some water. Irish Water continue to examine proposals to enhance the supply to the town. Any proposal for development would require investigation in consultation with Irish Water of the water infrastructure.

### **7.2 Water Supply**

#### **Objective IN 01: Water supply and storage**

It is an objective of the Council working with Irish Water to:

- (a) Facilitate improvements to the existing water supply system to cater for the needs of an expanding population in a sustainable manner;
- (b) Ensure that development proposals provide adequate water infrastructure to facilitate sustainable development of the Croom Local Area Plan;
- (c) Reserve land for future expansion of the water services infrastructure.

### **Objective IN 02: Water Conservation**

It is an objective of the Council to promote awareness of sustainable water use and to encourage water conservation and demand minimisation by:

- (a) Metering and control of leaks in the Water Conservation programme;
- (b) Promoting Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and grey water recycling in developments;
- (c) Minimising the potential for wastage through appropriate design and layout of pipe networks.

### **7.3 Foul Sewerage**

The provision of adequate water supply and wastewater treatment utilities is crucial to the continued expansion of Croom. The plant is operating effectively and currently compliant and has treatment capacity to cater for a further population equivalent of 500. It has been included on a programme for the installation of a storm tank by Irish Water.

### **Objective IN 03: Sewerage facilities**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Ensure that adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided for further development to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters. In this regard, account shall be taken of existing outstanding permission in assessing impact;
- (b) Ensure that development proposals provide adequate waste water infrastructure to facilitate the proposed development. This includes the separation of foul and surface water through the provision of separate sewerage networks;
- (c) Ensure that discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

### **7.4 Surface Water Drainage**

The Plan area is covered in parts by a storm water network. Any proposal for significant development would require investigation in consultation with the planning authority of the surface water infrastructure.

### **7.5 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems**

The extent of paved and other hard surface areas reduces the capacity of the soil to absorb run off and may increase the risk of flash flooding. A sustainable approach to urban drainage encompasses a whole range of approaches to surface water drainage including:

- Promoting the use of green infrastructure within new and existing developments;
- Source control measures including recycling or re-use of grey water;

- Infiltration devices to allow water to soak into the ground including individual soak aways and communal facilities;
- Permeable surface treatments that in suitable locations allow rainwater and run off to infiltrate into permeable material below ground and provide storage if needed; and
- Water attenuation designs that can hold excess water and that can be emptied gradually and in a controlled manner in drier periods.

The Planning Authority will normally be able to advise of sensitivities on particular sites, that will demand some SUDS measures to be adopted. From the initial design phases to subsequent consideration of planning issues and construction, consideration should be given to the incorporation of the principles of sustainable urban drainage into the new development.

The use of SUDS mechanisms will be one of the responses to climate change issues in that it is through such measures that flooding, currently seen as one of the major effects of climate change, can be alleviated. There will be a need for further adaptation of strategies in the future and the Council will, where necessary and appropriate, put these measures in place.

#### **Objective IN 04: Surface water disposal**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- Require that all applications for development demonstrate that appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) are examined and where feasible provided;
- Require the submission of surface water design calculations, establishing the suitability of drainage between the site and a suitable outfall in order to establish whether the existing surface water drainage system can accommodate an additional discharge generated by a proposed development(s);
- Require applicants to investigate the potential for the provision of porous surfaces, where car parking and hard landscaping is proposed;
- Protect the surface water resources of the plan area and in individual planning applications request the provision of sediment and grease traps, and pollution control measures, where deemed necessary;
- Surface water runoff to be designed to agricultural runoff rates, subject to agreement with the Local Authority.
- Surface water disposal proposal should not negatively impact on the capacity and efficiency of the N20 national road drainage scheme.

## 7.6 Flood Risk Management

The Council is committed to managing flood risk in accordance with the principles set out in Government guidance 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' (DEHLG and OPW, Nov, 2009). A site specific flood risk assessment has been prepared for land identified as being at risk of flooding in Croom. Flood risk maps (FRA) are available for Croom under the Office of Public Work's CFRAM study. These indicate areas of land along the Skagh Road are in the Flood Zone. Limerick City and County Council commissioned a specific flood study on the lands in question and determined the extent of flooding. The extent of the flood is demonstrated on the flood map in Appendix 1. In this zone all development is considered vulnerable to flooding. The precautionary approach has been adopted in this instance and these lands have been zoned for Agricultural purposes.

The Planning Authority will require applications in areas at risk of flooding to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment. All flood risk assessment should have regard to national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the River Shannon Catchment Flood Risk and Management Plan Studies (CFRAM) when completed by the OPW.

### **Objective IN 05: Flood Risk Management**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Implement the recommendations of the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works Guidance Documents (November 2009), and any subsequent guidelines;
- (b) Require any development proposal in a location identified as being subject to flooding to carry out a flood risk/catchment analysis for the development to assess the likely level of flood hazard that may affect the site to the satisfaction of the Council;
- (c) Demonstrate that the proposal will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow across floodplains, where compensatory storage/storm water retention measures shall be provided on site and will not alter the hydrological regime up stream or downstream or at the development location so as to pose an additional flood risk or to increase flood risk;
- (e) Proposals should have provision to reduce the rate and quantity of run-off i.e. minimisation of concrete surfaces and use of semi permeable materials and include adequate measures to cope with flood risk, e.g. sustainable drainage systems;
- (f) Have regard to the Office of Public Works Planning Policy Guidance in the design and consideration of development proposals; and
- (g) Preserve riparian strips free of development and ensure adequate width to permit access for river maintenance;
- (h) All flood risk assessment should have regard to national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the River

Shannon Catchment Flood Risk and Management Plan Studies (CFRAM) by the OPW and the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan. The 'Development Management Justification Test' and the 'Plan – Making Justification Test' as detailed in The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidance document will guide Council responses to development proposals in areas at moderate or high risk of flooding.

## **7.7 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.

### **Objective IN 06: Shared bin spaces**

It is an objective of the Council to require all commercial and residential developments to be provided with adequate internal and external space for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials. This is particularly important in relation to shared bin spaces such as apartment developments. In such cases the following must be provided for:

- (a) Adequate space must be given for waste to be segregated and stored in an appropriate manner;
- (b) A multi-occupancy development will require a designated, ventilated waste storage area of sufficient size which allows for the segregation of waste;
- (c) New and re-designed commercial buildings and apartment complexes should have waste facilities designed in a manner that waste can be collected directly from them and where possible waste and recyclables should not have to be collected on the street or at the front of the premises.

## **7.8 Energy and Electricity**

Croom is served by the ESB distribution networks and the area itself is served by 110KV overhead electricity lines. The Council will work with Limerick-Clare Energy Agency to improve energy conservation and renewable energy use.

### **Objective IN 07: Broadband**

It is the objective of the Council to ensure that all new development proposals, incorporate communications service infrastructure broadband including ducting on an open access basis

## **7.9 Broadband, Smart Homes and Smart Buildings**

Smart Homes and Smart Buildings have high speed connections to the Internet, while sensors and data will be used for a better, more sustainable use of energy and increased use of clean, renewable energy sources. Smart Homes will also facilitate people to live longer, more fulfilling and secure lives in their homes, will enable new services, new channels of communications and entertainment, while mundane tasks will be automated and decisions will be made using artificial intelligence. Collective data generated by sensors and Internet of Things (IoT) devices will lead to better energy use in each of the homes and buildings. District heating or energy storage solutions connected with new forms of transport such as e-mobility solutions and electric car sharing will be encouraged to create a smart energy settlement and a digital economy. The Council will be guided by national policy in relation to facilitation of improved internet and broadband infrastructure.

### **Objective IN 08: Broadband, Smart Homes and Smart Buildings**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Support the principles of Smart Homes and Smart Buildings as established by the Limerick Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020, and
- (b) Ensure that new development proposal incorporate modern communications infrastructure such as Broadband, including ducting on an open access basis.

## **7.10 Telecommunications**

The Planning Authority's goal is to achieve balance between facilitating the provision of mobile telecommunications services in the interest of social and economic progress, and sustaining residential amenities, environmental quality and public health. When considering proposals for telecommunication masts, antennae and ancillary equipment, the Council will have regards to the DEHLG document 'Telecommunication, Antennae and Supports Structures' (DEHLG 1996).

### **Objective IN 09: Telecommunications**

It is the objective of the Council to facilitate proposals for telecommunications masts antennae and ancillary equipment, where it can be established that there would be no negative impact on the surrounding area and that no other mode or location can be identified, which would provide adequate telecommunication cover to the standard required by local land uses.

### **7.11 Electric Vehicles**

It is important that significant new developments schemes provide the infrastructure for the move towards the use of electric cars. The Council will support the provision and delivery of charging points in new developments, as appropriate.

#### **Objective IN 10: Charging Points for Electric Vehicles**

It is the objective of the Council to facilitate proposals for the provision and delivery of recharging points for electric powered vehicles within public car parks, new residential development and at other appropriate locations in Croom for domestic, transition and end of journey type travel.



## **Strategic Policy for Environment and Heritage**

**Policy EH 1: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the archaeological, architectural, natural and the built heritage of Croom is protected.**

**Policy EH 2: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016 (as extended).**

### **8.1 Introduction**

The protection of the built, historic and natural environment is a keystone to the sustainable development of a town or village. Conservation and preservation relates to buildings and land and the Council is concerned with the protection and enhancement of both. As settlements develop the demands on the environment, both natural and manmade, become greater. The role of the Council is to balance the two – preservation of a high quality environment, while satisfying economic and social needs.

### **8.2 Built Environment**

#### **8.2.1 Protected Structures**

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 Appendix 3 of this Plan. This list of structures is an abstract from the Record of Protected Structures, which is a statutory document maintained by Limerick City and County Council, as part of the County Development Plan. Exempted development regulations are not applicable to such structures, where proposed development would materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure, which contributes to the architectural heritage.

#### **Objective EH 01: Protected Structures**

It is an objective of the Council to protect structures entered onto the Record of Protected Structures, or listed to be entered onto the Record and to encourage their appropriate re-use and restoration. The Council shall resist:

- (a) Demolition of protected structures, in whole or in part;
- (b) Removal or modification of features or architectural importance;
- (c) Development that would adversely affect the setting of the protected structure.

The Council will encourage the rehabilitation, restoration, re-use and change of use of existing older buildings and protected structures, where appropriate, in preference to their demolition and redevelopment, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. Proposals to construct extensions sympathetic to such buildings in order to facilitate their reuse would be welcomed by the Council. Some of the Protected Structures are also listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage. The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) established in 2010, under the provision of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999, identifies, records, and evaluates the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland. The NIAH provides the basis for the recommendations of the Minister to the planning authorities for the inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures (RPS). There are 17 NIAH structures located in the Croom LAP area. Refer to [www.buildingsofireland.ie](http://www.buildingsofireland.ie) for further details of these structures.



**Figure 16: Former National School, Croom**

### **8.2.2 Croom Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA)**

The collective arrangement of buildings along the Main Street in Croom are considered of significance to the built heritage of the area and contributes to the character of the area. It is an objective of the Council to preserve the character of this area and therefore it is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). The ACA is defined in the Protected structures and ACA Map Cr-20/26-04. The designation of the ACA does not preclude future development, but the carryout out of works to the exterior of structures, within the ACA shall not be considered as exempted development, where those works would materially alter the

character of the ACA. In assessing development proposals within the ACA, the Council shall take into account the material effect that the proposed development would be likely to have on the character of the ACA.

There is a requirement as per the provisions of Part IV (Architectural Heritage) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (Amended) and its accompanying Regulations for additional documentation to be submitted with planning applications for developments within Architectural Conservation Areas. Guidance for this is set out in the Supplementary Application form and in Chapter 3 of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Planning Guidelines No 9) (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) 2011. Extensions or standalone developments, should enhance the character of Architectural Conservation Area. This approach applies also to proposals involving the setting and amenities of Architectural Conservation Areas. In considering proposal for development in these situations, it is the policy to have particular regard to:

- The potential impact of the proposal on buildings and the receiving environment – be it natural or manmade;
- The potential impact of development on the immediate streetscape, or landscape, in terms of compatibility of design, scale, height, plot width and depth, roof treatments, fenestration, materials, finishes, landscaping, mix and intensity of proposed use.

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

Works in Conservation Areas must retain existing surviving elements, aim to re-instate lost elements or character, with new build complementing the existing building lines and open areas. Where original or early surviving elements, such as windows and doors, rainwater goods, natural slate roofing and lime render and so forth, these should be repaired sensitively. The guidance here is to 'do as much as necessary, as little as possible'. If replacement proves necessary, then they must be replaced on a 'like for like' basis.

In replacing elements that were installed as replacements in recent decades, such as aluminium windows or smooth finish artificial slate, there are good reasons, apart from those put forward on the basis of architectural heritage, to return to the original material, such as timber windows and natural slate. These reasons include the compatibility of traditional materials with one another and the fact that the historic material allows the building to breath, thereby providing a healthier internal atmosphere for those using the buildings.

#### **Objective EH 02: Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)**

It is the objective of the Council to protect, conserve and where appropriate enhance the ACA as identified in Map Cr-20/26-04.

Proposals for development within the ACA shall:

- (a) Not involve the whole demolition of existing buildings, where possible;
- (b) Contribute to or enhance the character or streetscape of the area;
- (c) Avoid a negative visual impact on the landscape and visual appearance of the area;
- (d) Reflect and respect the scale and form of existing structures within the ACA in proportioning, overall scale and use of material and finishes and seek to contribute to or enhance the character of the ACA;
- (e) Retain/incorporate/replicate exterior features that contribute to or enhance the character and townscape of the area.
- (f) Ensure priority is given to the pedestrian, to inclusive access, and to facilitate the improvement of the quality of the public realm.

### **8.3 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). The extent of the Historic Town Recorded Monument is shown in Appendix 1, as well as the location of the other Recorded Monument within the Plan area.

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, outlined in Appendix 1, the application will be referred to the National Monuments Service for its recommendation. An archaeological impact assessment may be required as part of the applications.

The National Monuments Act 1930 - 2004 provide the legal framework for the protection of the archaeological heritage. The National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 established a Record of Monuments and Places(RMP). It is a legal requirement under Section 12(3) of the 1994 Act, that any person, who wishes to carry out development in this area, including development that does not require planning permission, informs the National Monuments Services, DEHLG of their proposals, providing at least two months' notice in writing, the area of notification for Croom town centre is outlined on Map Cr - 20/26-05.

Owners and occupiers of buildings and property within the town are encouraged to improve the appearance of their properties and to contribute to improvement of the streetscape.

### **Objective EH 03: Archaeology**

It is the objective of the Council:

- (a) To seek the preservation (in situ, or at a minimum, preservation by record) of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest. This is to include all sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.
- (b) To protect and preserve (in situ, or at a minimum, preservation by record) all sites and features of historical interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.
- (c) To ensure that any proposed development shall not have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument.
- (d) That the area of a monument and the associated buffer areas shall not be included as part of the open space requirement demanded of a specific development, but shall be additional to the required open spaces. If appropriate, where such a monument lies within a development, a conservation and/or management plan for that monument shall be submitted as part of the landscape plan for that development.
- (e) To safeguard the value and settings of archaeological remains in situ or and only where appropriate through archaeological excavation.
- (f) Where it is deemed that archaeology would be affected by a development, or where the scale and nature of such development may in the opinion of the Planning Authority have a negative impact on previously unknown archaeological features/artefacts, the Planning Authority shall require archaeological assessments/investigations to be carried out prior to a decision on a planning application. This shall define a buffer area or area contiguous with any monument which will preserve the setting and visual amenity of the site.
- (g) To require archaeological monitoring outside the area of the RMP on development proposals, where the scale and nature of such development in the opinion of the Planning Authority will have a negative impact on previously unknown archaeological remains/artefacts.

### **Objective EH04: Upgrade/Renovation of Croom Mill**

It is an objective of the Council to promote the sensitive conservation, restoration, reconstruction and upgrade of the Mill.



**Figure 17: Croom Bridge, Protected Structure Reference 1133**

### **8.3.1 Protected view**

The approach to Croom Castle from the roundabout on Bridge Street provides a fine view of the Castle, and an important glimpse of the town's past. It signifies a sense of arrival in an historic place and provides an important overview of the general setting of Croom. A protected view has been included in the Plan to safeguard the setting of the Castle and any development on the adjoining town centre zoned lands shall be cognisant of this and shall respect the integrity of this view.

#### **Objective EH 05: Croom's Protected Views**

It is the objective of the Council to safeguard the scenic views and prospects by controlling development proposed within the viewshed of Croom Castle. In particular, the Council will seek to 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.

### **8.3.2 Special Control Area:**

The area within the curtilage of Croom Castle is designated as a Special Control Area. This area is located within the Recorded Monument, (LI030-025001), classified as the historic town of Croom and the Castle located within this classification has been assigned a unique reference (LI030-025005). It is also within the Architectural Conservation Area. Only proposals for the rehabilitation for re-use of short term tourist letting of the Coach House, which support the setting and amenity of Croom Castle, will be considered in this area and will be assessed on an individual basis. Ancillary walkways may be considered at this location.

#### **Objective EH 06: Special Control Area**

It is an objective of the Council to maintain the integrity of the Special Control area within the plan boundary.



**Figure 18: Croom Castle**

#### **8.4 Natural Environment**

The River Maigue is the most important natural asset of the town and has further potential for use as an amenity. In recent times, the recreational value of the River Maigue has been developed through the provision of linear walkway/cycleway which runs parallel to the river. The adjacent 13 acres of parkland is filled with woodland paths, seating, picnic areas and a children's playground. With an integrated approach from landowners in this area, lands to the rear of Main Street adjacent to the river provide a potential development opportunity for continuing this walkway along the river. It is the policy of this plan to encourage the development of this area. On the western bank with the exception of the restored mill building there is limited public access. There is potential to provide greater public access to

the river and therefore to harness its amenity value. This plan includes an Amenity Map that incorporates proposals to achieve this objective through the development of walks and area for both active and passive amenity. The Maigue River Trust was established to protect, enhance and cherish the rivers and lakes of the River Maigue catchment for the benefit and enjoyment of all. Furthermore, it seeks to promote the utilisation and enjoyment of the River. The introduction of a slipway along the riverbank adjacent to the Civic centre provides a real opportunity for active use of the river and the development of a blueway system along the River Maigue.

Both passive and active open space is required in Croom close to the town centre. The Well Meadow provides for passive recreation. Active recreation is catered for by a number of facilities and clubs. The community centre provide for some indoor sports facilities. There is an existing GAA ground located outside the town on Church Road. There is a soccer club located to the east of the town to the side of the community centre. The Council will require developers to make provision for sport and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the needs of the development as an integral element of their proposals.

**Figure 19: Linear walkway in Croom Town Park**



#### **8.4.1 Trees for Preservation within the Plan area**

Trees can be as visually prominent as buildings and are an important landscape component. They are able to integrate with building structures providing important landscape features and visual variety. From an ecological viewpoint, whatever the species, it is important to ensure that an adequate tree stock remains within the Croom area. The legacy of demesne planting is an integral part of the town of Croom and its environs and adds greatly to the setting and character of the town.

Closely related to the question of trees in the landscape is that of hedgerows. Within the LAP area, there is a presumption against the removal of these landscape features. These are part of the fabric and history of the landscape. Apart from their visual contribution, they are also important habitats in their own right. In order to ensure their continued vitality and amenity value as landscape features and habitats, they require continuous management, particularly, if they are to be integrated within new developments.

The link between the quality of the local environment, of which trees are an important component and human well-being is one that is increasingly recognised. With that in mind it is considered necessary to include the following objectives.

**Figure 20: Tree opposite St. Marys Church**



#### **Objective EH 05: Trees on zoned lands**

There are a significant proportion of existing trees on land zoned for development in the townland of Croom. Any future development on these lands shall incorporate as many of the trees as possible into the scheme. A comprehensive tree survey carried out by a suitably qualified person shall be submitted with any future planning application.

#### **Objective EH 06: Tree Protection and Nature Conservation**

It is the objective of the Council to protect natural stone boundary walls, mature trees, woodlands and hedgerows. Development that requires the felling or harming of such trees shall not normally be permitted unless otherwise supported by a tree survey report establishing that the subject trees are of no ecological or amenity value. Such report shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and competent person.

It is the policy of the Council to facilitate the preservation and protection of the following trees.

- Town park - ornamental trees and new planting with varied species including Beech, Lime and Ash.
- West of the park, variety of trees along the river bank amongst them Birch Alder and Ash.
- Old mill, with Sycamore and Ash north of the Bridge.
- National School: Beech trees present on the boundary.
- Kylefea Estate: rows of trees to the rear (south) of the estate with a mix pf species. These include Beech, Cypress, Poplar, White thorn and Sycamore located on the estate boundary.
- Ballingarry road: Beech trees along roadside.
- Graveyard: Yew trees.
- Church: mature Sycamore and Copper Beech close to roadside.
- Park area to south of bridge and close to Croom Castle: mix of Birch, Sycamore, Willow and Ash along the River boundary. Sycamore and Ash and Cypress close to Croom Castle.
- Orthopaedic Hospital: Tree belt along Western boundary amongst them, Horse Chestnut, Beech, Cypress and Sycamore.



**Figure 21: Trees along the River bank in Croom Town Park**

## **8.5 Climate Change**

Promoting land use patterns and economic activity that minimise effects on climate change is an objective of Limerick City and County Council. As part of this objective, the Council will endeavour to promote responsible development and management of land, drainage systems and natural habitats and the local delivery of energy, efficiency and adaption to climate change in Croom.

Achieving a low carbon producing economy and society requires, where practicable, everybody seeking to efficiently meet resource requirements from indigenous local resources. Those indigenous resources should be harnessed to optimum potential in order to meet or exceed local needs, having due regard for national targets and the local planning guidelines. This involves not just the use of local resources, where applicable but the adoption of new building techniques and designs which will minimise energy intensive inputs. Development proposals, which incorporate these issues, will be encouraged by the Council.

### **Objective EH 07: Climate Change & Adaption**

It is an objective of the Council to support the National Adaptation Framework 2018, the National Climate Change Strategy (or any updated/superseding document) including the transition to a low carbon future, taking account of flood risk, the promotion of sustainable transport, soil conservation, the importance of green infrastructure, improved air quality, the use of renewable resource and the re-use of existing resources.

### **Objective EH 08: Compliance with the Water Framework Directive**

All development activities governed by the plan shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive and associated regulations and guidance documentation.

### **Objective EH 09: Compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive**

Any developments that fall within the ambit of the EU EIA Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by the EU directive 2014/52/EU) and associated regulations shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment/Strategic Environmental Assessment and the contents of the revised directive and the updated regulations.



## CHAPTER 9: COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

### Strategic Policy for Community and Recreation

**Policy C1: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that community infrastructure and a range of open space opportunities for passive and active recreation contribute to a vibrant, prosperous settlement. This is conducive to ethical principles of healthy communities, inclusivity and accessibility to facilities for all abilities, and sustainability to ensure that Croom is a greener, cleaner, more welcoming place to live, work and attract investment.**

**Policy C2: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all developments in relation to community infrastructure, education, childcare, health facilities, open space, and recreational facilities comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016(as extended) and the objectives outlined below.**

#### 9.1 Introduction

National policy recognises the importance of community infrastructure and recreation opportunities to a vibrant community. The collective well-being of a settlement is correlated with the quality of the environment. Open spaces can assist the Council and the community achieve the wider objectives for biodiversity, health and well-being, place-making and identity. Green spaces can contribute to the legibility of a settlement assisting one's sense of location, direction and orientation. Open spaces can contribute to the intangible values of a community's sense of pride, civic activities and engagement, and collective ownership. The following policy documents express this sentiment at the national level:

- Ready! Steady! Play! – National Play Policy, 2004;
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities, 2007;
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, 2009;
- Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Local Area Plans, 2013 and the companion document Manual for Local Area Plans, 2013;
- Best Practice Guidelines Design Standards for New Apartments – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2018;
- Framework for Health and Well-being 2013 – 2025 under the Healthy Ireland programme;
- National Youth Strategy 2015-2020;
- Teenspace – National Recreation Policy for Young People 2007;

- Better Outcome Brighter Futures – the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-2020;

At a local level policy documents include:

- Limerick and Clare Sports and Physical Recreation Strategy, June 2013;
- County Limerick Recreation Strategy and Action Plan 2010 – 2012;
- Healthy Limerick programme launched in 2017;
- The Limerick Cultural Strategy – A Framework 2016-2030;

National planning guidance requires consideration of community facilities and open space, when preparing development plans and planning applications. As a means to prompt these considerations Limerick City and County Council requires developers of housing estates to submit Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment(SSIA), as part of their planning applications, since the adoption of the Limerick City and County Development Plans in 2010. At a policy level open space is considered an integral aspect of the Local Area Plan (LAP) process and the City and County Development Plan (CCDP) process.

In recent times the term 'green infrastructure' is considered more appropriate, when looking at open space provision. This concept is defined as looking at the totality of open space in an area and the opportunities to develop a connected system of the parks, green wedges, green corridors. The connectivity of open space is considered important to address wider sustainable transport/movement goals, and biodiversity principles of the movement of flora, fauna, pollinators and insects. Connected open spaces can also contribute to a more active and healthy lifestyle providing opportunities to cycle and walk/run at ease, and provide safety from traffic.

## 9.2 Community and Recreation

There is a mix of sporting facilities in the Croom area, with both private clubs and a public park. A total of 7.77 hectares are zoned as Open Space and Recreation in the LAP.

To align with the policy for open space as stated previously the following are the objectives of the Croom Plan based on the themes of; value, quantity, quality, sustainability, conservation and protection.

Provision is also made for the development of playgrounds/playlots in tandem with new residential development. The identification of possible amenity walkways and cycle routes also forms an important part of the plan.

### **Objective C1: Protection of lands zoned for open space**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Protect existing open space, by not permitting development, which encroaches on open space by reducing the recreational value to the public.
- (b) Protect semi-natural open space areas from inappropriate development in the interest of recreational enjoyment, community health and well-being, flood protection and biodiversity.
- (c) Seek in partnership with other agencies to develop active and passive recreational opportunities, such as extending the recreational walkway/cycleway along the river bank.



**Figure 22: Trees in Croom Public Park**

### **Objective C2: Improve Open Space Provision and encourage active and passive open space use**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Co-operate with sports clubs, schools, cultural groups and community organisations to provide quality sports and recreational facilities to the community. The Council encourages a multi-use and co-use of facilities of a complementary nature to support

more diverse range of sport and recreational opportunities. Proposed development shall demonstrate quality pedestrian and cyclist linkage.

(b) Ensure residential development incorporates appropriate provision of quality public open space and playlots, in accordance to national guidance and any subsequent guidance within the timeframe of the proposed Plan. Open space provision will be proportional to the scale of the number of residential units proposed. It shall consider access to existing open space and shall be cognisant of the principles of national guidance including accessibility, personal and child safety, linkage, place-making, and permeability and the hierarchy of open space.



**Figure 23: Passive Recreation Space**

#### **Objective C3: Open space hierarchy and playground provision**

It is the objective of the Council to:

(a) Require residential development to adhere to the requirements regarding open space within housing estates in accordance with Table 10 Open Space Hierarchy in Residential Estates.

(b) Require applications for residential developments to demonstrate clearly that sufficient consideration by the developer has been given to the provision of functional open space as per DEHLG 2009 guidelines on Design of Urban Residential Development.

(c) The Council will 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. Such facilities must be clearly delineated on planning application drawings and demarcated in advance of the sale of any of the units.

**Table 10: Open Space Hierarchy within Residential Estates**

Type of Public Open Space	Area	Accessibility from residential units	Note
Play lot/ pocket park – primarily catering for play for younger children	400sqm – 0.2 hectare	Every home within 100m walking distance	To be provided in all cases in housing estates, overlooked with passive surveillance by as many houses as is practicable. Not permitted to side or rear of dwellings. Developers will be required to provide a minimum of two permanent play features on site.
Small Park	0.2 ha – 2 ha	Every residential unit within 400m walking distance	To accommodate a small play ground with a minimum of 4 play features, kick around space, and passive recreation. Must be overlooked with passive surveillance by as many houses as is practicable. Not permitted to side or rear of dwellings.



**Figure 24: Croom playground**

**Objective C4: New amenity areas walkways, allotments and community gardens**

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map in co-operation with local interested parties including private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties overlook proposed walkways.
- (b) Co-operate with other agencies to enhance and provide recreational and amenity facilities in the area.
- (c) Facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations.

### **9.3 Education and Childcare Facilities**

The area is currently served by two pre-school services, one run at the National School and the other at the Old Rectory just outside the plan area. The area is served by a primary school and a Secondary School. Presently work has commenced on the construction of a new 850 pupil Secondary School along the Old Cork Road. There is an identified need for accommodation that meets all ages in the lifecycle within the plan area and a parcel of land to the rear of the former National School has been identified as a potential site for a nursing home/ nursing home integrated with retirement homes.

### **Objective C5: Educational Facilities/Community & Education zoned lands**

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Ensure that there are sufficient educational 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.
- (b) Ensure that all proposals for childcare facilities shall comply with the development management standards of the County Development Plan or any subsequent plan.
- (c) 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.



**Figure 25: St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church**

#### **9.4 Health Facilities**

The primary role of the Planning Authority with regard to healthcare is to ensure that there is an adequate policy framework in place inclusive of the reservation of lands, should additional services be required and to permit healthcare facilities, subject to good planning practice. The town is served by a Health Centre, which includes a doctor's surgery. The Council will continue to support further economic and social progress with regard to health services, including capital investment in community and continuing care services in the Croom area. Permission has been granted for a primary health centre adjacent to the Orthopaedic Hospital

and provision has also be made to zone additional Community & Education lands in the vicinity of the Hospital should the need arise to extend the Orthopaedic Hospital.

**Objective C8: Provision of Healthcare Facilities**

It is an objective of the Council to:

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

## Overall Strategic Policy

**Policy UD1: Urban Design:** It is the policy of the Council to 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 UD2: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan Development 2010-2016 (as Extended) Management Guidelines:** It is the policy of the Council to determine applications for development in accordance with the policies, objectives and development management standards set out in the Croom LAP and the Limerick County Development Plan in order to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

### 10.1 Introduction

Good urban design is essential for attractive places to live in, work in and relax in. It is achieved by the arrangement of streets and spaces, the mass, scale, design of buildings, the materials used, colour scheme and finishes of buildings, roads and footpaths. Street furniture also contributes to urban design, as does a mix of appropriate complementary land uses. A well designed urban area has a clear and distinct sense of place, instilling a sense of community and pride with a clearly defined centre, which is desirable to walk around and feels safe.

This chapter of the Croom LAP is intended to provide guidance to assist prospective applicants in drawing attention to aspect of planning and design, which the Planning Authority will be taking into account, when assessing applications for future development. Since adoption of the 2009-2015 Croom Plan (as extended), there has been a number of guidance documents issued, which deal with urban design.

- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets DECLG (2013)
- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual - DEHLG (2009)
- Government Policy on Architecture 2009-2015 - DEHLG (2009)
- Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment - DEHLG (2009)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - DEHLG (2009)
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments - DHPCLG (2018)
- Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future - DTTS (2009)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities' - DEHLG (2007)
- DTA Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020
- National Building Authority's (2002) 'Building for Everyone – Inclusion, Access and Use' .

## 10.2 Themes and principles of Urban Design

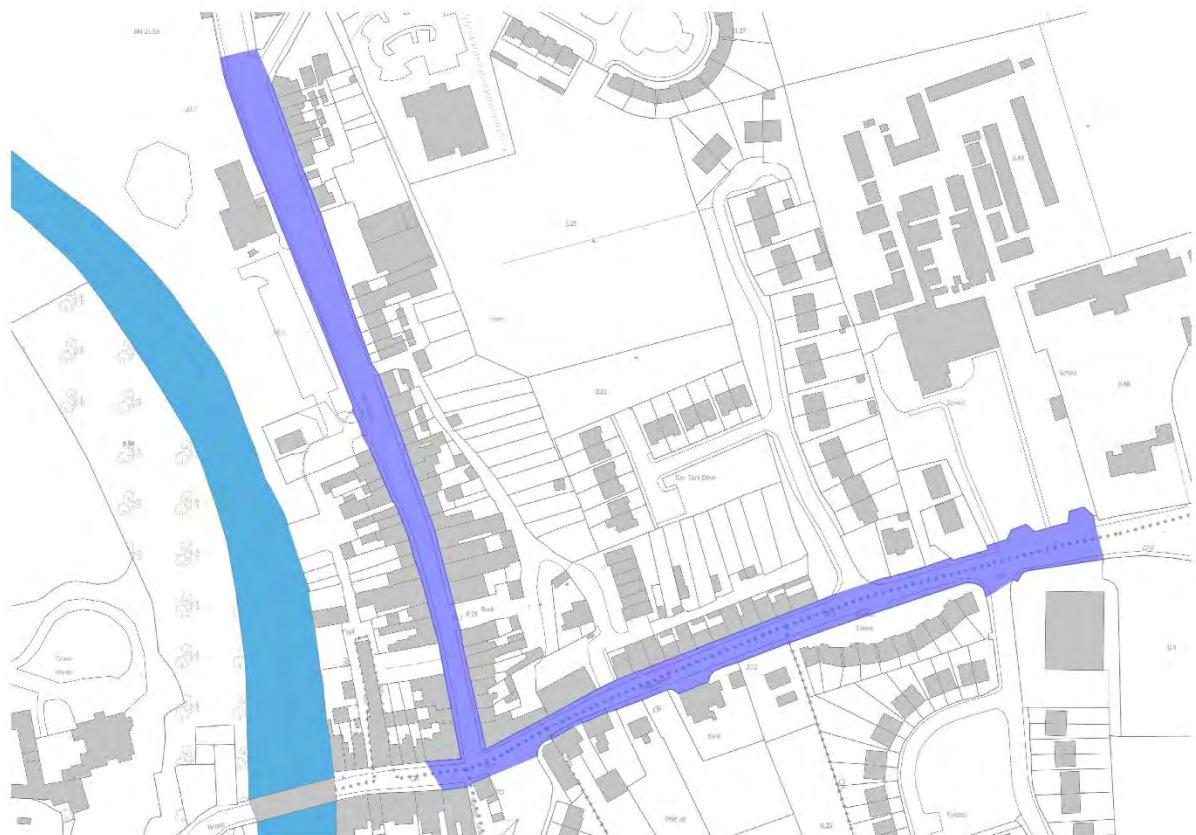
A successfully designed urban area would generally be governed by the following themes:

1. **A commitment to achievement of a high design quality.** It is considered essential that there would be a commitment to good design as a sustainable and cost effective means of accommodating suitable land uses in a way that enhances a local sense of place and creates vibrant communities. Design should be both comprehensive in its scope with respect to its brief and thorough in its attention to detail.
2. **Sensitive response to context and insertion of distinctive character:** The key questions are how does the development respond to its surroundings? How do proposals create a sense of place?
3. **Accommodation of an appropriate type and variety of uses and tenures:** A key challenge is how to accommodate and facilitate a variety of uses that will nurture a sense of community and vitality to a neighbourhood.
4. **Ensuring connectability and inclusivity:** How well is the new neighbourhood / site connected? How easily can people use and access the development? How will parking be secure and attractive?
5. **Environmental efficiency and responsibility:** How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
6. **Ensuring adequate amenities for private and for public needs:** How does the layout of the development safeguard the privacy of its residents and provide for their amenity needs? How does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces? How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?

At a local level, the Limerick CDP 2010 – 2016 (as extended) has placed greater emphasis on appropriate design in its development management guidelines. It is a requirement that a design statement is submitted as part of a planning application for 5 or more dwellings, or commercial / industrial developments over 1,000 sq. metres. A ‘Design Statement’ is a short document, which enables the applicant to explain why a particular design solution is considered the most suitable for a particular site. The design statement should outline a justification for the development as proposed and any alternative design options considered. The accompanying Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment should also demonstrate the design considerations having regard to the transport, energy, ecology, and social quality.

In respect of qualifying development proposals, the design statements required should make explicit reference to up to date national guidelines, how the site and context is appraised, and how the design meets the objectives and follows the site specific guidelines of this Plan as relevant to the site or opportunity.

### 10.3 Transformational Areas of Main Street and High Street



The Main Street and High Street of Croom have been identified as key areas, within the Plan boundary that has potential for transformational works, beneficial not alone across the plan area but into the wider hinterland. The area was chosen on the basis of its unique challenges and the opportunities that it faces and the potential contribution it can make to the future development of the town.

There are a number of buildings along both streets in the town centre, which are vacant, under-used, and some are poorly maintained. Collectively these buildings contribute to a sense of degeneration, which is not the ambition of a town, with anticipated population growth. Equally traffic congestion and parking along the Main Street has a negative effect on the town centre. The Council has identified these streets for their potential to be key contributors to urban regeneration in the town, sustaining community vitality, contributing to a positive public realm experience, and having potential for adaptive re-use. Furthermore, the refurbishment of buildings has the potential to sustain and improve the value of these property assets in terms of rental and selling market value. Proposals for traffic management improvements will also create a more attractive place in which to live and carry out business.

#### 10.3.1 Challenges and Opportunities for Main Street and High Street

Main Street extends along the length of the commercial spine of the town from the junction of the L1408 Crecora Road and Garda Station to the junction of Main Street and High Street.

High Street runs perpendicular to it and into Bridge Street. Both streets have suffered from the departure of key commercial businesses in recent years, due to a wide range of factors and have notable levels of vacancy and in instances dereliction. Maximising the reuse of space both at ground floor and upper floor level will be a key focus in this area. As the established commercial centre, it is vital that the Main Street retains and enhances its primacy as the focus for retail and recreational and social activities. This will necessitate a focus on improving the overall appearance of the buildings along the streets, re-using existing buildings, encouraging the provision of new buildings and uses and addressing the traffic movement and parking along the Main Street, as well as the junction with High St and at the other end of the street with the Garda Station.



**Figure 26: Vacant Units along Main Street and High Street**

### **10.3.2 Role of Main Street and High Street:**

It is envisaged that Main Street and High Street will strengthen and re-establish its position as a centre in which to live, work, shop and socialise. Increased residential occupancy will add to character and vitality of the area. It is recognised that, rejuvenation of the town centre in particular, is of importance to create a self-sustaining town. The following are the key developments, which are needed along Main Street and High Street.

### **10.3.3 Key enabling works for Main Street and High Street:**

- Rationalise the parking along Main Street and carry out junction improvement works between Main Street and High Street and the junction of Main Street and the L1408;
- Challenge the vacancy and dereliction along both streets and seek the re-purposing of obsolete properties, and exercise powers under the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, and the Derelict Sites 1990 if appropriate, subject to resources and due legislative process;
- Actively encourage residential and commercial use and reuse of the existing building stock;
- Promote infill development as appropriate enhancing the pedestrian experience, whilst ensuring linkages are provided to the Main Street. Any new urban form should be of a high quality. Contemporary design will be encouraged, whilst also respect the scale, massing and fine grain of the surrounding buildings and respecting the ACA.
- Encourage the use of traditional shopfront designs. All proposals must be of a high quality of design and finish and must contribute positively to the established pattern, scale, material and proportions of buildings and the use of plastic, neon lit shop fronts shall be prohibited;
- Promote the use of the Market Square as a Civic Plaza and gathering space.



### 11.1 Purpose of Land Use Zoning

The land use zoning map of the plan guides development to appropriate locations and should be read in conjunction with both the zoning matrix of this LAP and the Limerick County Development Plan, Chapter 10: Development Management Guidelines. The purpose of the land use zones is to indicate the types of development that are considered most appropriate in each areas and to avoid competing and incompatible land uses. The zoning objectives allow developers to plan proposals with some degree of certainty, subject to other conditions and requirements as set out in the Plan.

The land use zoning matrix is intended as a general guide to assess the acceptability or otherwise of development proposals, although the listed uses are not exhaustive. The various land use designations have been formulated on the following principles:

- Ensuring that land use designations will accommodate the potential population and growth needs of Croom within and beyond the lifetime of the Plan;
- Encouraging the development of Croom as a compact and coherent settlement;
- Ensuring an acceptable balance of land uses in proximity to one another;
- Supporting the principles of proper planning and sustainable development of the area; and
- Identifying the characteristics of various primary land use categories in order to provide a broad planning framework, which guides development to appropriate locations.

The following table sets out the total zoned land for the various zoning categories in this plan compared with the totals designated in the 2009 – 2015 (As Extended) LAP.

**Table 11: Total Zoned Lands**

Zoning	Area designated in 2020 LAP (ha)	Area designated in 2009 LAP (ha)	% change
<b>Agriculture</b>	73.03	45.5	60.5%
<b>Education and Community Facilities</b>	25.01	12.9	90.6%
<b>Existing Residential</b>	22.03	20.5	7.5%
<b>Enterprise &amp; Employment</b>	7.51	Formerly Industrial 7.9	
<b>Open Space and Recreation</b>	7.77	22.4	-65.3%

<b>Residential Development Area</b>	10.42	18.8	-44.6%
<b>Residential Serviced Sites</b>	3.05	12.8	-76.2%
<b>Town Centre</b>	8.04	8	0%
<b>Special Control Area</b>	0.99	2.2	-55%
<b>Utility</b>	0.32	0.07	357%

## **11.2 Non-Conforming Uses**

Throughout the County, there are uses, which do not conform to the zoning objective of the area. These include uses, which were in existence on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1964, or which have valid planning permissions. Reasonable extensions to and improvement of premises accommodating, these uses will generally be permitted within the existing curtilage of the development and subject to normal planning criteria.

## **11.3 Land Use Zoning Categories**

The various categories of zoning incorporated on the Land Use Zoning Map and the Zoning Matrix are defined below.

### **Existing Residential**

The purpose of this zoning is to ensure that new development is compatible with adjoining uses and to protect the amenity of existing residential areas.

### **Residential Development Area**

This zoning provides for new residential development and other services associated with residential development. While housing is the primary use in this zone, recreation, education, crèche/playschool, sheltered housing and small corner shops are also acceptable, subject to the preservation of neighbouring residential amenity. Permission may also be granted for home based economic activity within this zone, subject to the preservation of residential amenity, traffic considerations and compliance with Section 5.3 in Chapter 5 of this Plan.

### **Special Control Area**

The area within the curtilage of Croom Castle is designated as a Special Control Area. This area is located within the Recorded Monument, LI030-025001, classified as the historic town of Croom and the Castle located within this classification has been assigned a unique reference LI030-025005. It is also within the Architectural Conservation Area. Ancillary walkways may be considered at this location.

### **Open Space and Recreation**

The purpose of this zoning is to protect, improve and maintain open space and recreational areas.

## **Education and Community Facilities**

The purpose of this zoning is to facilitate the necessary development of schools and community facilities in appropriate locations.

## **Enterprise & Employment**

It is envisaged that these lands will accommodate high quality and sensitively designed enterprise and employment development and complementary uses, as indicated in the zoning matrix. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location having regard to surrounding uses and scale.

## **Agriculture**

The purpose of this zoning is to provide for the development of agriculture by ensuring the retention of agricultural uses, protect them from urban sprawl and ribbon development and to provide for a clear demarcation to the adjoining built up areas. Uses which are directly associated with agriculture or which would not interfere with this use are open for consideration. Dwellings will only be considered for the long-term habitation of farmers and their sons and daughters on this zoning.

## **Utilities**

The purpose of this zoning is to provide for essential public services, existing and planned.

## **Town Centre**

The purpose of this zoning is to protect and enhance the character of Croom's Town Centre and to 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.

Warehousing/industrial and other incompatible uses will not be permitted in the town centre.

It is the policy of the Council to:

- Enhance and support the development of the town centre as the principal location for retail and commercial uses that provide goods and services;
- Encourage a mixed use character in the centre by supporting a variety of compatible uses that will contribute to an enhanced provision of a range of town centre uses that will consolidate the centre as the primary activity and business centre for the area.
- Encourage the integration of residential areas with any proposed development of the town at appropriate densities;
- Encourage the development of land uses that are considered particularly important to the viability and vitality of the town such as retailing and general offices;

- Improve the quality of the public realm in any proposals for the redevelopment of the Town centre, including hard and soft landscaping; and
- Promote improved pedestrian accessibility, permeability and safety

#### **11.4 Land use matrix**

The approach of the Council to land use is determined by the zoning objective for the area in which they fall. This is depicted in the following land use matrix which should be cross-referenced with the Zoning Map (Appendix One)

The following use classes apply in the Land Use Zoning Matrix:

/ = Generally Permitted

A use which is generally permitted is one which the Council accepts in the relevant zone. However, it is still subject to the normal planning process including policies and objectives outlined in the Plan.

O = Open for Consideration

An Open for Consideration use is one which the Council may permit where it is satisfied that the suggested form of development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, will not conflict with the permitted uses and conforms with the proper planning and sustainable development in the area.

X = Generally Not Permitted

A use Generally Not Permitted is one which would be incompatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, would conflict with the permitted uses and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Development	Residential	Enterprise & Employment	Public Open Space	Town Centre	Education/Community Facilities	Agriculture	Special Control Area
Dwelling /Residential/apartments	/	X	X	O	X	X*	X**
Hotel/Hostel/Guesthouses	O	X	X	/	X	X	X
Local Shops	O	O	X	/	X	X	X
Retail Warehousing	X	O	X	/	X	X	X
Supermarket >900 sq.m /Regional Shop	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Take Away	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Pub	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Restaurant/Café	O	O	X	/	X	X	X
Cinema/Theatre /Dance Hall	X	O	X	/	X	X	X
Community Hall	O	O	O	O	/	X	X
Conference Facilities	X	O	X	/	X	X	X
Nursing Home / Nursing home integrated with retirement homes	O	X	X	O	X***	X	X
Health Centre/Clinic	O	X	X	O	O	X	X
Hospital	X	X	X	O	O	X	X
Church	/	X	X	O	/	X	X
School	/	X	X	O	/	X	X
Open space/Recreational/Leisure	O	O	/	O	/	X	X
Office	O	/	X	/	X	X	X
Car Repair/Sales	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Petrol Station	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Industry- General	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Industry - Light	O	/	X	O	X	X	X
Wholesale/Warehouse	X	/	X	X	X	X	X
Logistics	X	O	X	X	X	X	X
Agricultural Machinery	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Garden Centre	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Amusement Arcade	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Advertising Panel	X	O	X	/	X	X	X
Hair Dressing Salon	O	O	X	/	X	X	X
Bank	O	X	X	/	X	X	X
Group Housing, Halting Sites & Transient sites for Travellers	O	O	X	X	X	X	X
Childcare Facilities	/	/	X	/	O	X	X
Bring Centre/Bank (e.g. Bottle Banks)	/	/	/	/	/	/	X
Burial Ground	O	O	O	O	/	/	X
Allotments	O	O	O	O	O	O	X

X\* - Residential only permitted for sons/daughter of farmers

X\*\* - Short term tourist related letting only of the Coach House

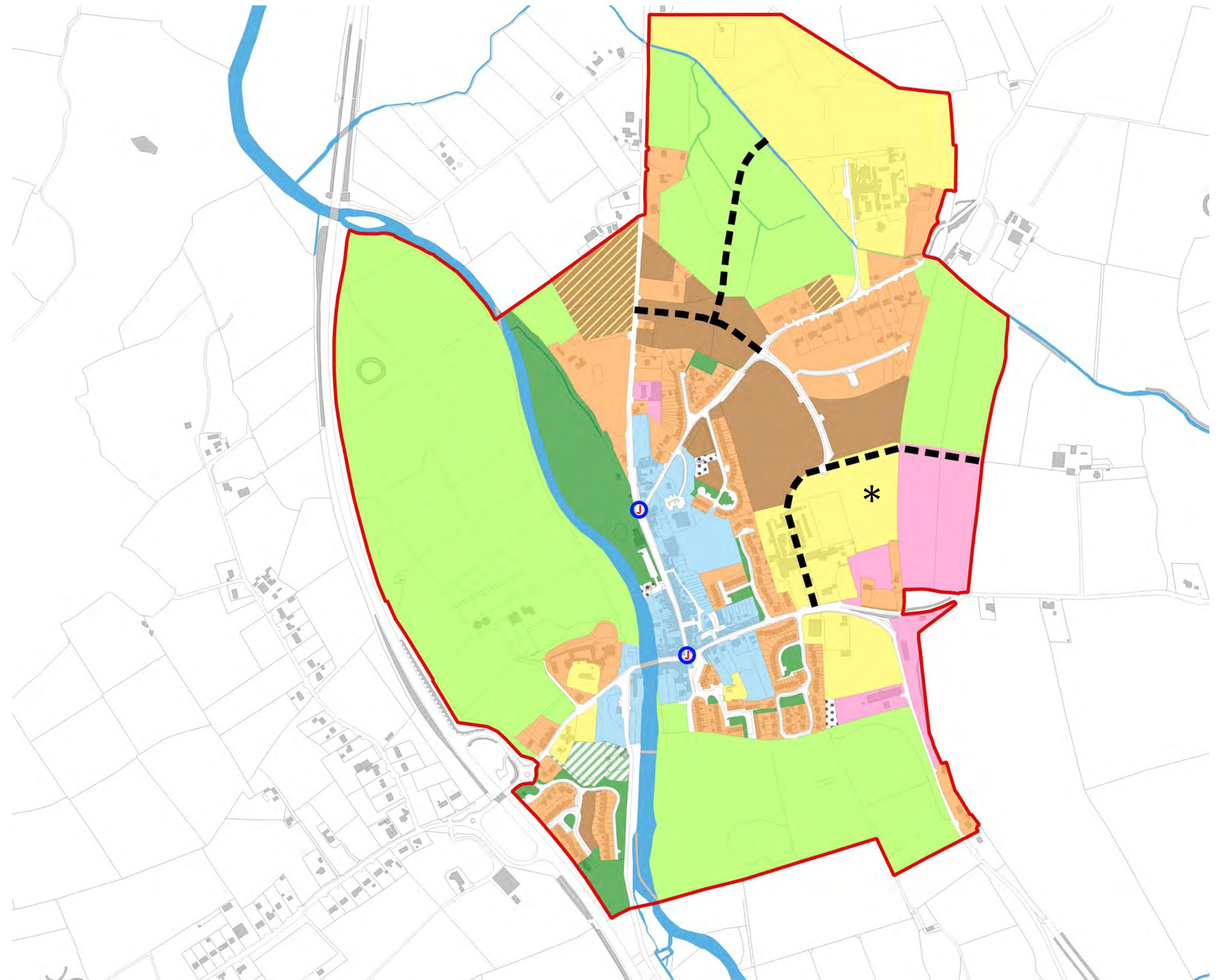
X\*\*\* - Only permitted on site marked \* on the Land Use Zoning Map



## **Appendix 1: Zoning Maps**

**Croom  
Local Area Plan  
2020-2026**

**Zoning Map**



**Legend**

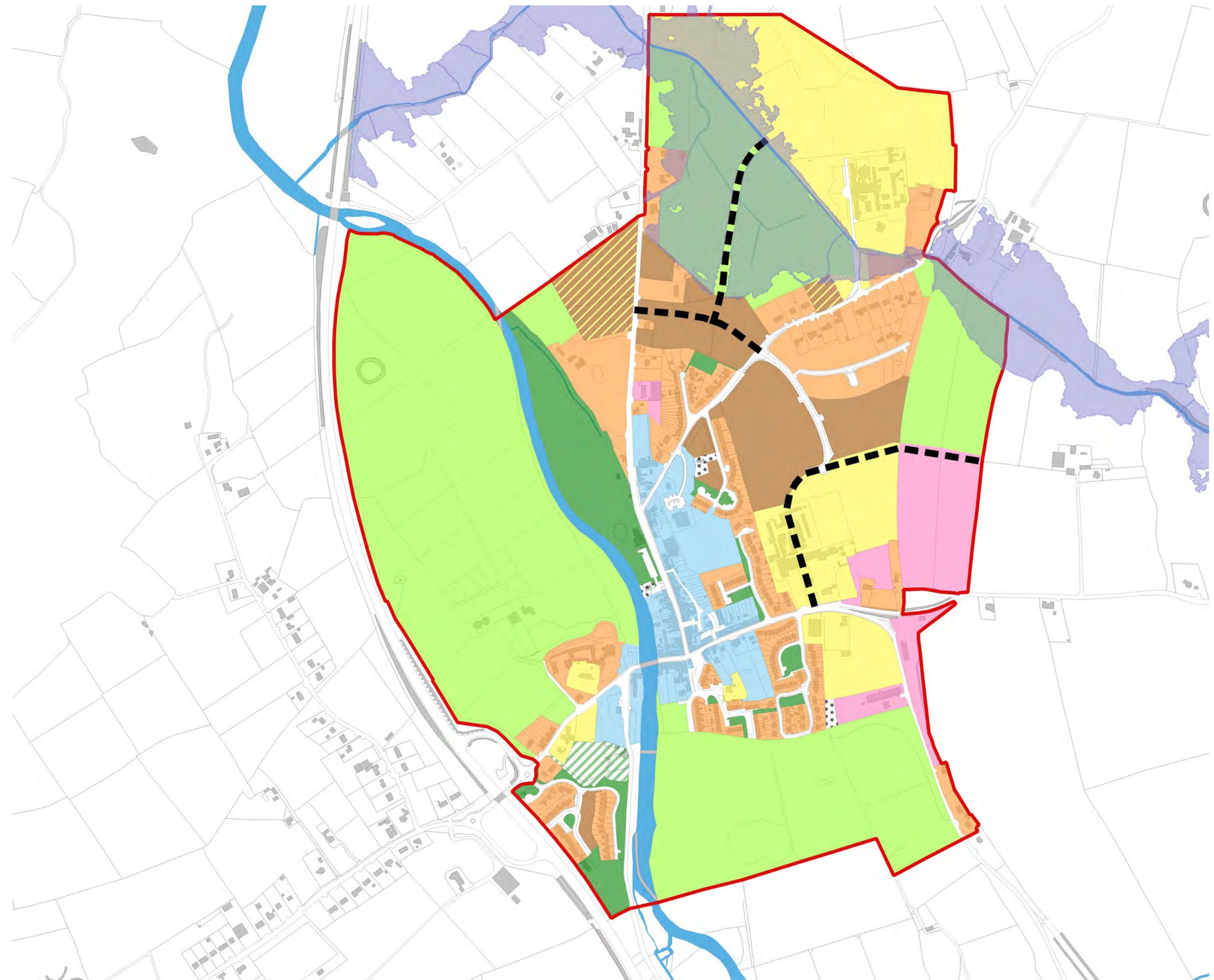
- Agriculture
- Existing Residential
- Residential Development Area
- Residential Serviced Sites
- Town Centre
- Education & Community Facilities
- Enterprise & Employment
- Open Space & Recreation
- Special Control Area
- Utility
- Indicative Distributor Roads
- LAP Boundary
- Proposed Junction Improvements
- \* Refer to Objective C5

Forward Planning  
Economic Development Directorate

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SCALE NA	DWG. NO. Cr-20/26-01
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DATE Feb '20	

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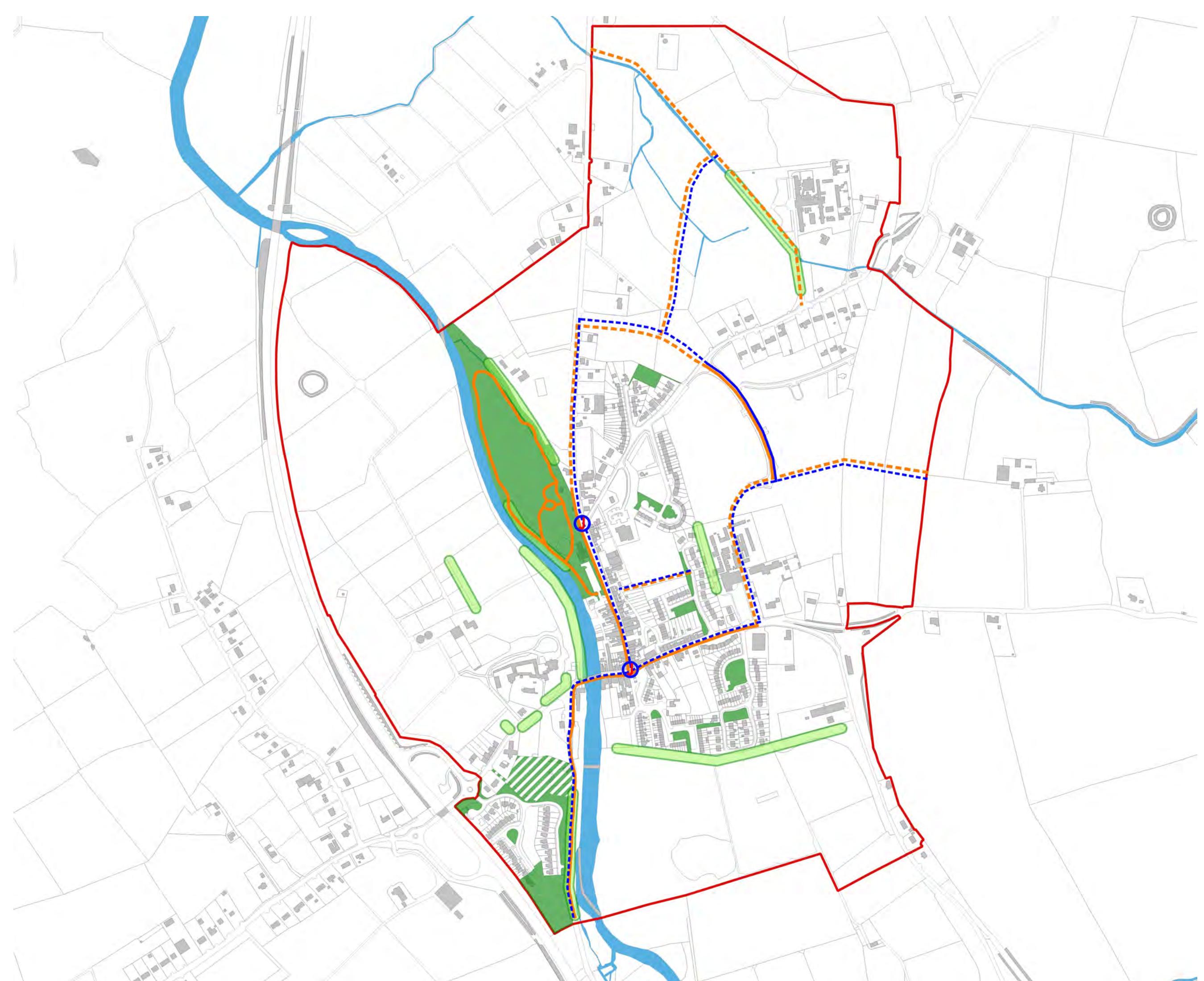
Forward Planning  
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Amenity Map



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Protected Structures Map



Legend

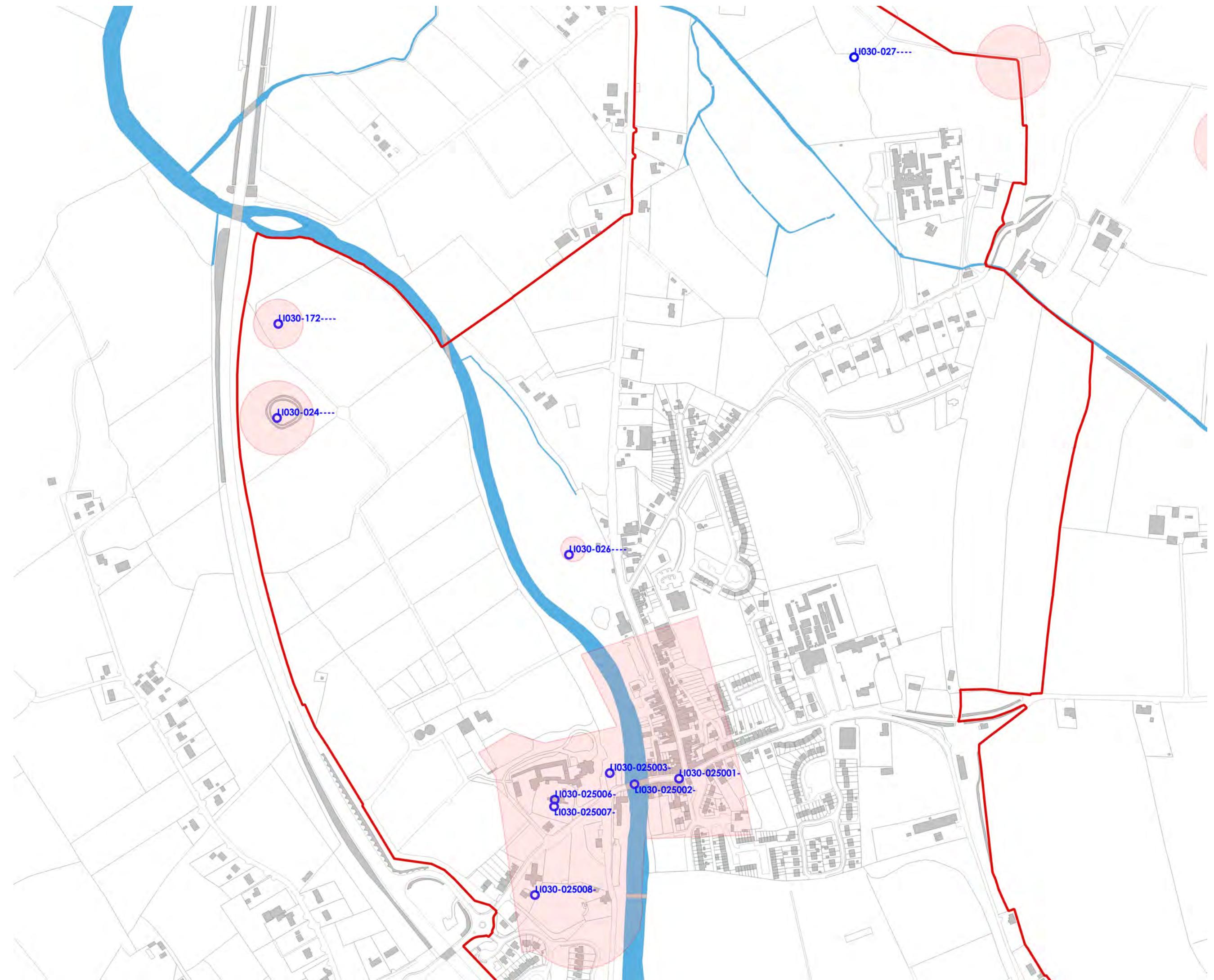
- Record of Protected Structures
- ▨ Architectural Conservation Area
- LAP Boundary

Forward Planning  
Economic Development Directorate

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Recorded Monuments Map



**Legend**

- National Monuments
- LAP Boundary
- Zone of Notification

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Economic Development Directorate

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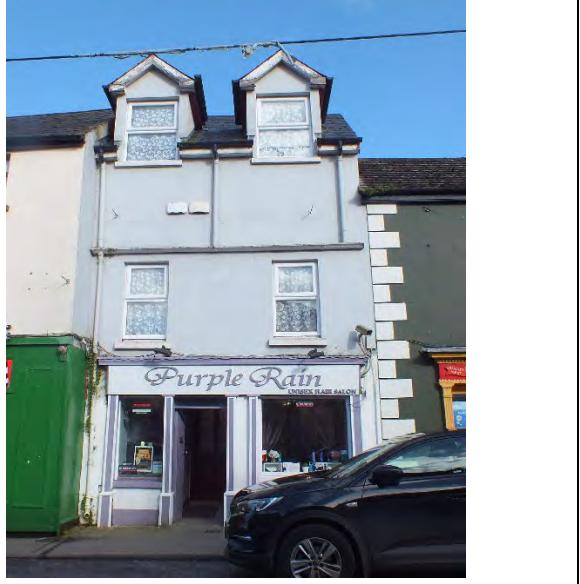
## **Appendix 2: Recorded Monuments**



<b>RMP No.</b>	<b>Townland</b>	<b>Classification</b>
LI030-024	Croom	Enclosure
LI030-026	Skagh	Holy Well
LI030-027	Skagh	Designed Landscape Feature
LI030-172	Croom	Fulacht Fia
LI030-025001	Croom/Skagh/Toreen	Historic Town
LI030-025002	Croom/Skagh/Toreen	Bridge
LI030-025003	Croom	Mill(unclassified)
LI030-025005	Croom	Anglo-Norman Castle
LI030-025006	Croom	Church
LI030-025007	Croom	Graveyard
LI030-025008	Croom	Font
LI030-025009	Croom	Town Defences

### **Appendix 3: Protected Structures**

CDP 2010- 2016 Reg. No.	Building / Structure Name	Location	Description / Comments	Picture
1120	Hospital	Hospital	Institutional & Industrial- Former Workhouse	
1121	School	Skagh	Urban Structure – Institutional	
1122	Railway Station	Tooreen	Urban Structure – Institutional	

1123	Croom Bar	Main Street(West Side)	Urban Structure - Commercial	
1124	Hogans	Main Street (West Side)	Urban Structure – Commercial	
1125	Shanahan's	Main Street(East Side)	Urban Structure – Commercial	

1126	Downey's	Main Street(East Side)	Urban Structure – Commercial	
1127	Croom House	Croom townland	Country House, includes gatelodge and gateways	
1128	Bank	High Street(South Side)	Urban Structure – Commercial, Allied Irish Bank	

1129	R. Clegg's Shop	Bridge Street (North Side)	Urban Structure - Commercial	
1130	Sean de Clegg's	Bridge Street(North Side)	Urban Structure – Commercial	
1131	Tangney's House	Bridge Street(North Side)	Urban Structure - Commercial	

1132	J. Moroney's	Bridge Street(North Side)	Urban Structure – Commercial	
1133	Not named	Bridge Street	Urban Structure – Bridge	
1134	Church	Croom townland	Church of Ireland, surrounding graveyard and boundary thereto, comprises the curtilage	

1135	Mausoleum	Croom townland	Mausoleum, in the grounds of the Church of Ireland	 A photograph showing a stone mausoleum with a low-pitched roof and a small arched doorway. The roof is covered in green vegetation. In the background, a church with a tall, dark spire is visible, surrounded by a metal fence and some headstones.
1136	Mausoleum	Croom townland	Mausoleum, in the grounds of the Church of Ireland	 A photograph of a stone mausoleum with a gabled roof. The front facade features a large, arched stone plaque with a heraldic crest. The structure is situated in a grassy area with trees in the background.
1137	Mill	Croom townland	Urban Structure – Mill(derelict)	 A photograph of a large, derelict stone building, likely a mill, with multiple windows and a weathered facade. The building is situated behind a metal fence, with a road visible in the foreground under a clear blue sky.

1138	Mill	Croom townland	Urban Structure – Commercial, Mill Granary(Tourist facility and Offices)	
1139	St. Marys R.C Church	Croom townland	Roman Catholic Church, surrounding churchyard and the boundary thereof, comprises the curtilage.	
1140	Not named	Croom townland	Urban Structure- Dwelling, Former Estate House – 2 storey	

1141	Not named	Crooom townland	Urban Structure – Dwelling Former Estate House – 2 storey	
1142	Not named	Croom townland	Urban Structure – Dwelling former estate house- single storey	
1143	Not named	Croom townland	Urban Structure – Dwelling, Former estate house – single storey	

1144	Not named	Croom townland	Urban Structure – Dwelling Former estate house – single storey	
1145	Croom Castle	Croom townland	Medieval Site and Country House. A complex site with evidence for multi-period usage with consequent alterations.	



## **Appendix 5: Serviced Lands Matrix and Map**



## **Appendix 5: Implementation and Infrastructure Delivery Schedule**



## **Implementation and Infrastructural Delivery Schedule**

### **Implementation and Service Delivery**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The Council acknowledges that one of the main factors in the successful implementation of a Local Area Plan is securing the necessary funding and partnerships to deliver key objectives in the plan, such as those relating to infrastructure and services. This Implementation and Infrastructure Delivery Schedule has been prepared to assist in the delivery of the key objectives in the LAP. The sequential development of Croom, alongside the phased delivery of necessary infrastructure, including open space, waste water, drainage, educational and recreational amenities and local service provision, is key to the sustainable development of the town. It is critical that the development of the town is sequential in nature and in accordance with the policies set out in the Local Area Plan.

#### **1.2 Strategy**

In terms of the development of the Local Area Plan, the development of the plan, has been based on the following sustainable principles:

- Application of the ‘sequential approach’ advocated by national planning guidance, whereby zoning extends outwards from the town centre.
- Promotion of the town as a walkable town, whereby, new residential development is within 10-minute walking distance of the town centre is prioritised;
- Promotion of lands close to existing community and social infrastructure such as town centre, schools, walkways/cycleways and open space and proximity to the bus stop;
- Cognisance has been taken of the need to provide upmost protection to the environment, built, natural and archaeological heritage of the town

Only in exceptional circumstances should the above principles be contravened, for example, where a barrier to development is involved, any exceptions must be clearly justified by local circumstances and such justification must be set out in any planning application proposal. Notwithstanding, the zoning of any lands, the development management process will monitor and implement the population targets for Croom, and will phase or restrict, where necessary, the granting of residential planning permissions to ensure the targets are not exceeded.

In accordance with these principals, the priority development areas for Croom are as follows:

Priority 1	Town centre – to protect , enhance and encourage the redevelopment of the town centre, including infill, brownfield and backlands as appropriate
Priority 2	Development of lands zoned New Residential, Enterprise and Employment, Community and Education Facilities and protect Special Control Areas from inappropriate development

### **1.3 Infrastructure Delivery Schedule**

This section sets out the key infrastructure necessary, in a staged delivery schedule, in order to achieve the phased delivery of the objectives of this plan. This section focuses on the key infrastructure planned over the lifetime of the proposed plan. It is acknowledged that there is a broad range of infrastructure necessary in order to enhance the services of Croom. The development and continued delivery of telecommunications and energy is addressed under the County Development Plan and Limerick City and County Council continues to liaise and work with the necessary telecommunications and energy providers of such infrastructure to continue to enhance these services.

The lifetime of the Local Area Plan is six years. The delivery schedule is divided in to the following four phases as well as an on-going stage with delivery throughout the plan lifetime and beyond:

- Short Term – 1 -2 years
- Medium Term – 3 – 5 years
- Long Term – 5 + years

There are a number of stakeholders involved in the delivery of all the infrastructure projects. All projects are dependent on funding. There are also numerous other matters that need to fall in line in order for each infrastructure project to be delivered, like land acquisition, securing the appropriate planning approval, sourcing the funding, etc. The LAP identifies a range of strategic and local infrastructure necessary to facilitate development in the Plan Area. The timely and co-ordinated delivery of such infrastructure across a number of state agencies will be a key focus of Limerick City and County Council.

The key funding sources for the delivery of infrastructure are:

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Developer	Private investment of the developer of the land to deliver/ provide the infrastructure to the standards required by the local authority and statutory legislation/regulations

State	Irish Water, Office of Public Works, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, National Transport Authority, LEADER/SICAP funding, RRDF funding, other government departments/ agencies e.g. Health Service Executive, the Heritage Council, Department of Education and Skills
Limerick City & County Council	Development Contribution Scheme and the Capital Works Programme

The schedule is a rolling programme and it will be reviewed at regular intervals to assess how the implementation is progressing, available resources and as new sources of funding emerges.

### **Implementation and Infrastructural Delivery Schedule Tasks**

Infrastructure	Delivery	Funding
Transport, Smarter travel modes, and water services		
Distributor Road	Short/Medium	LCCC/Department of Education/Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport
General road improvements, footpath improvements, cycleways/walkways, junction improvements and implementation of proposed traffic management plan	Short term	LCCC/National Transport Authority

### **Phasing:**

The phasing of development will be linked with the overall development strategy for the Local Area Plan whereby the existing settlement will expand geographically from the centre, through the development of physically adjoining lands in a coherent manner. New development will integrate with the established settlement of Croom and will be supported by the required infrastructure provision.

