

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

Re: Part 8 Proposal for the following:

The development will consist of a new burial ground and carpark consisting of the Following:

- (i) The construction of a new Burial Ground, Concrete ground beams for headstones and Columbarium Walls
- (ii) Proposed traffic calming measures and signage on the R524, a new vehicular entrance on the R524 to the northeast of site and carpark access roadway,
- (iii) Provision of a carpark to serve the existing Greenway and the proposed Burial Ground, which consists of vehicle and bicycle parking, vehicle set down areas, EV Charging and disability parking spaces and motorbike parking
- (iv). The provision of site structures to include bin stores and a utility maintenance store.
- (v) Provision of an entrance Signage Totem.
- (vi) A universally accessible ramp and handrail structure, and steps to link to the proposed development to the existing greenway.
- (vii) pedestrian access points to the existing greenway at the southwest and southeast of the site.
- (viii) Proposed onsite surface water drainage arrangements incorporating SUDS measures and surface water attenuation zones.
- (ix) The installation of a wastewater holding tank.
- (x) Provision of hard landscaped areas, extensive planting and soft landscaping
- (xi) Miscellaneous fence and boundary upgrades, gates, bollards, concrete footpaths, and all ancillary site works.

1.0 Introduction

This report has been prepared pursuant to Section 179 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended).

2.0 Description of the nature and extent of the proposed development

The proposed development is for:

- A new burial ground and carpark
- The construction of a new burial ground, concrete ground beams for headstones and columbarium walls
- Proposed traffic calming measures and signage on the R524, a new vehicular entrance on the R524 to the northeast of site and carpark access roadway.
- Provision of a carpark to serve the existing Greenway and the proposed Burial Ground, which consists of vehicle and bicycle parking, vehicle set down areas, EV Charging and disability parking spaces and motorbike parking.
- The provision of site structures to include bin stores and a utility maintenance store.
- Provision of an entrance Signage Totem.
- A universally accessible ramp and handrail structure, and steps to link to the proposed development to the existing greenway
- Pedestrian access points to the existing greenway at the southwest and southeast of the site.
- Proposed onsite surface water drainage arrangements incorporating SUDS measures and surface water attenuation zones.
- The installation of a wastewater holding tank.
- Provision of hard landscaped areas, extensive planting and soft landscaping
- Miscellaneous fence and boundary upgrades, gates, bollards, concrete footpaths, and all ancillary site works

The proposed development is for a new burial ground at Knockbrack, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. The site is 2.26 hectares.

2.1 Public Consultation:

The plans and particulars were placed on public display from the 25th May, 2026 up to and including 23rd June, 2026, and submissions and observations were invited up to the 9th of July, 2026.

3.0 Submissions with respect to the proposed development

No third party submission/observation and 1 statutory body submissions/observation were received and are listed below:

No.	Name
1.	Uisce Éireann, PO Box 6000, Dublin 1

Submission from Statutory Bodies:

SUB (1): Uisce Éireann

Submission Summary:

Submission received from Uisce Éireann outlines the applicant/operator shall comply with the Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan objectives to ensure that the development will not negatively impact on the water quality of source/receiving waters during both construction and operational phases. The applicant/operator shall meet the requirements of EIA Directive 2014/52/EU. The applicant/operator shall comply with the requirements of the Groundwater Directive, Article 6(1) of Directive 2000/60/EC. In the interest of Public Health and Environmental Sustainability the applicant/operator will comply with best practice Groundwater Protection Schemes set in the GSI Groundwater Protection Schemes. Where the applicant proposes to connect to a public water/wastewater network operated by Uisce Éireann, the applicant shall sign a connection agreement with Uisce Éireann prior to the commencement of the development and adhere to the standards and conditions set out in that agreement. All development shall be carried out in compliance with Uisce Éireann's Standard Details and Codes of Practice. To ensure adequate provision and protection of water and wastewater facilities, Uisce Éireann recommends the following;

1. Where the applicant seeks a connection to the public network, the applicant shall enter into a connection agreement with Uisce Éireann prior to the commencement of the development and adhere to the standards and conditions set out in that agreement.
2. There shall be no build over of public infrastructure from these proposals. Separation distances as per Uisce Éireann's Standards Codes & Practices shall be achieved where public infrastructure is in situ within and/or adjacent to site boundaries*.
3. The development shall not impact public drinking water sources and/or abstraction point(s) and/or abstraction infrastructure**.
4. The design and construction of the Water & Wastewater pipes and related infrastructure to be installed in this Development shall comply with the Uisce Éireann Connections and Developer Services Standard Details and Codes of Practice.

Mayor's Response:

The contents of the submission have been considered and responses to the key points are summarised below:

The issues raised in the submission have been considered. The proposed development will be designed and carried out in accordance with relevant national and European legislation, including the Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management Plan objectives, Environmental Impact Assessment requirements, and groundwater protection standards. Measures will be implemented during both the construction and operational phases to protect water quality, groundwater resources, and public health.

Where connections to public water or wastewater infrastructure are required, these will be undertaken in agreement with Uisce Éireann and in accordance with its standards, codes of practice, and technical requirements. The development has been designed to avoid impacts on existing public water services infrastructure, maintain required separation distances, and prevent any adverse effects on public drinking water sources, abstraction points, or associated infrastructure.

Overall, the water supply, wastewater, and related infrastructure associated with the development will be designed and constructed in line with Uisce Éireann's Connections and Developer Services Standards and Codes of Practice, ensuring the protection of water resources and the sustainable provision of services.

4.0 Habitats Directive Project Screening Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken by Ecology Research & Solutions Ltd for the proposed development. The screening examined the impacts the proposed development may have on European Designated Sites including the Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code 002165 and Stack's to Mullaghareirk Mountains, West Limerick Hills and Mount Eagle SPA (004161). The report concludes that the proposed development is not likely to have a significant effect on any European Site given the nature of the proposed works. The screening report has been reviewed by the Councils Heritage Officer (11/06/26) and agreement indicated with the conclusions.

The concluding commentary states:

- The proposed development has been screened to assess its potential impacts on the Natura 2000 network. The assessment concludes that the development will not give rise to likely significant effects on any designated European sites and, as such, an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- The assessment examined the potential for the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, to give rise to likely significant effects on any European Site, having regard to their conservation objectives.
- The screening process involved a detailed review of the nature, scale, and location of the proposed works, the receiving environment and ecological baseline, and the

identification of any European sites with a potential pathway for impact. Consideration was also given to potential impact pathways, including hydrological connections, disturbance effects, habitat loss, and possible in-combination impacts.

- The nearest European sites were identified as 200m from the Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) and the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries SPA (004077). However, the proposed development is located entirely outside these designated sites and is both physically and hydrologically separated from their qualifying features. A potential hydrological pathway exists, however, this is significantly buffered by existing topography and further addressed through design measures, including in the scheme as follows: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), Permeable surfacing and Sediment and runoff control measures.
- On the basis of the information available and applying the precautionary principle, it is concluded that the proposed development is not likely to have significant effects on any European Site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Consequently, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement) is not required. This determination is made based on the best available scientific information and in full compliance with relevant legislative and guidance requirements.

Having regard to the above, the scale of the development and the distance of the development from any SAC and SPA, the development as proposed should not exercise a significant effect on the conservation status of any SAC or SPA either alone or in combination with other plans or projects and therefore a Stage 2 NIS is not necessary.

5.0 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening

An EIA Screening Report has been prepared by Ecology Research & Solutions Ltd and submitted with the application which considered whether an EIA is required for the proposed development. The submitted EIA Screening Report concludes that there is no real likelihood of significant effects of the environment having regard to the nature, scale and location of the proposed development. The characteristics and sensitivities of the site and receiving environment are not considered vulnerable to significant adverse effects from the project with the appropriate best practice standards and procedures being implemented throughout the project.

The development is not listed in Schedule 5 Part 1 and does not meet or exceed sub-threshold requirements in Schedule 5 Part 2 as specified in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Having regard to the size of the development, located within a modified environment, it is considered that the development as proposed does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report. The screening report has been reviewed by the Heritage Officer (11/06/26) and agreement indicated with the conclusions.

6.0 Key Policy Provisions

Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028:

Abbeyfeale is identified as a Level 3 Towns (>1,400 population) in Table 2.4 Limerick Settlement Hierarchy.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out the following policies and objectives with respect to acceptable development at the location in question:

Policies and Objectives

Objective CGR O13 Level 3: Towns

It is an objective of the Council to monitor and review existing Local Area Plans and prepare new Local Area Plans for the following settlements: Abbeyfeale, Caherconlish, Castleconnell, Kilmallock and Rathkeale to align with the Limerick Development Plan on completion and to consolidate the growth of these towns and focus policy on ensuring these towns become more self-sufficient, in terms of job creation and services

Policy CS P2 Compact Growth

It is a policy of the Council to support the compact growth of Limerick City Metropolitan Area, towns and villages by prioritising housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing City and town footprints where it can be served by public transport and walking and cycling networks, to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence, in line with the Core Strategy Table 2.7.

Objective PF O1 Physical Framework Strategy

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Build a strong competitive economy.
- b) Promote healthy communities.
- c) Require good design.
- d) Promote sustainable movement.
- e) Deliver a wide choice of high-quality homes.
- f) Support high quality communications infrastructure.
- g) Meet the challenge of climate change and flooding.
- h) Conserve and enhance the natural and historic environments.

Policy CS P2 Compact Growth

It is a policy of the Council to support the compact growth of Limerick City Metropolitan Area, towns and villages by prioritising housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing City and town footprints where it can be served by public transport and walking and cycling networks, to ensure that development proceeds sustainably and at an appropriate scale, density and sequence, in line with the Core Strategy Table 2.7.

Policy CGR P1 Compact Growth and Revitalisation

It is a policy of the Council to achieve sustainable intensification and consolidation, in accordance with the Core Strategy, through an emphasis on revitalisation and the delivery of more compact and consolidated growth, integrating land use and transport, with the use of higher densities and mixed-use developments at an appropriate scale on brownfield, infill, backland, state-lands and underutilised sites within the existing built footprint of Limerick's City, Towns and Villages.

Objective SCSI O38 Burial Grounds/Crematoria

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Support the implementation of the Burial Ground Strategy which is currently under preparation.
- b) Provide and facilitate the provision of burial grounds in Castletroy and other towns throughout Limerick identified in the Burial Grounds Strategy (under preparation).

- c) Support the development of crematoria in Limerick, subject to normal planning considerations.
- d) Support the future provision of new funeral homes, in appropriate locations, which are designed to sensitively meet the needs of the service.
- e) Ensure protection of water quality, in particular drinking water sources, with any proposed development.

Objective HO O3 Protection of Existing Residential Amenity

It is an objective of the Council to ensure a balance between the protection of existing residential amenities, the established character of the area and the need to provide for sustainable new development.

Objective IN O21 Construction and Demolition

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Require construction Waste Management Plans to be submitted as part of planning applications, to address waste management on site during construction and mitigation measures to address waste generation, in accordance with the principles of the circular economy and the principles of prevention, renewal and recycle.
- b) Require a Refurbishment/Demolition Asbestos Survey (RDAS) with full details of disposal of the asbestos to be submitted with any planning application. The RDAS should be carried out in accordance with Section 8 of the Health and Safety Authority, Asbestos Guidelines (Practical Guidelines on ACM Management and Abatement) by a suitable qualified professional with expertise in asbestos disposal.

Objective EH O40 Proper procedures during the planning process

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure early engagement at pre planning stage is undertaken with the Local Authority Archaeologist to promote the 'preservation in situ' of archaeological remains and settings in development.
- b) Adopt a policy of archaeological monitoring of developments where the scale and nature of such developments may, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, have a negative impact on previously unknown archaeological features/ artefacts.
- c) Require the preparation of an Archaeological Heritage Assessment in cases where it is deemed that Archaeological Heritage would be affected by a proposed development (due to their location, size or nature). The report shall be prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist on the archaeological implications, if any, of the proposed development either prior to a decision on a planning application or prior to commencement of development on site.

Table DM 9(b): Car and Bicycle Parking Standards – Newcastle West and other settlements

Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029 - the site is zoned 'Education & Community'.

Objective: To protect and provide for educational, training and adult learning, community, healthcare, childcare, civic, religious and social infrastructure.

Purpose: To protect existing and allow for expansion of a wide range of educational facilities, services and related development. To facilitate sustainable development of

community infrastructure and create an inclusive high quality of life. This land use will provide for community facilities, healthcare services, childcare, religious, social and civic infrastructure, ancillary purpose-built accommodation, such as residential care or institutions to support the main use only, and other facilities.

Policies and Objectives

Overall Strategic Development Objectives

It is an objective of the Council to:

1. Seek the sustainable intensification and consolidation of the existing built environment, in accordance with the objectives for compact growth in higher-level spatial plans, through appropriate infill and brownfield development, supported by the necessary physical and community infrastructure.

Policy C1 Community Infrastructure, Recreation and Open Space Strategic

It is policy of the Council to: Support the provision of a broad range of high quality social/community, educational, health care and recreational facilities and infrastructure in Abbeyfeale.

Objective C01 Community and Educational Facilities

It is an objective of the Council to:

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

Section 11.2 Identified Local Area Plan Actions

Action 5 Develop a new cemetery

LCCC Draft Burial Ground & Interment Strategy – Sets out the need in Abbeyfeale town for the acquisition and development of a burial ground.

7.0 Appraisal

Principle of Development:

The proposed development comprises the provision of a new burial ground on a greenfield site located to the north of Abbeyfeale Town at Knockbrack, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. The site is accessed from the R524 Regional Road and is situated on lands in the ownership of Limerick City and County Council.

The subject lands are zoned Education and Community under the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029. The objective of this zoning is to protect and provide for educational, training and adult learning, community, healthcare, childcare, civic, religious and social infrastructure. As such, the proposed burial ground represents an appropriate use of the lands and is consistent with the zoning objective.

The proposal accords with Objective C01 (Community and Educational Facilities), which supports the development of a new burial ground in Abbeyfeale on lands located at Knockbrack to the north of the town. The proposed development will provide an essential community facility to serve the current and future needs of Abbeyfeale and its wider hinterland.

The development is also consistent with Objective CGR O10 (Revitalisation) and Policy CGR P1 (Compact Growth and Revitalisation), insofar as it facilitates the delivery of an important community facility within a suitably located site. The proposal represents the effective use of zoned lands and contributes positively to the social infrastructure of Abbeyfeale.

Furthermore, the proposed development accords with Objective SCSI O38 (Burial Grounds/Crematoria), which seeks to support and facilitate the provision of burial grounds in towns throughout Limerick as identified in the Draft Burial Grounds Strategy. Abbeyfeale has been identified within the Draft Burial Grounds Strategy as requiring the provision of a new burial ground, and the proposed development will directly address this identified need.

Having regard to the relevant policy framework, the zoning of the site, and the demonstrated need for additional burial capacity in Abbeyfeale, it is considered that the proposed development represents an appropriate form of development. The proposal will provide a necessary community facility, enhance local social infrastructure and contribute positively to the sustainable development of the area. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered acceptable in principle and consistent with the objectives of the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029 and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

Design & Layout:

The proposed development will consist of the development of a new burial ground and car parking area to include for columbarium walls on the western side of the site. The proposed burial ground has been designed as a parkland landscape setting that will provide a high-quality civic and community amenity while also fulfilling an important burial function for Abbeyfeale and its hinterland. The landscape design incorporates pollinator-friendly planting throughout the site, contributing positively to biodiversity. The burial ground is visually buffered from the adjoining shared parking area through the provision of tree and hedgerow planting, thereby enhancing the amenity value of the site. The proposal has been also been considered in the context of the adjoining Greenway Hub development, recognising that both facilities represent important civic amenities. The layout seeks to establish a visual and functional relationship between the burial ground and the Greenway Hub, contributing to the creation of an integrated community asset on the northern approach to Abbeyfeale.

The burial ground is arranged within a secure enclosed area and comprises a structured network of internal paths which define a series of burial sectors. Each sector accommodates between approximately 100 and 200 graves and is bounded by pathways facilitate accessibility and ease of movement throughout the site. Semi-mature tree planting is proposed at the corners of each sector, creating a strong landscape framework and reinforcing the parkland character of the development. The internal path network has been designed to respond to the site topography, avoiding a rigid

arrangement and ensuring that the layout integrates sensitively with the natural slope of the land. A Remembrance Garden is proposed within the elevated north-eastern portion of the site. This location benefits from views towards Abbeyfeale town centre and will provide a contemplative space for visitors. The Remembrance Garden has been designed to align visually with the civic plaza associated with the permitted Greenway Hub development, further strengthening the relationship between the two developments and enhancing the overall sense of place.

The proposal includes two pedestrian and vehicular access points located at the north-western and south-eastern boundaries of the site. Columbarium walls are proposed along the western boundary of the burial ground, arranged in a series of offset parallel rows which open towards the main burial area. The connectivity between the proposed burial ground and the Limerick Greenway Hub is welcomed as this could potentially lead to the reuse of the old railway building as some form of community space.

Having regard to the overall design approach, landscaping strategy and supporting infrastructure, it is considered that the proposed development will provide a high-quality burial facility and civic amenity that integrates successfully with the surrounding area while contributing positively to biodiversity, accessibility and the wider community infrastructure of Abbeyfeale.

Materials and Finishes:

The submitted material palette has been carefully selected to complement the parkland setting of the proposed burial ground and to ensure that the development integrates appropriately within the rural landscape at Knockbrack. The proposed use of natural materials will assist in creating a respectful and dignified environment appropriate to the function of the site. The proposed gabion walls incorporating natural stone are considered an appropriate design response and will provide a robust and visually attractive boundary treatment. The use of locally appropriate natural stone will help to anchor the development within its landscape setting while also establishing consistency with the proposed columbarium structures. The gabion construction method introduces texture and visual interest while maintaining a simple and durable appearance that is compatible with the overall character of the development.

Landscape elements, including the proposed yew tree planting, are considered traditionally appropriate within the burial ground setting given their long-standing association with places of remembrance and contemplation. The use of tree planting throughout the site will reinforce the parkland character of the development, provide seasonal interest and contribute to the establishment of a mature landscape over time. The proposed site furniture, is contemporary in design and will provide functional resting areas for visitors while maintaining a high standard of visual quality.

The proposed boundary treatments, ramps, steps and handrails have been designed to ensure accessibility throughout the site. The use of high-quality and durable materials for these elements will enhance the usability of the burial ground while ensuring compliance with universal access principles. The submitted details indicate that these features have been designed in a sympathetic manner that will integrate successfully with the wider landscape design.

The proposed ground surface finishes, including permeable paving, tarmacadam pathways, grassed areas and vegetated swales, represent an appropriate and balanced approach to site design. The incorporation of swales within the landscape design contributes positively to surface water management and further reinforces the naturalistic character of the development.

The proposed columbarium walls have been informed by a range of architectural precedents and are designed to form an integral component of the burial ground. The architectural precedent studies, include reference to the Mirogoj Columbarium in Zagreb, Croatia and the Pavel Kucera Garden Cemetery in Pague, in the Czech Republic, demonstrate a design philosophy centred on high-quality landscape integration, simple architectural expression and the creation of reflective spaces within a natural setting. While the proposed development is of a more modest scale, it is evident that these precedents have informed the design approach adopted for the Abbeyfeale burial ground.

Overall, the proposed materials and finishes are considered to be of a high quality and are appropriate to the intended use of the development. The palette of natural stone, landscaping elements, permeable surfaces and carefully selected site furniture will contribute to the creation of a dignified, attractive and sustainable burial ground that integrates successfully within its surrounding environment. Accordingly, the proposed materials and finishes are considered acceptable and consistent with the overall design objectives of the development.

Bin Storage:

Secure external bin storage is proposed to the front of the site. This is considered appropriate and finishes and materials are noted and acceptable.

Vehicle and Bicycle Parking:

The parking area is located along the southern boundary. As set out in Table DM 9(b) of the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, there is no category set out for burial ground. It would appear from the information submitted that 80 car parking spaces are proposed which include 5 universal parking, set-down and 6 EV spaces. Additional spaces include 2 hearse spaces, 1 coach space and 4 motorbike spaces. It is noted that 12 bicycle parking are also included. There is ample room to retrofit a part of the amenity area to provide any additional spaces as necessary. This aspect of the development was reviewed by the Roads Section (12/08/26) and considered acceptable.

Access:

The proposed development includes for a new access point onto the Regional Road (R524) and works along the roadside boundary to the north of Abbeyfeale town. The proposal was reviewed by the Roads Section (04/08/26) and a number of items were identified where further or revised documentation will be required. It was noted that the proposing department has acknowledged these requirements and has committed to providing the necessary updated drawings and information prior to the commencement of development. In addition, the proposing department has confirmed that all relevant post-construction documentation, including as-built records, compliance

documentation and final design certifications, will be submitted upon completion of the works.

Having regard to the documentation submitted to date and the proposing department's commitment to provide the outstanding information at the appropriate stages of the project, the Roads Section has no objection to the proposed development, subject to the provision of the agreed pre-construction and post-construction documentation and certification requirements.

Boundary and Landscaping Detail:

The northern boundary of the site is considered the most sensitive boundary, as it adjoins an existing dwelling. To address this interface, it is proposed to provide a zinc-aluminium wire mesh fence together with appropriate landscaping along this boundary.

Overall, the proposed boundary treatment, planting scheme, materials and finishes are considered to be of a high quality and appropriate to the intended use of the development. The combination of the wire mesh fencing, low stone walls and associated native landscaping will provide an effective and visually attractive buffer to the neighbouring property, agricultural lands and regional road, while maintaining a respectful and well-integrated setting. In addition, the use of landscaping elements, permeable surfaces and carefully selected site furnishings will contribute to the creation of a dignified, attractive and sustainable burial ground that integrates successfully with the surrounding environment. Accordingly, the proposed boundary treatment, materials and finishes are considered acceptable and consistent with the overall design objectives of the development.

Surface Water Disposal:

The proposal manages surface water using a swale and rain garden system that temporarily stores runoff, filters it through engineered soil, allows it to soak into the ground where possible, and drains any excess water through a perforated pipe. Any works will be limited and will ensure that runoff rates and volumes are managed in accordance with best practice and local authority requirements, with opportunities for minor on-site attenuation or SuDS measures incorporated where feasible.

Services:

The proposed development will connect to new public foul, water and surface water connections.

Invasive species:

There are no noted invasive species on site.

Architecture/Archaeology:

The site is not located within the vicinity of any Recorded Monument. The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), prepared by PHM Consulting, outlines that the Main Contractor will be required to implement appropriate procedures in the event that previously unidentified archaeological or

cultural heritage assets, or areas of subsurface contamination, are encountered during intrusive ground works. These procedures will be developed further as part of the detailed CEMP. Any unexpected finds will be reported to the appropriate authorities and recorded in an appropriate manner. The proposal was reviewed by the Archaeology Section (13/08/26), which noted that there are no Recorded Monuments within the site and given the scale of the proposed development (2.26 ha) and its greenfield location, the potential exists for previously unknown archaeological remains or artefacts to be uncovered during construction. In accordance with Objective EH040(b) (Proper procedures during the planning process) archaeological monitoring of all ground disturbance associated with the development is required and noted in the Outline CEMP. Accordingly, the developer shall ensure that all ground disturbance works are subject to archaeological monitoring, undertaken under licence from the National Monuments Service, to provide for the preservation, protection, or recording of any archaeological features or materials that may be encountered within the site.

Site Suitability Assessment:

The proposal was reviewed by the Environment Section (04/08/26) and it was noted that the site is characterised by peaty, poorly drained soils within the Abbeyfeale Gleys soil group and is located in an area of high groundwater vulnerability. Evidence of poor drainage conditions was observed onsite, including the presence of rushes, poaching and numerous drainage ditches along the eastern and southern boundaries and adjacent to the greenway, all of which are indicative of a seasonally high groundwater table.

The trial hole investigation identified clay subsoils with pockets of mottling occurring from approximately 0.4m below ground level, which is a recognised indicator of a seasonally high winter water table. Furthermore, during the second pre-soak phase, the pre-soak test failed and the Site Assessor was unable to proceed with percolation testing due to the extremely slow rate of percolation recorded at the site.

It was noted that these conditions may give rise to difficulties for winter burials due to the high-water table as indicated by the mottling observed within the subsoil. However, the assessment concludes that, provided graves are not opened excessively in advance of a burial, the rate of groundwater inflow is likely to be sufficiently slow so as not to result in excessive water accumulation within the grave. Opening graves the day before a burial could result in significant water ingress and potentially leave the grave containing a substantial volume of water prior to interment. It can therefore be concluded that the proposing department shall ensure that any issues associated with the seasonal high water table and groundwater ingress are appropriately managed on site through the adoption of suitable burial management practices.

Further comments were received from the Environment Section (28/08/26) following a review of the site assessment report undertaken by the Environment Section in 2019 used to choose the most suitable site. The assessment was specifically carried out to determine the suitability of the site for the development of a burial ground. Several trial holes were excavated across the site and the findings confirmed that both the bedrock and groundwater table were at sufficient depth so as not to adversely impact burial activities. The assessment also concluded that the site's low permeability clay soils and

the depth to bedrock would provide a high degree of protection to both groundwater and surface water receptors from potential contamination.

In relation to the potential for a seasonally elevated water table, the Environment Section note that the sporadic mottling identified within the subsoil was considered to be attributable to localised drainage issues rather than a persistent site-wide groundwater condition. It was further noted that the proposed landscaping, site contouring, and stormwater/surface water drainage measures would assist in addressing these localised drainage issues and improve overall site conditions.

Having regard to the detailed site assessment and the proposed drainage and site management measures, the Environment Section report (28/08/26) agreed with the conclusion of the original assessment report that the site is suitable for the development of a burial ground.

Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP):

The Outline CEMP was prepared by PHM Consulting and details the approach to the construction waste that will result from this scheme. The CEMP states that the Contractor will comply with all relevant waste management legislation, including the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended), the Protection of the Environment Act 2003, the Litter Pollution Act 1997, and the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) as transposed into Irish law by the European Communities (Waste Directive) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 126 of 2011). In addition, the Contractor will have regard to national policy and guidance documents such as A Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy (Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020–2025) and the EPA's Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects, ensuring that all waste arising from the project is managed in accordance with best practice and statutory requirements. Having regard to the above, the Outline CEMP as presented is acceptable.

Bat Report:

A Bat Report has been undertaken by Ecology Research and Solutions Limited. This report has been reviewed by the Heritage Officer (11/06/26) and comments noted regarding the eventual improvement of the site from bat conservation purposes owing to planting of 50 trees and limited mowing regime in parts of the site. The existing field is open with an improved grassland habitat which would have limited potential for bat usage.

Flooding

The proposed site is not located within a Flood Zone.

8.0 Conclusion:

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with the relevant policies and objectives of the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029 and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028. The proposal for the creation of a graveyard will have a positive impact in terms of providing essential burial facilities and supporting the needs

of the local community in Abbeyfeale Town. Overall, it is considered that the proposal will provide a positive benefit for Abbeyfeale residents.

Having regard to the foregoing evaluation and the reasons and considerations as set out, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the objectives of the Abbeyfeale Local Area Plan 2023-2029 and the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028, and with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Pursuant to Section 179(3)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the proposed development is recommended to the Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council for their approval.



Mr. John Moran

Mayor

Limerick City & County Council

Date: _____

APPENDIX 1 INTERNAL REPORTS

HERITAGE OFFICER



Planning Application Internal Report

Planning Ref: PT8 LL 393.

Applicant: LCCC

Development Description: The Construction of a new Burial Ground, Concrete ground beams for headstones and Columbarium Walls.

Report Prepared By: T O Neill Heritage Officer/ Ecologist.

Comments: comments on bat survey noted regarding the eventual improvement of the site from bat conservation purposes owing to planting of 50 tree and limited mowing regime in parts of the site. The existing field is open with an improved grassland habitat which would have limited potential for bat usage.

The AA screening notes that the site is outside any designated site and is currently improved grassland. The creation of swales will introduce some ecological features to the site. As noted in the Bat Report, the mowing regime in part of the site will also favour pollinators and later flowering plants, itself a welcome ecological improvement. Noted too that earthworks will be localised, small in scale, and subject to standard construction best practices to prevent pollution or sediment runoff. The burial ground will develop gradually over time, with no sudden intensity of development like a conventional development site with consequently less intensive loading to local drainage systems or discharges. The site is not located within any SPA or SAC, and does not support qualifying habitat types or species associated with any nearby Natura 2000 sites. I would agree that progression to stage 2 is unnecessary.

Recommendation:

That **permission be granted** for the Part 8 to be constructed and managed in accordance with material submitted.

Signed

T O Neill

Date: 11/6/2026

ENVIRONMENT SECTION



Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae Luimnigh

Limerick City
& County Council

Planning Application Internal Report

Planning Ref: 268393

Applicant: Part 8 PTL8393

Development Description: I. The Construction of a new Burial Ground, Concrete ground beams for headstones and Columbarium Walls, II. Proposed traffic calming measures and signage on the R524, a new vehicular entrance on the R524 to the northeast of site and carpark access roadway. III. Provision of a carpark to serve the existing Greenway and the proposed Burial Ground, which consists of vehicle and bicycle parking, vehicle set down areas, EV Charging and disability parking spaces and motorbike parking. IV. The provision of site structures to include bin stores and a utility maintenance store. V. Provision of an entrance Signage Totem, VI. A universally accessible ramp and handrail structure, and steps to link to the proposed development to the existing greenway, VII. 2 no. pedestrian access points to the existing greenway at the southwest and southeast of the site, VIII. Proposed onsite surface water drainage arrangements incorporating SUDS measures and surface water attenuation zones, IX. The installation of a wastewater holding tank. X. Provision of hard landscaped areas, extensive planting and soft landscaping XI. Miscellaneous fence and boundary upgrades, gates, bollards, concrete footpaths, and all ancillary site works

Development Location: Knockbrack, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick

Report Prepared By: Rona Saunders

Comments:

The following points were noted on the Site Characterisation Form:

The soil type is peaty, poorly drained soil, soil group is Abbeyfeale Gleys.

The groundwater vulnerability is noted as high.

Rushes and poaching are noted onsite which is indicative of poor drainage.

There are numerous drainage ditches noted on the eastern, southern and along the greenway which is indicative of a seasonal high water-table and poor drainage onsite.

The trial hole noted a Clay subsoil with pockets of mottling noted from 0.4 meters below ground level, which indicates a seasonal high winter water table.

At the second pre-soak phase, the presoak failed and the Site Assessor was not able to proceed to undertaking a percolation test due to extremely slow rate of percolation.

Recommendation:

There may be problems with winter burials due to high water table as indicated by the mottling. However, once the hole is not opened too early, the rate of inflow of water will be so slow so as not to fill excessively. Opening the grave the day before could result in a hole full of water.

Signed:



Date: 04/08/2026

Addendum to the above report :

Environment has been made aware that an extensive assessment of this location was undertaken in August 2019 and a subsequent report prepared in 2020 by a former colleague, Andrew Faughnan. The Site Assessment submitted with the application originally, appears to be related to the proposal for a wastewater treatment system on this site but associated with the Greenway hub adjoining this site. This resulted in some confusion as the assessment concluded that the site "was unsuitable for development", but this related to a wastewater treatment system and not a burial ground.

The assessment in 2019 was specifically carried out with the development of a burial site in mind. Several trial holes were dug across the site. Both bedrock and water table were at sufficient depth so as not to impact on burials. The low permeability clay soil and the depth to bedrock will ensure both groundwater and surface water receptors will be protected from any contamination. The assessment addresses the potential of a seasonal elevated water table with the sporadic mottling put down to localised drainage issues and is not 3

persistent across the site. The proposed land scaping, contouring and storm/surface water drainage system will address this potential.

I agree with the conclusion in the assessment report of January 2020, that the site is suitable for the development of a burial ground.



Date: 28th August 2026

Cathal Brodie

Senior Executive Scientist



Planning Application Internal Report

Planning Ref: PT8LL393

Applicant: Limerick City and County Council

Development Address: Knockbrack, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick

Development Description: A New Burial Ground and Carpark consisting of the Following: I. The Construction of a new Burial Ground, Concrete ground beams for headstones and Columbarium Walls II. Proposed traffic calming measures and signage on the R524, a new vehicular entrance on the R524 to the northeast of site and carpark access roadway. III. Provision of a carpark to serve the existing Greenway and the proposed Burial Ground, which consists of vehicle and bicycle parking, vehicle set down areas, EVCharging and disability parking spaces and motorbike parking. IV. The provision of site structures to include bin stores and a utility maintenance store. V. Provision of an entrance Signage Totem VI. A universally accessible ramp and handrail structure, and steps to link to the proposed development to the existing greenway VII. 2 no. pedestrian access points to the existing greenway at the southwest and southeast of the site VIII. Proposed onsite surface water drainage arrangements incorporating SUDS measures and surface water attenuation zones IX. The installation of a wastewater holding tank. X. Provision of hard landscaped areas, extensive planting and soft landscaping XI. Miscellaneous fence and boundary upgrades, gates, bollards, concrete footpaths, and all ancillary site works

Report Prepared By: Tony Carmody

Date: 12.08.2026

Comments:

Part 8 Application Review

1. Introduction

This report outlines the Roads Section's review of the documentation and drawings submitted as part of the Part 8 Application for the proposed development. The purpose of this assessment is to confirm the adequacy of the information provided at this stage and to record any requirements relating to further or revised submissions.

2. Documentation and Drawings Reviewed

The Roads Section has examined all documentation and drawings submitted by the applicant in support of the Part 8 Application. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Proposed site layout plans
- Road layout and design drawings
- Associated technical documents relevant to road infrastructure and access.

3. Additional Information Requirements

During the review process, certain items were identified where further or revised documentation and drawings will be required. The applicant has acknowledged these requirements and has formally committed to providing the necessary updated information prior to the commencement of the development.

Furthermore, the applicant has confirmed that additional documentation and relevant certifications including as-built records, compliance documentation, and final design certifications will be submitted upon completion of the development.

4. Technical Assessment Outcome

Following a technical assessment of the materials submitted at this stage and having regard to the applicant's commitment to supply outstanding documentation at the appropriate milestones, the Roads Section confirms that it is satisfied with the submission at this stage of the Part 8 process.

5. Conclusion

Subject to the applicant's fulfilment of the agreed pre-construction and post-construction submission requirements, the Roads Section has no further objection to the progression of the Part 8 Application based on the information currently available.

Recommendation:

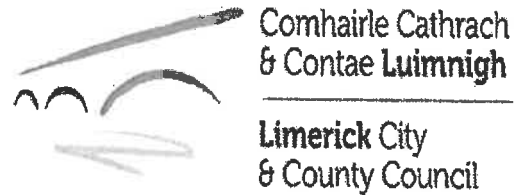
No objection.

Signed



Tony Carmody

Date: 12.08.202



Planning Application Internal Report

Planning Ref: PT8LL393

Applicant: Limerick City and County Council

Development Description: Limerick City & County Council proposes to carry out the following development works on the R524, and on a site east of the R524, all north of the Greenway Hub Abbeyfeale at Knockbrack, Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick. The development works will consist of: A New Burial Ground and Carpark consisting of the Following: I. The Construction of a new Burial Ground, Concrete ground beams for headstones and Columbarium Walls II. Proposed traffic calming measures and signage on the R524, a new vehicular entrance on the R524 to the northeast of site and carpark access roadway III. Provision of a carpark to serve the existing Greenway and the proposed Burial Ground, which consists of vehicle and bicycle parking, vehicle set down areas, EV Charging and disability parking spaces and motorbike parking IV. The provision of site structures to include bin stores and a utility maintenance store V. Provision of an entrance Signage Totem VI. A universally accessible ramp and handrail structure, and steps to link to the proposed development to the existing greenway VII. 20. pedestrian access points to the existing greenway at the southwest and southeast of the site VII. Proposed onsite surface water drainage arrangements incorporating SUDS measures and surface water attenuation zones IX. The installation of a wastewater holding tank X. Provision of hard landscaped areas, extensive planting and soft landscaping XI. Miscellaneous fence and boundary upgrades, gates, bollards, concrete footpaths, and all ancillary site works

Address: Knockbrack, Abbeyfeale

Report Prepared By: Sarah McCutcheon, Local Authority Archaeologist

Comments: There are no Recorded Monuments within the curtilage of the site. The development, however, is large in scale (2.26ha) and located in green field. There is a possibility of disturbing previously unknown archaeological material/artefacts. In this instance, it is a policy of Limerick City & County Council to require archaeological monitoring of all ground disturbance associated with the development (Objective EH040 (b) Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028). The developer shall preserve, protect or otherwise record archaeological materials or features that may exist within the site by ensuring that all ground disturbance associated with the site development is archaeologically monitored under licence from the National Monuments Service.

Recommendation: No objection subject to the following conditions

The developer shall preserve, protect or otherwise record archaeological materials or features that may exist within the site by ensuring that all greenfield ground disturbance associated with the site development is archaeologically monitored under licence from the National Monuments Service.

Condition 1:

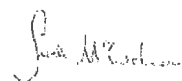
- a. Notify the Planning Authority in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of any site operation (including hydrological and geotechnical investigations) relating to the proposed development.
- b. Employ a suitably qualified archaeologist who shall apply for a licence to monitor all site investigations, excavation works and all ground disturbance associated with the development.
- c. Submit the name of the suitably qualified archaeologist to the Planning Authority four weeks in advance of the commencement of any site works (including site investigations) accompanied by a site specific letter from the archaeologist certifying that they have applied for a licence.

Condition 2:

- a. Submit on completion of the ground works a report detailing the results of the licensed archaeological monitoring works to the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and the Planning Authority. The report shall contain a drawing showing the

- exact extent of the area that was archaeologically monitored certified by the archaeologist. Excavators should include a catalogue of excavated features with 12 figure ITM coordinates for the centre point of each feature. In the event that the development is phased, interim reports shall be submitted at each stage showing the area monitored and giving preliminary results.
- b. Should archaeological material be found during the course of monitoring, the archaeologist may have work on the site stopped, pending a decision as to how best to deal with the archaeology. The Development Applications Unit, National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and the Planning Authority Archaeologist shall be informed immediately. The developer shall be prepared to be advised by the National Monuments Service, Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and the Planning Authority with regard to any necessary mitigating action.
- c. Should an archaeological excavation be required then the following shall apply: the developer shall provide satisfactory arrangements for the recording and excavation of any archaeological material that may be considered appropriate to excavate and shall undertake to complete all post excavation analysis up to and including final report stage. Excavators should include a catalogue of excavated features with 12 figure ITM coordinates for the centre point of each feature. Within twelve months of the completion of the excavation a final report (in the format recommended in the Guidelines for Authors of Reports on Archaeological Excavations 2006 National Monuments Service) shall be submitted to the Planning Authority
- Reason - In order to conserve the archaeological heritage of the site and to secure the preservation of any remains which may exist within the site.

Signed: _____



Date: 13.08.2026

Local Authority Archaeologist

