

# LIMERICK DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2028

## Volume 1

## Written Statement

Adopted June 2022

ATLANTIC EDGE
LIMERICK
EUROPEAN EMBRACE

Comhairle Cathrach & Contae **Luimnigh**

**Limerick** City & County Council

In accordance with the provisions of Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 was adopted by the Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council on the 17th of June 2022. The Development Plan came into effect on the 29th of July 2022, six weeks after the date of adoption.

Note: On the 4th of November 2022 a Section 31 Ministerial Direction was issued in respect of a number of amendments and directing that the Plan be altered.

Variation No. 1 to the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 was adopted by the Elected Members on the 22nd of May 2023 comprising an amendment to Policy TR P11 Road Safety and Carrying Capacity of the non-national Road Network and Objective TR O37 Land Uses and Access Standards

Variation No. 2 to the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 (as varied) was adopted by the Elected Members on the 30th of March 2026 comprising an amendment to Objective TR O37 Land Uses and Access Standards

Variation No. 3 to the Limerick Development Plan 2022–2028 (as varied) was adopted by the Elected Members on the 28th of September 2026 to facilitate the accelerated delivery of housing and ensure consistency with changes in national planning policy, specifically the National Planning Framework First Revision and the relevant Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

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# 1

# Introduction, Vision and Strategic Overview

## 1.1 Introduction

In the 2022 Census Limerick was home to 209,536 people. Limerick City is the largest urban centre in Ireland's Mid-West and the country's third largest City, located 200km from the capital Dublin.

The Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028 (hereafter referred to as the Plan) envisages Limerick as the principal focus within the region, with the potential to generate and be the focus of significant employment and housing growth. Limerick City and Suburbs is the prime employer for the Mid-West Region with a jobs/daytime working population of 49,871 in 2022. The strategic location of Limerick City in relation to the other regional cities and Dublin, and its location on the Atlantic Economic Corridor, presents tremendous potential for growth and investment across the county.

Some of the prime assets in Limerick include world-class infrastructure, a highly educated and skilled workforce and a high-quality lifestyle. Limerick has excellent global and national trade and tourism connectivity, with an international airport at Shannon, within the Metropolitan Area and a Tier 1 port located at Shannon Foynes. Limerick's third level institutes include the University of Limerick, Technological University of the Shannon and Mary Immaculate College.

In 2014 Limerick City and County Council was formed through the amalgamation of the former City and County Councils. The Plan is the first to be prepared for Limerick City and County and will replace the Limerick City Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended) and the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 (as extended).

Preparation of the Plan has come at a challenging time during the Covid-19 pandemic. The recovery of our economy, rebuilding of our society, renewing of our communities and responding to the wide-ranging challenges we face, will be crucial for the overall development of our City and County. Limerick previously set a successful example for recovery during the economic recession following the Celtic Tiger years. Limerick City and County Council will build on this experience in enabling and facilitating the recovery from the challenges we now face. One of the key assets in this respect is the collective approach of Limerick's stakeholders.

The preparation of the Plan is one of the most important functions of the Elected Members. The Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of Limerick over a six-year period between 2022 and 2028.

This chapter outlines the vision, strategic objectives and an overview of the Plan. The chapter also outlines the context of planning and environmental policy, legislation and local level strategies, in which the Plan has been prepared.

## 1.2 Strategic Vision for Limerick

The Plan is underpinned by a strategic vision intended to guide the sustainable future growth of Limerick.

At the core of the vision are cohesive and sustainable communities, where our cultural, natural and built environment is protected. The vision embraces inclusiveness and a high quality of life for all, through healthy place-making and social justice, including the ongoing development of the Regeneration Areas and disadvantaged communities. An integrated approach will align housing and public transport provision. Human and environment wellbeing including climate adaptation are at the core of the vision.

The strategic vision has been prepared having regard to the National Strategic Outcomes of the National Planning Framework, the Regional Strategic Outcomes of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the 8 Corporate Goals of the Corporate *Plan 2019 – 2024* and the aspirations of the people and stakeholders in Limerick.

The strategic vision of the Plan reads as follows:

**Limerick – A Green City Region on the Waterfront**

By 2030, Limerick will become a green City region on the Shannon Estuary connected through people and places. This will be achieved through engagement, innovation, resilient urban development and self-sustaining rural communities.

### 1.2.1 Key Ambitions:

**1 A Green Region**

**Limerick will develop as an environmentally sustainable and carbon neutral economy - a pioneer in sustainable growth. This will be underpinned by the promotion of active mobility for all, creating an attractive and distinctive place to live, work and visit.**

**2 Embracing the River Shannon**

**Limerick will provide room for people to enjoy the River Shannon/ Estuary. The animation of the waterfront will increase public access and create new recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.**

**3 Resilient, Connected and Inclusive Communities**

**The future development of Limerick will make it easier to live sustainably and be well prepared for the future, increasing opportunities for movement and connectivity between communities.**

**4 A Sustainable, Innovative and Competitive Economy**

**The Limerick region will be an inclusive, self-sustaining economy built on growth and innovation and which maximises its competitive edge. This will enhance local enterprises, attract international investment in a manner which guarantees quality of life.**

## 1.3 Strategic Objectives

The Plan aims to form a coherent development strategy to 2028 and beyond. The strategic vision recognises the potential of Limerick to align with the key growth objectives set out in the higher order spatial plans and to take advantage of the strategic assets of the City and County.

The vision is underpinned by a number of interlinked strategic objectives that will be realised through the chapters of the Plan. The development of Limerick over the lifetime of this plan focuses on sustainable growth of the built environment, employment generation and the provision of community and social services, together in a low carbon, compact, consolidated and connected pattern of development. Delivering on these objectives will result in an enhanced quality of life for all citizens.

The following are the interlinked strategic objectives of the Plan:

1. Grow Limerick's economy and create opportunity through maximising the potential for development through the promotion and enhancement of the **competitive advantages of Limerick**, including its strategic location, connectivity and accessibility to international markets, a skilled workforce and a high quality of life. The Limerick brand shall be used to internationalise the city. Any further brands created within and by the Local Authority, including organisations owned by the Local Authority, shall work within the framework outlined in the 'Limerick Atlantic Edge, European Embrace' brand.
2. Transition to an environmentally sustainable **carbon neutral economy**.
3. Ensure new and existing residential development is of the highest quality, enabling life cycle choices and physical, community, recreation and amenity infrastructure are provided in tandem, to **create sustainable, healthy, inclusive and resilient communities**.
4. Protect the unique character of Limerick. Support and facilitate **revitalisation** and consolidation of the City, towns and villages, through public realm and place-making initiatives. Address vacancy and dereliction to create compact attractive, vibrant and safe environments in which to live, work, visit and invest. Ensure the highest quality of public realm and urban design principles are applied to all new developments, including the construction of landmark buildings in appropriate locations.
5. Create a competitive environment in which to do business. Promote, support and enable **sustainable and economic development**, enterprise and employment generation. Focus in particular on areas which are accessible by public and sustainable modes of transport. Enable settlements and rural areas to become self-sustaining through innovation and diversification of the rural economy.
6. Reduce car dependency and promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport. Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport. Provide an appropriate level of road infrastructure, road capacity and traffic management, to support existing and future development and **enhance connectivity**.
7. Protect, enhance and ensure the sustainable use of key **infrastructure**, through the provision of support to utility providers including water supplies and wastewater treatment facilities, energy supply including renewables, broadband and transportation. This plan will also foster the linkages to transition from linear model to a circular model which keeps resources in use for as long as possible.
8. Protect, enhance and connect areas of **natural heritage, green infrastructure and open space** for the benefits of quality of life, biodiversity, protected species and habitats, while having the potential to facilitate climate change adaptation and flood risk measures.
9. Protect, conserve and enhance the **built and cultural heritage** of Limerick, through promoting awareness, utilising relevant heritage legislation and ensuring good quality urban design principles are applied to all new developments. The principle that well planned and integrated development enhances the sustainability, attractiveness and quality of an area should be at the centre of any proposal.
10. Support growth in the **tourism** sector in Limerick, specifically focusing on sustainable tourism, and capture key opportunities to develop the sector based around five key drivers – Greenways, Waterways, Activities, Heritage, Arts and Culture, in an urban and a rural environment.

## 1.4 Plan Overview

The Plan is set out as follows:

- **Volume 1 - Written Statement:** The Written Statement is the main document of the Plan, setting out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of Limerick over a 6-year period to 2028. This volume comprises thirteen chapters of text, policies and objectives for development.
- **Volume 2 – Settlements:** This volume includes the following:
  - Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty Settlement Capacity Audit, Zoning, Flood and Transport Maps;
  - Level 4 Settlements zoning and development objectives;
  - Level 5 Settlements text and boundary maps;
  - Level 6 Settlements text and maps.
- **Volume 3 – Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas:** This volume includes the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas in Limerick.
- **Volume 4 – Environmental Reports:** This volume includes the documents informing the preparation of the Plan in accordance with environmental legislation, including a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Natura Impact Report and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- **Volume 5 – Designated Sites, Recorded Monuments and Places:** This volume includes maps of designated Natura 2000 sites, Recorded Monuments and Places and other accompanying maps.
- **Volume 6 – Accompanying Strategies:** This volume includes the accompanying strategies of the Housing Strategy, including Housing Need Demand Assessment, Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick, Building Height Strategy for Limerick, Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary and the Limerick 2030 Interim Review and Update.

In the event that any conflict or ambiguity arises between the Written Statement and supporting maps, the Written Statement shall take precedence.

## 1.5 Plan Making Process and Requirements

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), higher tier international, national and regional level plans, ministerial guidelines and with regard to local level strategies and plans.

The preparation of the new Plan involved a 3-stage process as set out in Figure 1 below. The formal process for the preparation of this Plan commenced on 15th of August 2020, with the publication of the First Issues Paper entitled *Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, What is your Vision for Limerick?*

Preparation of the Plan has been informed by extensive consultations with members of the public, stakeholders, service providers, Elected Members, Strategic Policy Committees, Statutory Bodies, Government Departments and with the various Directorates of Limerick City and County Council. The final Plan was adopted at a Council meeting on 17th of June 2022.

The following sections set out the context of policy documents, local level strategies and environmental legislation requirements, which have underpinned the preparation of the Plan.

### 1.5.1 Planning Legislation

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended). Section 10(1) of the Act provides that the Plan shall set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and shall consist of a written statement and a plan, or plans, indicating the development objectives for the area. The Act sets out mandatory requirements with respect to the content of the Plan, including objectives for the zoning of land, the provision of infrastructure, the conservation and protection of the environment and the integration of planning and sustainable development with the social, community and cultural requirements of the population.

The Act requires the preparation of a *'Core Strategy'* for Limerick, which must be consistent, as far as practicable, with the higher tier National and Regional growth objectives, set out under the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

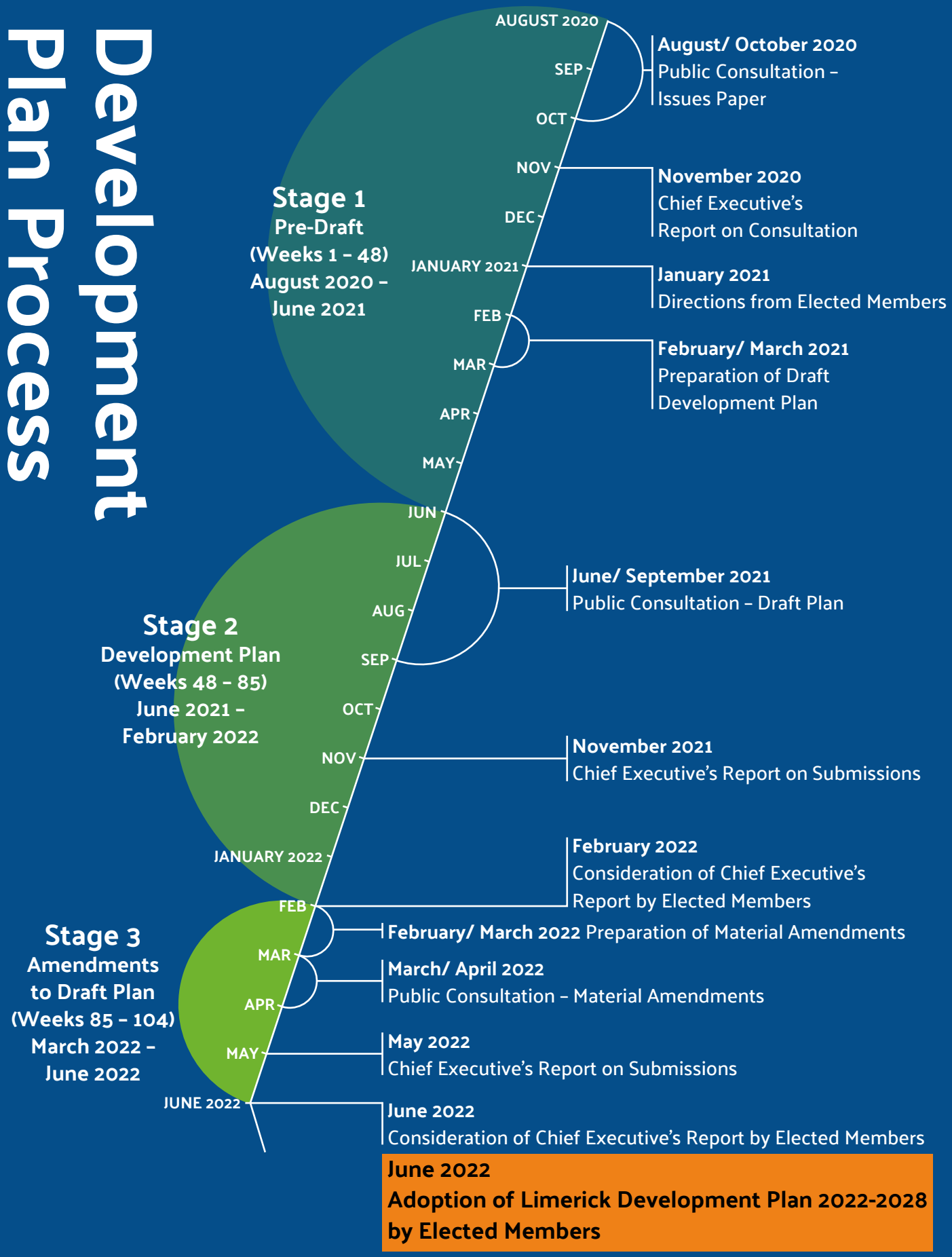
In making the Plan, Section 12(11) of the Act states that members shall be restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the statutory obligations of any Local Authority in the area, and any relevant policies or objectives for the time being of the Government or any Minister of the Government.

Where Policy Objectives and supporting text refer to specific legislation, Planning Guidelines Policy documents or organisational titles and if new or updated versions of these are published or the renaming of organisations/departments it shall be taken as read that the most up to date versions shall apply. It should be noted, where reference is made to specific National Policy Objectives (NPOs) or National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), these should be taken to refer to NPOs or NSOs as numbered in the National Planning Framework as adopted in 2018, unless specifically stated as being an NPO or NSO of the 'NPF-First Revision"

### 1.5.2 Ministerial Guidelines

In accordance with Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), all Ministerial Guidelines issued to Planning Authorities regarding their functions under the Planning Acts, have been fully considered in the preparation of the Plan. A statement of consistency with these Guidelines is included in Volume 1 Appendix 1.

Figure 1:
Development Plan Process



### 1.5.3 Policy Context

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with Project Ireland 2040 and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region.

As set out in the NPF, sustainability is at the centre of long-term planning. In this regard, Ireland is a signatory to the United Nations' Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) as set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *Transforming our World*. The seventeen SDGs reflect economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and set a framework for national level policies and agendas to 2030.

There is significant alignment between the SDGs and the NPF's National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), in areas including climate action, clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, economic growth, reduced inequalities and innovation and infrastructure, education and health. A summary of how the policies and objectives align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals is set out in Volume 4, Appendix 2.

### 1.5.4 Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 comprises the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan (NDP). The NPF sets out an overarching strategy and policy context to shape the sustainable development of Ireland to 2040. The NPF comprises 10 no. National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) and 75 no. National Policy Objectives (NPOs). The NSOs and NPOs guide Ireland's economic, environmental and social development at national, regional and local level, including the preparation of the policies and objectives of the Plan. The NPF envisages Limerick as the principal centre of development within the region, with the potential to generate and be the focus of significant employment and housing growth.

The National Development Plan 2021-2030 provides the accompanying investment strategy which aligns with the strategic objectives of the NPF.

Figure 2: UN Sustainable Development Goals



Figure 3: National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF




### 1.5.5 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region supports the implementation of the National Planning Framework at a regional level. The development of Limerick will be shaped by the Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) which provide a framework for the spatial and economic development of the Southern Region.

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) sets out the framework for the Local Authorities of Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council and the various stakeholders to implement the National Planning Framework. The MASP provides a strategic focus on the development of Limerick City and the metropolitan settlement of Shannon. The MASP supports Limerick City in becoming a major economic force in the Irish and international economy.

### 1.5.6 Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS)

The Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) has been prepared by the National Transport Authority (NTA), in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council, Clare County Council and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII). The strategy provides a framework for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area over the medium to long term. The Strategy will deliver a high-quality, accessible, integrated and more sustainable transport network that supports the role of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as the major growth engine of the Mid-West Region, an internationally competitive European city region and main international entry to the Atlantic Corridor. The Planning Authority must ensure that the Plan is consistent with the Transport Strategy of the NTA.

### 1.5.7 Limerick 2030 An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick

The Limerick 2030 An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick is a once in a generation plan, designed to guide the economic, social and physical renaissance of Limerick City Centre and the wider County. The plan sets out a framework for the integration of economic development with spatial planning. The Interim Review and Update of the Limerick 2030 Plan has been completed as set out under Volume 6 and complements the Plan.

### 1.5.8 Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024

The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is a high-level document designed to bring the issue of climate change to the mainstream in Limerick City and County Council's plans, policies and operations. Our planning system must be responsive to our national environmental challenges and development must occur within environmental limits. The key role that land use planning plays in progressing climate change mitigation and adaption is to the forefront of the Plan. Part of this commitment includes sustainable land management and resource efficiency, in order to support the transition towards a low carbon society.

### 1.5.9 Environmental Requirements

In accordance with European and National legislation, Limerick City and County Council has carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), an Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), which have informed the preparation of the Plan.

#### 1.5.9.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Plan is required in accordance with the SEA Directive (DIR 2001/42/EC). SEA is a formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan, policy or programme. The SEA process seeks to 'provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development'.

SEA has been carried out to inform the likely environmental impacts of implementing the policies and objectives and integrating relevant environmental considerations into the Plan. Both the Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment have informed preparation of the SEA. The SEA Environmental Report (SEA ER) and SEA Statement accompany the Plan. This report sets out the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the location and type of developments within the plan area, mitigation measures to offset potential adverse effects of the plan and monitoring proposals. Mitigation measures recommended in the SEA ER have been incorporated into the Plan.

### 1.5.9.2 Appropriate Assessment

The Habitats Directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance, through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of Natura 2000 sites. These are candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC), designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), designated under the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (2009/147/EC).

Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required in accordance with Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive (DIR 92/43/EEC). AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of the plan or project, alone and in combination with other plans and projects, on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site in view of its conservation objectives.

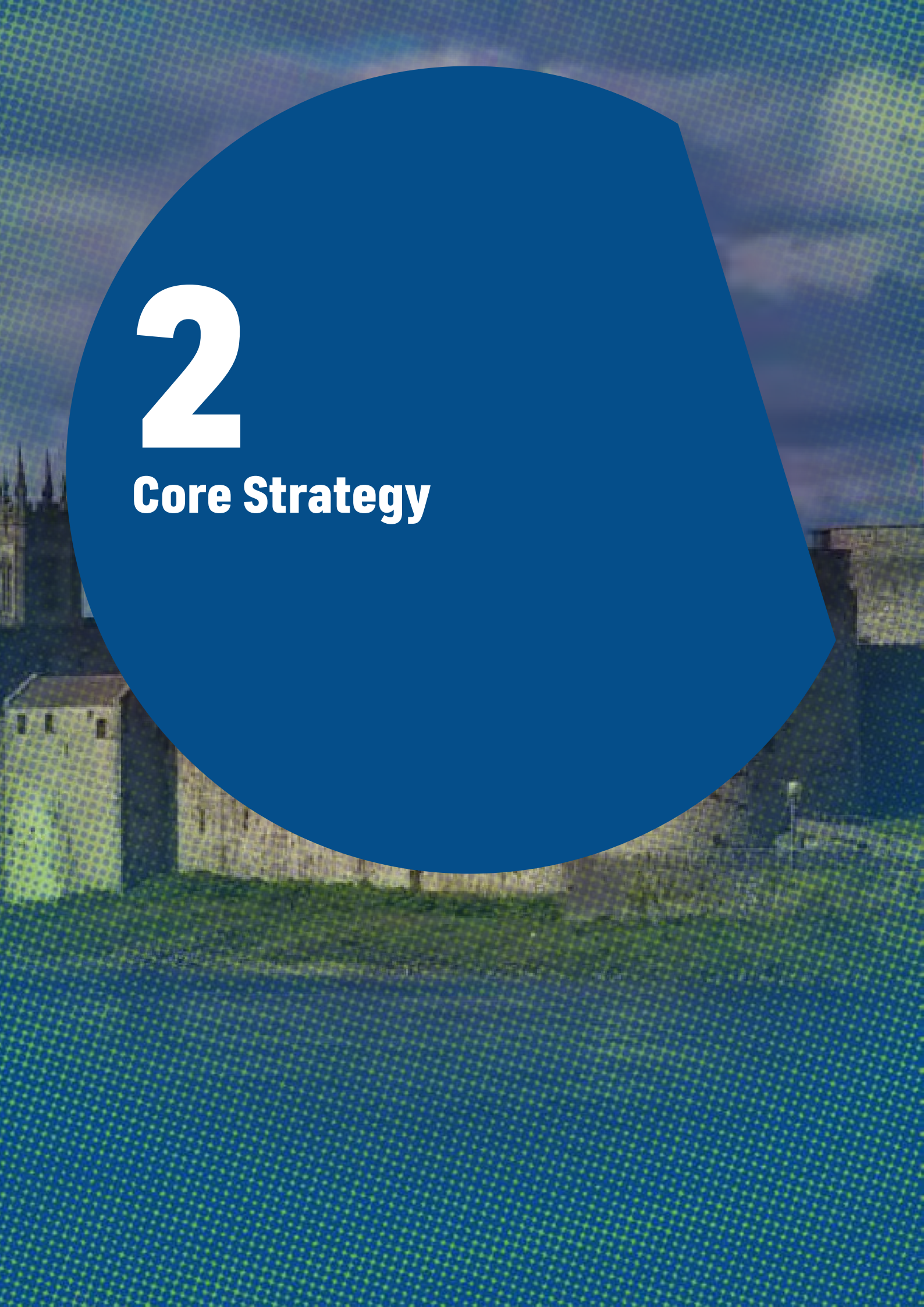
Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA) of plans and projects likely to affect Natura 2000 sites. A Natura Impact Report has been prepared for and accompanies the Plan. The mitigation measures identified in the Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Report) have been incorporated into the Plan.

### 1.5.9.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is required in accordance with *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* as amended by Circular PL2/2014. The primary purpose of the SFRA is to determine flood risk within a particular geographical area and to support planning decisions in relation to land use during development of the plan. The SFRA has been integrated into the SEA and accompanies the Plan.







# 2
# Core Strategy

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the Core Strategy which informs the overall framework for the objectives and policies throughout the Plan.

The Core Strategy provides a transparent evidence-based rationale for the amount of land proposed to be zoned for new residential development and for mixed use development, involving a residential component that is required to meet the proposed population growth over the lifetime of the Plan period, at settlement level. The central focus of the Core Strategy is to ensure there is an acceptable equilibrium between the supply of zoned and serviced land for the projected demand for new housing, jobs, social and economic infrastructure. The Core Strategy also aims to translate the overall vision and goals set out in Chapter 1: Introduction, Vision and Strategic Overview into a spatial development strategy for Limerick.

The Core Strategy was originally prepared in the context of Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Implementation Roadmap for the NPF, the Regional and Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) and Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines.

By way of variation No. 3, the Core Strategy has been updated to take account of the National Planning Framework (NPF) First Revision (April 2025) and Section 28 NPF Implementation Guidelines Housing Growth Requirements (July 2025). In line with the provisions of the Act, the Core Strategy includes a Written Statement, a Core Strategy Map, which identifies the main settlements, existing road and rail routes, designated rural areas in the county and also a Core Strategy Table. Information on the economic strategy, including the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick is also included within this chapter.

## 2.2 National and Regional Policy Context

At a national level, the National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out parameters for growth for the regions, cities, towns and rural areas. These parameters are further developed in the Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. The Core Strategy acts as the fundamental link between national, regional and local planning levels by demonstrating that the local planning policy is consistent with higher-level national and regional policy.

The National Planning Framework First Revision was published in April 2025 to reflect the changes that have occurred in Ireland since 2018, and to plan for a significant increase in the capacity to deliver housing to meet population projections. The Revised NPF sets out updated population growth targets for Limerick City and Suburbs for the period 2022 to 2040. The Framework reinforces ambitious growth objectives designed to strengthen and accelerate the development of Limerick City and Suburbs. Under NPO16 (NPF- First Revision), it is recommended that Limerick City and Suburbs should plan to grow by more than 40% to 2040.

The NPF recognises the Limerick City region as a key asset, that will play a major role in both driving and accommodating a significant proportion of the proposed national population growth and will act as an effective complement to the economic strength of Dublin. Ensuring a balanced approach in activating and realising much underutilised potential in the wider rural towns and dispersed communities is also a priority.

The NPF proposes that within Limerick, future growth will be based on leveraging national, regional and international connectivity, higher education capacity and quality of life to secure strategic investment. This must be underpinned by sustainable employment and housing development, focused on the broader Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and a strengthening of the urban cores of the county towns and principal settlements, as well as in rural areas.

The Regional and Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region sets out a number of strategic outcomes that align to the NPF 2018 (published in 2020), including the sustainable growth of a compact city, towns and villages to achieve better residential development across the Southern Region. It should be noted that the revised NPF will provide the basis for the review and updating of the current RSES, which will reflect the updated population growth and housing targets to 2040. The RSES contains a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) for the Limerick Shannon area. The MASP for Limerick Shannon emphasizes that a dynamic approach to land-use within the footprint of existing settlements is sought by the RSES in order to maximise the opportunity of urban regeneration and infill sites to contribute to sustainable balanced and compact growth and revitalisation of our existing settlements of scale. The vision statement for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area is:

**'To create a sustainable, inclusive, smart, climate and economic resilient Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, which is competitive and of a scale which can exert critical-mass leverage at an international level, maximising the economic, social, cultural and environmental opportunities in a manner for all those who live, work and visit the Metropolitan Area, Mid-West Region and for the benefit of the country'.**

## 2.3 Core Strategy Methodology

The Core Strategy is developed around a framework of high-level population and household targets that are set out in the NPF First Revision and the Section 28 Guidelines – NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements.

There are a number of steps involved in preparing the Core Strategy:

1. Identify population projections for 2022-2030;
2. Identify household projections for 2025-2030;
3. Identify the proposed settlement hierarchy;
4. Allocate population/households to settlements;
5. Identify quantum of zoned land required to accommodate proposed growth.

### 2.3.1 Population Projections

The population projections for Limerick City and Suburbs are set out in the NPF First Revision as per Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1:
Ireland 2040 Target Pattern of City Population Growth

| City | Population 2022 | Population Growth to 2040 | | Minimum Target Population 2040 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | % Range 2022-2040 | People | |
| **Limerick City and Suburbs** | 102,000* | 40% | 44,000 | 150,000* |

**Note: The Population for Limerick City and Suburbs in the NPF First Revision includes areas in Clare*

While the above table contains a population growth target of 44,000 for Limerick City and Suburbs to 2040, the minimum population target to 2040 in the Revised NPF is 150,000 for the area, which translates to an additional population of circa 48,000 based on the Census 2022 population of 102,287 (47% growth). In order to comply with the NPO 4 of the Revised NPF which recommends that a target of half (50%) of future population and employment growth will be focused in the existing five cities and their suburbs, and NPO 16 (First Revision) which outlines the targeted population growth for Limerick and Suburbs to 2040, it is necessary to target a significant proportion of the population growth for Limerick City and Suburbs, Mungret and Annacotty to 2030.

The Revised NPF NPO17 (First Revision) states that in each Regional Assembly area, settlements not identified in Policy 4 or 5 of the Framework, may be identified for significant (i.e. 30% or more above 2022 population levels) rates of population growth at regional and local planning stages, subject to:

- Agreement (regional assembly, metropolitan area and/or local authority as appropriate);
- Balance with strategies for other urban and rural areas (regional assembly, metropolitan area and/or local authority as appropriate), which means that the totality of planned population growth has to be in line with the overall growth target; and
- A co-ordinated strategy that ensures alignment with the delivery of investment in infrastructure and the provision of employment, together with supporting amenities and services

Section 2.3.4 further expands on the proposed household distribution.

In preparing the Core Strategy, the patterns of development up to the end of 2025 were also taken into account. A review of commencements of planning permissions along with Geodirectory information, was used to undertake this exercise.

### 2.3.2 Housing Growth Requirements 2025-2030

Under Section 28 of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended), the NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements were published in July 2025. The Section 28 Guidelines provide new 'housing growth requirements' to enable the revision and update of development plans by Local Authorities, in line with the Revised NPF. The Guidelines have replaced the Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, published in December 2020. The National Planning Framework First Revision objective NPO 42 sets out a need to plan for the delivery of approximately 50,000 additional housing units per annum to 2040. Given the revisions to the housing units required, the Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines set out the housing demand scenario for each local authority to 2040 by translating the NPF requirements into an estimated annual average figure to facilitate the review and variation of city and county development plans.

The housing growth requirements figures are provided in the form of an annual estimated housing figure for two time periods (2025-2034 and 2035-2040). The housing distribution at local authority level in the Guidelines is based on the NPF 50:50 City preferred scenario, which is consistent with the NPF objective for more regionally balanced population growth. Table 2.2 presents the housing growth requirements for Limerick City and County as set out in the Section 28 Guidelines, with an average of 2,599 additional housing units per annum from 2025-2034.

Table 2.2:
Section 28 Guidelines Housing Target Growth Requirements for Limerick City and County Council (July 2025)

| Local Authority | Adopted Development Plan 2022- Annual Housing Supply Target | New Annual Housing Growth Requirement 2025 to 2034 | New Annual Housing Growth Requirement 2035 to 2040 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Limerick City & County Council** | 2,599 | 2,599 | 2,740 |

The Section 28 Guidelines outline that the planning authorities have the scope for additional provision of up to 50% in excess of the baseline housing growth requirement as set out for each Local Authority, given the urgent need to accelerate housing delivery and to optimise the ability to deliver on the housing requirements as set out in the Revised NPF. The 'additional provision' acknowledges that, for various reasons, a significant portion of zoned land may remain undeveloped during the lifetime of a development plan. Table 2.3 illustrates the housing growth requirements for Limerick City and County Council including the 50% excess on the annual baseline figure.

Table 2.3:
Section 28 Guidelines Housing Target Growth Requirements for Limerick City and County Council (July 2025) including the 50% Additional Provision

| Local Authority | Adopted Development Plan 2022 - Annual Housing Supply Target | New Annual Housing Growth Requirement 2025 to 2034 | New Annual Housing Growth Requirement 2025 to 2034 + 50% Additional Provision |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Limerick City & County Council** | 2,599 | 2,599 | 3,898 |

### 2.3.3 Settlement Hierarchy

A settlement hierarchy is a way of arranging settlements into a hierarchy based upon their population or some other criteria, such as the range of services. The higher up the settlement hierarchy, the size of the settlement increases, as does the population and the range of services available. Each settlement has an important function at a local level and some at a regional level, in supporting jobs, providing services and a mix of housing, as well as acting as a focal point for community networks and activities.

The following considerations were taken into account in preparing the settlement hierarchy for Limerick, which is set out in Table 2.5 further below:

1. Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty is designated for significant growth under the NPF First Revision and RSES;
2. Towns that are located within the Limerick Shannon MASP;
3. The designation of Newcastle West as a Key town in the RSES;
4. The availability of planned physical and social infrastructure (education, community facilities, retail etc.);
5. Scale of existing population and its performance;
6. Historic role and function of the settlement;
7. Towns that have strong employment and service centres;
8. Extent to which sustainable modes of travel can be encouraged (walking, cycling or public transport); and
9. Environmental considerations.

Table 2.4 Limerick Settlement Hierarchy

| Level | Settlement Hierarchy | Settlements |
|---|---|---|
| **Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick)** | **Level 1** | Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) |
| | | Annacotty |
| | | Mungret |
| | **Metropolitan Settlements** | Castleconnell (Level 3), Patrickswell (Level 4), Clarina(Level 5), Montpelier(Level 5) |
| | **Rural** | Rural Metro Area |
| **Key Town** | **Level 2** | Newcastle West |
| **Towns** | **Level 3 (>1,500 population)** | Abbeyfeale, Rathkeale, Caherconlish Kilmallock |
| **Large Villages** | **Level 4 (>500 population)** | Adare, Askeaton, Ballingarry, Bruff, Bruree, Cappamore, Croom, Doon, Dromcolliher, Foynes, Glin, Hospital, Kilfinane, Murroe, Pallasgreen, Pallaskenry |
| **Small Villages** | **Level 5** | Ardagh, Athlacca, Athea, Ballyagran, Ballyhahill, Ballylanders, Ballyneety, Broadford, Carrigkerry, Castlemahon, Croagh, Fedamore, Galbally, Herbertstown, New Kildimo, Kilteely, Knocklong, Loghill, Oola, Mountcollins, Nicker, Shanagolden, Templeglantine, Tournafulla |
| **Rural Clusters** | **Level 6** | Anglesboro, Ardpatrick, Ashford, Ballybrown, Ballyorgan, Ballysteen, Banogue, Caherline, Cappagh, Castletown, Crecora, Drombanna, Dromkeen, Elton, Feenagh, Feohanagh, Glenbrohane, Glenosheen, Glenroe, Granagh, Kilbeheny, Kilcolman, Kilcornan, Kilfinny, Kilmeedy, Knockaderry, Knockainy, Knockdown, Martinstown, Meanus, Monagea, Old Pallas, Patrickswell (Lough Gur), Raheenagh, Roxborough, Strand |
| **Open Countryside** | **Level 7** | |

### 2.3.4 Population/Household Distribution

In line with the NPF First Revision and RSES, a significant portion of Limerick's proposed growth will be in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty. In towns and smaller settlements outside of this area, the overall objective is to ensure that these settlements grow at an appropriate rate where both physical and social infrastructure keeps pace with population growth.

### 2.3.5 Determining the Quantum of Zoned Land Required to Accommodate Proposed Growth

A number of factors were considered in determining the quantity of zoned land required for each settlement in the hierarchy. This included the number of proposed housing units, density, a settlement capacity audit, potential of mixed-use zoned land to accommodate housing units and national and regional objectives to significantly grow Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty.

#### 2.3.5.1 Proposed Housing Allocation

The proposed housing growth requirements, are distributed based on the settlement hierarchy.

#### 2.3.5.2 Density

The *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* were published in 2024. These Guidelines set out national planning policy and guidance in relation to the planning and development of urban and rural settlements, with a focus on sustainable residential development and the creation of compact settlements. The Guidelines replace the Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas-Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 in 2009 (revoked). They build on and update previous guidance to take account of current Government policy, legislative frameworks and economic, social and environmental considerations.

The Guidelines expand on the higher-level policies of the National Planning Framework, setting policy and guidance in relation to the growth priorities for settlements, residential density, urban design and placemaking and introduce standards for housing development.

An increase in residential densities is essential to achieve the housing targets for Limerick City and County in a sustainable and compact manner. The range of densities allocated to the settlements will optimize the use of serviced lands and maximise the viability of investment in social and physical infrastructure, in particular public transport. Consolidation of the built environment through the reuse of underutilized infill and brownfield sites will minimise urban sprawl and loss of biodiversity on the edges of the settlement. More compact and intensified settlements will also enable a reduction in travel and energy demands, thus alleviating climate change. Higher densities across the settlements can facilitate emerging sectors of the residential market, including purpose built student accommodation.

The Guidelines introduced a range of net densities (dph – dwellings per hectare) that respond to the settlement's level in the hierarchy, size and different place contexts, recognising in particular the differences between the city, towns and villages.

In Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) Mungret and Annacotty, the applicable density range has been set out on the basis of three zones comprising the City Centre, Urban Neighbourhoods and Suburban/ Urban Extension areas in accordance with the Guidelines and having cognisance to proximity to centres, public transport corridors and major employment zones. The density zones are outlined in Table 2.5 and Map 2.1 below. Where applicable, the density zones are described for the relevant settlements in accordance with the provisions of the Guidelines in the Table below.

The development standards for housing within the Guidelines will allow for greater flexibility and innovation and support the delivery of a greater range of housing options. As necessary further refinement of the density ranges will be considered in the assessment of planning applications in Urban Areas Plans and Priority Area Plans.

In accordance with the Guidelines, Limerick City and County Council will generally encourage residential densities that are:

- At or above the mid-density range at the most central or accessible locations, together with locations proximate to high-capacity transport nodes or interchanges;
- Close to the mid-density range at intermediate locations; and
- Below the mid-density range at peripheral locations.

The appropriateness of a proposed density shall be considered by the Planning Authority in the context of the Guidelines and the receiving environment with respect to impacts on:

- Defining important local characteristics of an area;
- The amenities of existing surrounding residential properties including privacy, daylight/sunlight and microclimate;
- The natural, historic and built environment.

Within settlements outside of Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, allowance will be made for the development of serviced/cluster sites, which will act as an alternative to one off rural housing. Up to 20% of proposed housing units within these settlements will be allocated to serviced sites at a density of 10 units per hectare. This is reflected in Table 2.5 below.

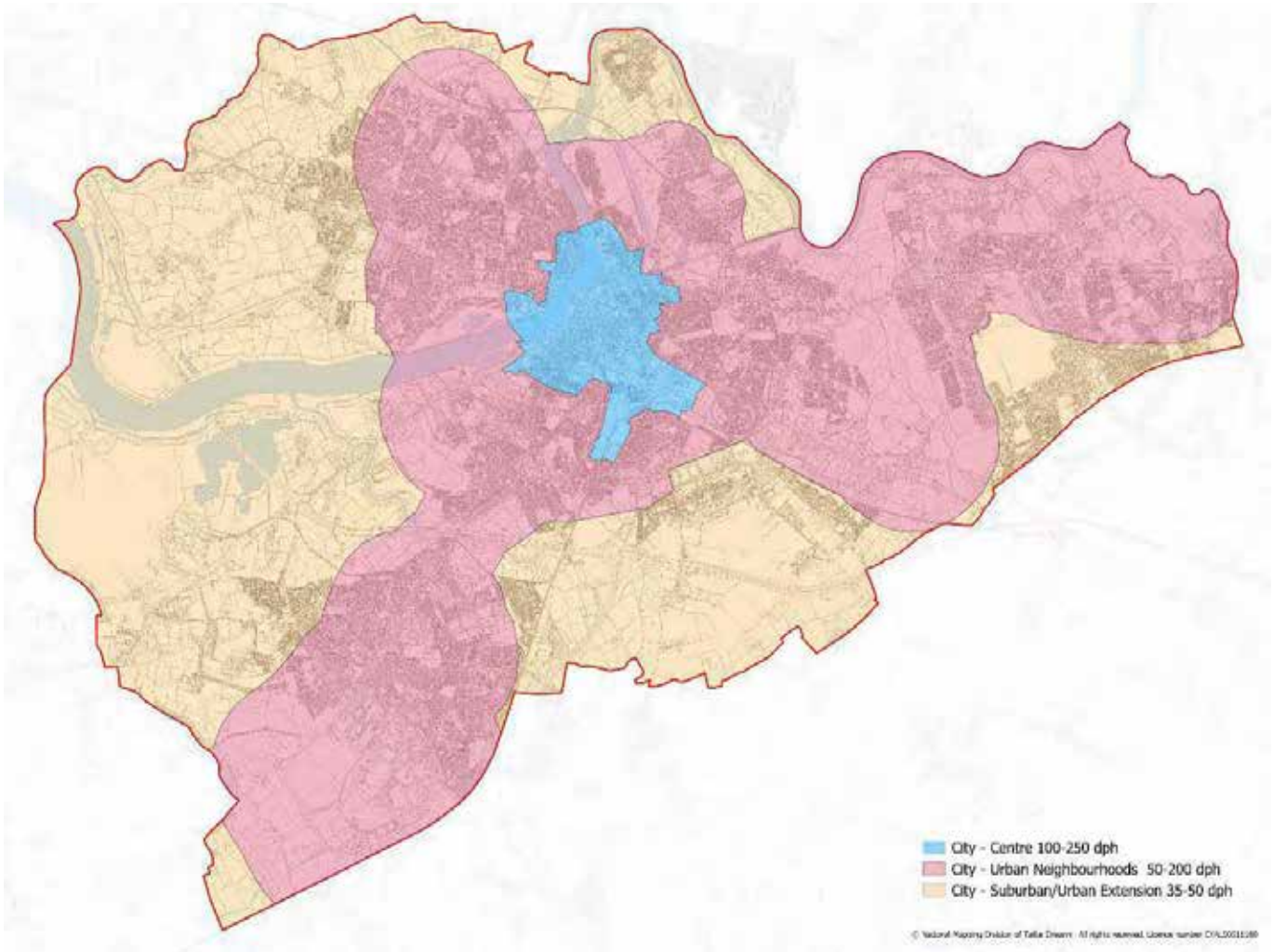
In line with the above considerations and Section 28 Guidelines, the following density assumptions were applied to the settlement hierarchy:

Table 2.5: Density Assumptions per Settlement Hierarchy

| Level | Settlement Hierarchy | Density applied |
|---|---|---|
| **Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick)** | **Level 1 Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty (see Map 2.2 below)** | **Density Zone 1: City Centre:**<br>A net density in the range of 100 to 250 dwelling units per hectare shall generally be applied within the City Centre. |
| | | **Density Zone 2: Urban Neighbourhoods:**<br>A net density in the range of 50 to 200 dwelling units per hectare are required at appropriate locations within:<br>800 metres of (i) the University Hospital; (ii) Raheen Business Park; (iii) National Technology Park; (iv) University of Limerick; (v) Technological University of the Shannon; (vi) Mary Immaculate College; (vii) Bons Secours Hospital<br>500m of high frequency (min. 10-minute peak hour frequency) existing or proposed urban bus services and;<br>Compact medium density residential neighbourhoods around the city centre that have evolved over time. |
| | | **Density Zone 3: Suburban / Urban Extension:**<br>A net density in the range of 35 to 50 dwelling units per hectare shall generally be applied. Densities of up to 100 dwelling units per hectare shall be open for consideration at accessible suburban/ urban extension locations. |
| | **Metropolitan Settlements** | **Metropolitan Town of Castleconnell**<br>**Density Zone 1: Centre and Urban Neighbourhoods –**<br>Comprising:<br>(i) Town Centre and immediately surrounding neighbourhoods;<br>(ii) Strategic and sustainable development locations and;<br>(iii) Lands around existing or planned high capacity transport nodes or interchanges:<br>A net density in the range of 50 to 150 dwelling units per hectare shall generally be applied.<br>**Density Zone 2: Suburban/ Urban Extension –**<br>Comprising:<br>(i) Low density car orientated residential areas constructed at the edge of the town;<br>(ii) Greenfield lands at the edge of the existing built-up footprint that are zoned for residential or mixed use (including residential) development:<br>A net density in the range of 35 to 50 dwelling units per hectare shall generally be applied. Densities of up to 100 dwelling units per hectare shall be open for consideration at accessible suburban / urban extension locations. |
| | | **Metropolitan Village of Patrickswell**<br>Density should reflect existing density and/ or built form but should not generally fall below 25 dwelling units per hectare. |
| | | **Metropolitan Village of Clarina**<br>Density should reflect existing density and/ or built form but should not generally fall below 25 dwelling units per hectare. |

| Level | Settlement Hierarchy | Density applied |
|---|---|---|
| **Key Town** | **Level 2** | **Newcastle West**<br>**Density Zone 1: Centre and Urban Neighbourhood –**<br>Comprising:<br>(i) Town centre and surrounding streets;<br>(ii) Urban neighbourhoods consisting of the early phases of residential development around the centre that have evolved over time:<br><br>A net density in the range of 40 to 100 dwelling units per hectare shall generally be applied.<br><br>**Density Zone 2: Suburban/ Urban Extension –**<br>Comprising:<br>(i) Low density car orientated residential areas at the edge of the town;<br>(ii) Greenfield lands at the edge of the existing built-up footprint zoned for residential or mixed use (including residential) development:<br><br>A net density in the range of 30 to 50 dwelling units per hectare shall generally be applied. Densities of up to 80 dwelling units per hectare shall be open for consideration at accessible locations. |
| **Towns** | **Level 3 (>1,500 population)** | **Abbeyfeale, Rathkeale, Caherconlish, Kilmallock**<br>**Density Zone 1: Town Centre –**<br>Comprising:<br>(i) Town centre main street and streets immediately adjoining;<br>(ii) Urban neighbourhoods consisting of the early phases of residential development around the centre and may include local services and interdispersed commercial, industrial and institutional uses:<br><br>The scale should respond positively to the scale, form and character of existing development, and to the capacity of services and infrastructure.<br><br>**Density Zone 2: Town Edge –**<br>Comprising:<br>(i) Lower density housing areas constructed around the centre;<br>(ii) Greenfield lands at the edge of the built-up area that are zoned for residential or mixed use (including residential) development.<br><br>A net density in the range of 25 to 40 dwelling units per hectare shall generally be applied. |
| **Large Villages** | **Level 4 (>500 population)** | Adare, Askeaton, Ballingarry, Bruff, Bruree, Cappamore, Croom, Doon, Dromcolliher, Foynes, Glin, Hospital, Kilfinane, Murroe, Pallasgreen, Pallaskenry<br><br>The density of development at such locations should respond in a positive way to the established context. |
| **Small Villages** | **Level 5** | Ardagh, Athlacca, Athea, Ballyagran, Ballyhahill, Ballylanders, Ballyneety, Broadford, Carrigkerry, Castlemahon, Croagh, Fedamore, Galbally, Herbertstown, New Kildimo, Kilteely, Knocklong, Loghill, Oola, Montpelier, Mountcollins, Nicker, Shanagolden, Templeglantine, Tournafulla<br><br>See objective CGR O17 in Chapter 3<br><br>The density of development at such locations should respond in a positive way to the established context. |
| **Rural Clusters** | **Level 6** | See objective CGR O19 in Chapter 3 |
| **Open Countryside** | **Level 7** | N/A |

Map 2.1 Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty Density Zones




### 2.3.5.3 Settlement Capacity Audit

In accordance with the methodology set out in Appendix 3 of the NPF, a Settlement Capacity Audit was applied through the carrying out of an infrastructural assessment for each of the zoned settlements within the Plan. See Volume 2 of the Plan for further details.

### 2.3.5.4 Potential Housing Yield on Town Centre/Mixed Use Zoned Land

The potential housing yield on Local Centre/mixed use (in the case of Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty where applicable) zoned land was considered on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the vacancy and dereliction within each settlement and also the quantum of land zoned for Town Centre/mixed use development within the particular settlement. Consideration of this issue can be found within Volume 2 of the Plan, which contains a description, infrastructure assessment report and zoning maps for Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty and a number of Level 4 settlements.

## 2.4 Core Strategy Statement

The approach in developing the Core Strategy is focused on developing and strengthening the role of Limerick City as an international city of scale, the key town of Newcastle West, large towns, villages and rural clusters. There is a focus on increasing residential densities and employment in the City and main towns, thereby decreasing the distance that people have to travel from their home to work. The strategy is also focused around settlements with good public transport links and improving public transport links in other settlements, highlighting the importance of integrating land use and transportation to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy.

The concept of developing a 10-minute city/town with a series of neighbourhoods and vibrant towns and villages, which are compact, that can support a range of jobs, services and housing choice, not only provide the basis of strong economies and communities, but also support a greater range of sustainable modes of transport, both within and between settlements. The development of a network of settlements that work together to the benefit of Limerick and all its inhabitants, including those in rural areas can only occur in a planned way.

Guidance throughout the Plan on housing densities, building height and development layouts, are all aimed at ensuring the economic use of land for development, compact, quality neighbourhoods and integration with infrastructure and non-residential land uses that nurtures sustainable travel patterns and choices.

Prioritising the development of brownfield sites and reducing vacancy in Limerick City and Town Centres should also assist in the increase in average densities and in helping to revitalise many rural towns and villages as well as their surrounding areas. Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy outlines objectives for the regeneration of opportunity sites within the City with a view to realising their full potential to contribute to the growth of the city. For larger settlements, Local Area Plans will be prepared, during which time opportunities will be identified for brownfield and regeneration opportunities. Furthermore, Volume 2 sets out development objectives for a number of Level 4 settlements where this issue has been considered.

The Settlement Hierarchy is developed around seven levels. While each level serves a different strategic role, together they will achieve a balanced, spatial planning settlement framework, which supports our urban and rural areas. All settlements, regardless of their Level, have an important role and contribution to make to the economic and social life of Limerick.

The Plan aims to facilitate the sustainable growth of Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty in line with the Revised NPF and RSES. The Revised NPF supports ambitious growth targets to enable Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty to grow by at least 40% by 2040 and to achieve its potential to become a City of scale. This area forms part of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area in the RSES, coming within the scope of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) and as such is a priority growth area within the strategy's policy framework. The MASP recognises that for the Metropolitan Area to prosper and develop in a sustainable manner, Limerick City must be the primary driver of economic and population growth in the Southern Region, so that it can compete effectively for investment and jobs.

There are a number of districts within the Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, which provide important opportunities for the sustainable development of residential, educational, recreation and amenity, employment and commercial uses. These include the Ennis Road, Caherdavin, Thomondgate, Corbally, Rhebogue, Garryowen, South Circular Road /Ballinacurra, Castletroy, Raheen/ Dooradoyle and Mungret. The NPF First Revision also recognises the importance of sustainable development of new brownfield and greenfield areas and specifically refers to Mungret as a key future growth enabler for Limerick in terms of 'progressing the sustainable development of new brownfield and greenfield areas for housing and the development of supporting public transport and infrastructure'.

To do this, growth must complement and consolidate the urban form of the City as a whole to create a compact City region with improved integrated supporting infrastructure, public transport improvements to provide linkages to local residential populations and the provision of high levels of community facilities and amenities. The integration of the designated Regeneration Areas, including Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St. Mary's Park into the wider City area is also an important focus of the Plan.

Outside of the City, the policy intention is to focus on supporting sustainable and vibrant rural communities by supporting and regenerating towns and villages. This will be facilitated through a number of measures including active land management measures, effective use of funding streams for town/village and public realm improvement (including the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF), LEADER etc.), working with community groups and utilising available statutory powers such as derelict site and compulsory purchase powers. The promotion of an alternative to one off rural housing in the open countryside, through initiatives like serviced sites and redevelopment of vacant units in town, villages and rural areas, will be encouraged. This will support the regeneration of these settlements.

Within the open countryside, the Plan identifies two types of areas for rural housing:

1. Areas under urban influence and;
2. Rural areas elsewhere;

and recommends a policy approach to each area, which supports those who have a need to live within the rural area.

## 2.5 Local Area Plans

The Core Strategy provides an objective evidence base to allow for an area to be zoned for development, which can then be delivered in a sustainable and planned manner. At a local level, statutory LAPs were the primary vehicles for guiding and informing the content, layout and design of both 'new' and 'redevelopment' areas in various settlements. The Planning and Development Act 2024 introduced major reforms to the Irish Planning system, including replacing Local Area Plans with three types of area-based plans:

- **Urban Area Plans:** For regional growth centres and key towns identified in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy;
- **Priority Area Plans:** For parts of towns or cities with potential for major housing or other development;
- **Coordinated Area Plans:** Jointly prepared by two or more local authorities.

The Planning Authority will incorporate the existing Local Area Plans by way of variations to the Development Plan or by way of the preparation of a new Development Plan in line with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2024.

Since the adoption of the Development Plan a number of new Local Area Plans have been prepared including Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale, Adare, Caherconlish, Castleconnell, Kilmallock, Patrickswell and Rathkeale.

### 2.5.1 Phasing of Lands – Local Area Plans

A number of existing Local Area Plans have a significant amount of Phase 2 lands zoned. Phase 2 lands cannot proceed for development until 50% of the lands in Phase 1 have been developed. Having regard to the Plan's Core Strategy figures, it is likely that some of this land will be de-zoned during the Local Area Plan Review. In order to allow a degree of flexibility to applicants who meet the rural housing need, as outlined in Chapter 4 and who wish to build their homes on lands zoned Phase 2 / 3 within a Local Area Plan, individual planning applications will be considered on their merit and on a case-by-case basis having regard to all relevant planning criteria.

**Objective CS O1**
**Phase 2 Residential Development Lands**
It is an objective of the Council to consider applications for individual houses on lands currently zoned Phase 2/3 Residential Development, within Local Area Plans subject to the applicant meeting rural housing criteria as outlined in Objective HO O20 or Objective HO O21 of the Rural Settlement Strategy, whichever is applicable. Applications for individual planning applications will be considered on their merit and on a case-by-case basis having regard to all relevant planning criteria.

## 2.6 Employment Development

### 2.6.1 Employment Strategy

To complement the preparation of the Core Strategy, the Guidance Note on Core Strategies (2010) states that Planning Authorities should undertake an appropriate level of analysis to ensure that sufficient lands are identified for employment purposes at suitable locations, taking proper account of national planning policies.
While the Guidance document does not provide a methodology for determining the appropriate quantum of employment zoned lands, the Plan sets out objectives and zoning of land for employment uses that has regard to national policy, the Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) and the availability of infrastructure.
The employment strategy aims to develop Limerick's enormous competitive advantages, including its central location on the Atlantic Economic Corridor, its national and international trade and tourism connectivity through Shannon Airport and Shannon Foynes Port Company and its third level complement, via the University of Limerick, Limerick Institute of Technology and Mary Immaculate College, that ensures constant supply of graduates. The NPF and NDP's support for the implementation of the Limerick 2030 Plan will also help realise the potential to generate and be the focus of significant employment growth. It is ideally positioned from a scale and capacity perspective, to accommodate significant population and economic growth as proposed in the NPF.

Chapter 5: A Strong Economy sets out the policies and objectives for economic development over the Plan period. The overall objective of the Plan is to ensure that there is sufficient zoned land, based on the principles of sequential development, to accommodate the overall growth proposed and also to recognise the importance of Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty as a regional employment centre.

### 2.6.2 Retail Strategy

Section 10(2A)(e) of the Act requires a Core Strategy to contain information to show that, in setting out objectives regarding retail development, the Planning Authority has had regard to Section 28 Guidelines that relate to retail planning. A successful retail sector that safeguards existing retail floor space, as well as providing additional floor space has an important role to play in realising the aims of the Settlement Strategy.

In line with the RSES MASP Objective 17, a Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick was prepared. This document, which also considered the remainder of Limerick outside of the MASP area, is included in Volume 6.

The Strategy is aligned to the Core Strategy and the Settlement Hierarchy. It focuses on maintaining and further developing Limerick City for its dominant retail function in the Mid-West hierarchy, the development of District Centres, the Key Town of Newcastle West and other towns as the main retail centres in the county. The development of retail services in the smaller settlements will be focused on providing support services for their respective populations and rural hinterlands.

The Plan recognises that the retail sector is pivotal to regeneration and renewal of Town Centre areas, their economic viability and delivery of a high-quality public realm, built environment and sense of place.

## 2.7 Core Strategy Policies and Objectives

**Policy CS P1**
**Core Strategy Implementation**
It is a policy of the Council to implement the Core Strategy for Limerick to ensure consistency with policies at a national and regional level, in particular population targets and distribution.

**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 CS P3**
**Availability of Land**
It is a policy of the Council to ensure that sufficient zoned land continues to be available for the projected population and employment growth over the lifetime of the Plan.

**Policy CS P4**
**Local Area Plans**
It is a policy of the Council to use Local Area Plans, that form part of the hierarchy of plans within Limerick, to promote and embed the principles of good urban design in the delivery of new and existing, sustainable communities. Following the adoption of the Plan, a review of the existing Local Area Plans will be undertaken to ensure consistency with the Core Strategy and policies and objectives of the Development Plan.

**Policy CS P5**
**Road Network**
It is a policy of the Council to maintain the strategic function, capacity and safety of the national roads network, including planning for future capacity enhancements and ensure that the existing extensive transport networks, which have been greatly enhanced over the last two decades, are maintained to a high level to ensure quality levels of service, safety, accessibility and connectivity to transport users.

**Policy CS P6**
**LSMATS**
It is a policy of the Council to ensure that the Core Strategy is in line with the objectives of the final LSMATS and the integration of land use planning and transport in reducing the need to travel and promote modal shift from the use of the private car.

**Policy CS P7**
**Settlement Strategy**
It is a policy of the Council to:

a) Align with the provisions of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.
b) Accord with the Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2: Core Strategy and the Housing Strategy, including the Housing Needs Demand Assessment for Limerick set out in Volume 6 of the Plan.
c) Seek to promote the creation of sustainable places and healthy communities, while ensuring that development occurs at an appropriate pace and that infrastructure is delivered in tandem to support this growth.

**Policy CS P8**
**Development of Limerick in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy**
It is a policy of the Council to develop Limerick in accordance with the Settlement Strategy and Hierarchy and to require future residential development to locate at and be of a scale appropriate to, the settlement and growth levels identified in the Core Strategy.

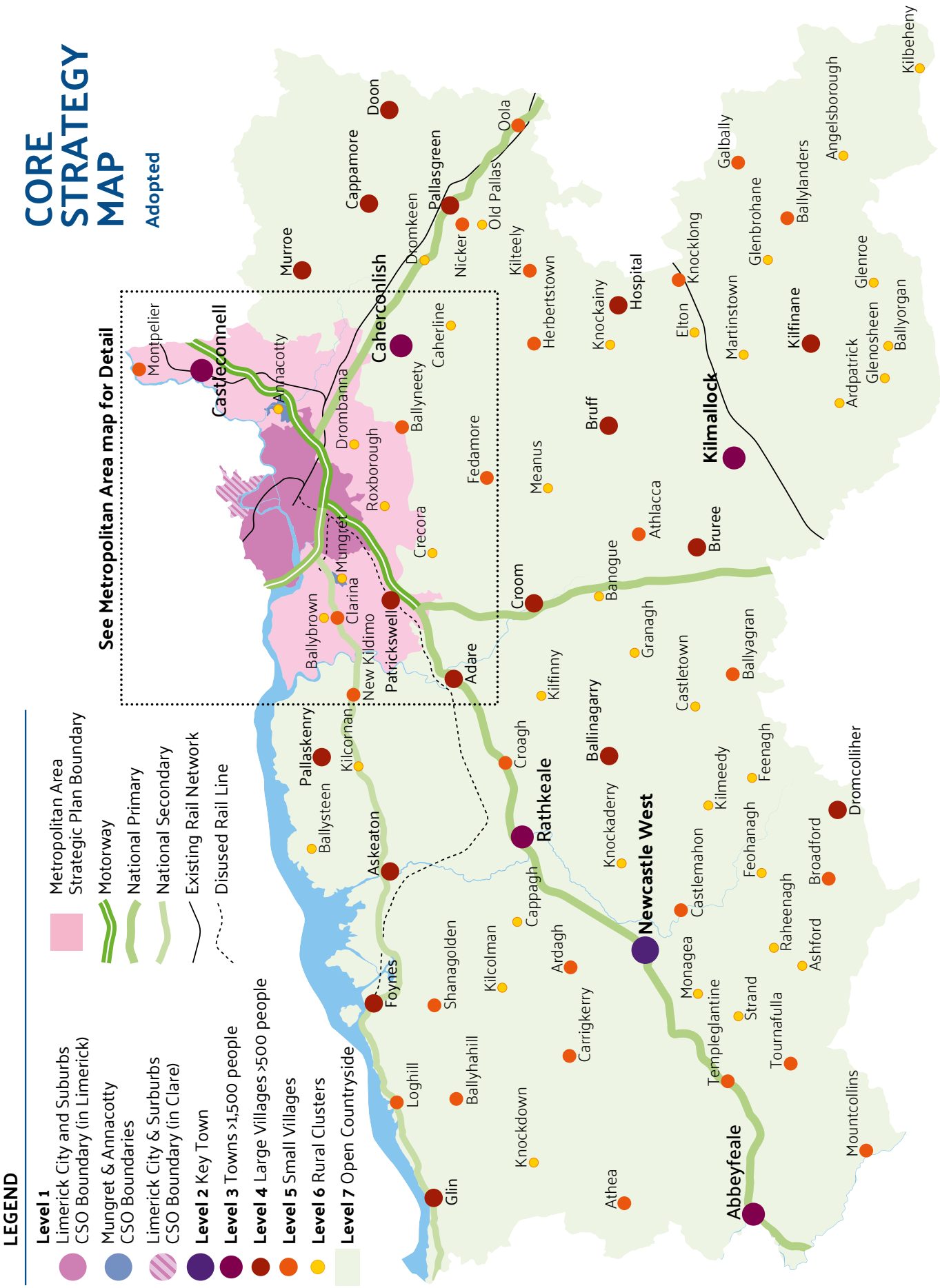
**Objective CS O2**
**Capacity of Town/Village to Absorb Development**
It is an objective of the Council that development within towns and villages shall be considered on the basis of its connectivity to the existing town/village core, capacity (infrastructural, social, cultural and economic), good design, community gain and proper planning and sustainable development.

**Objective CS O3**
**Monitoring Growth**
It is an objective of the Council to monitor growth patterns and the pace of growth within individual settlements and apply appropriate management measures in ensuring compliance with the Core Strategy.

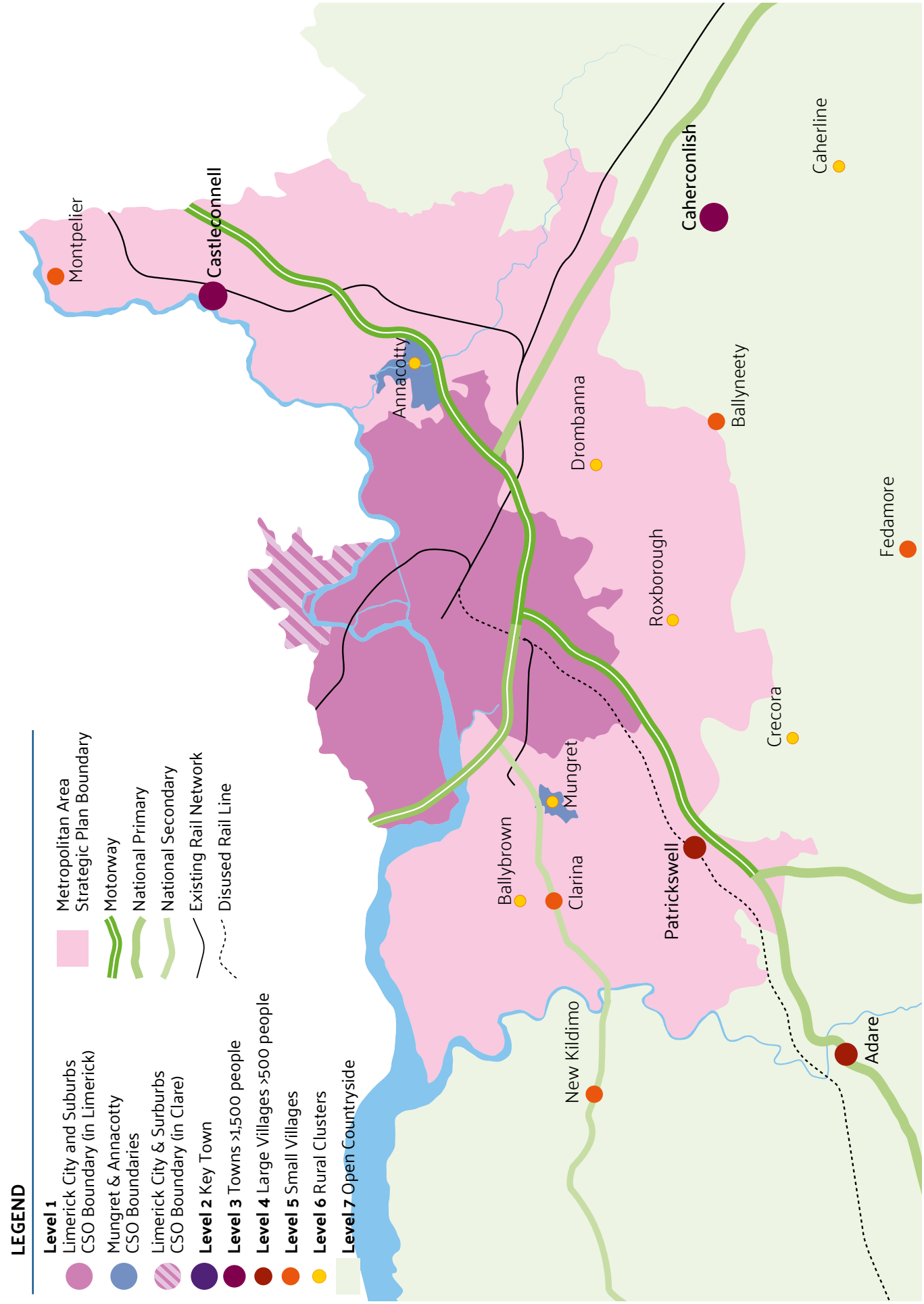
## 2.8 Core Strategy Maps

### Map 2.2: Core Strategy Map

(Refer to Chapter 4: Housing for Rural Housing Map)



Map 2.3: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) Core Strategy Map



## 2.9 Core Strategy Table

The Core Strategy Table indicates the distribution of housing growth requirement across Limerick's settlements in the form of a settlement hierarchy; they also set out the zoned lands available in selected settlements for new housing where relevant.

**Table 2.6 Advisory Notes**

[1] Housing Growth is dependent on the capacity of the settlement to absorb development.

[2] The Housing Growth Requirement identified in the table takes account of the new annual Housing Growth Requirement as per the 'The NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2025)' which is 2,599 per annum for Limerick from 2025-2034, and adding 50% additional provision that is allowed for in the 2025 Guidelines, which is then assigned to the settlements.

[3] The target in the Revised NPF is for at least 40% of all new housing to be delivered within the existing built-up areas of cities, towns and villages on infill and/or brownfield sites. It should be noted that the zoning for new housing development in the settlements of Bruff, Cappamore and Foynes are immediately contiguous to the built up area.

[4] Densities are derived in accordance with the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024) as outlined in Table 2.6 Density Assumptions per Settlement Hierarchy.

* A percentage of the population growth ranging from 5% to 15% is expected to be accommodated within the town or village centre zoning. Where there are deficits between the quantum of zoned land required and that which is available, it is expected that the balance of demand will be met from within the town or village centres through renovations or infill development.

Table 2.6: Settlement hierarchy and household growth up to December 2030 plus zoned land provision

| Level | Settlements | Census 2022 Population | Housing Growth Requirement June 2025 - December 2030 | Residential Density Range (UPH) (See also Table 2.5) | Zoned Land Required (ha.) June 2025 - December 2030 | Zoned Land Provision (ha.) | Household Growth 1 - Potential No. of Residential Units at Lowest Density | Household Growth 2 - Potential No. of Residential Units at Medium Density | Household Growth 3 - Potential No. of Residential Units at Highest Density |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick)** | City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty | 101,622 | 15,734 | 100-250/ 50-200/ 35-50 | 328.33 | 364.56 | 17,564 | 35,903 | 52,423 |
| | Castleconnell | 2,488 | 282 | 50-150/ 35-30/ 100+ | 8.05 | 12.20 | 472 | 523 | 615 |
| | Patrickswell | 848 | 400 | 25+ | 16 | 19.46 | 493 | 493 | 493 |
| | Clarina | 501 | 28 | 25+ | - | - | - | | |
| | Montpelier | 172 | 9 | - | - | - | - | | |
| | Rural Metro Area | 9,061 | 143 | - | - | - | - | | |
| | **Remainder of Metro Area** | 13,070 | 862 | - | 24.05 | 31.66 | 965 | 1,016 | 1,108 |
| | **Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick)** | 114,692 | 16,596 | - | 352.38 | 396.22 | 18,529 | 36,919 | 55,351 |
| **Key Town** | Newcastle West | 7,209 | 971 | 40-100/ 30-50/ 80+ | 31.36 | 56.83 | 1,738 | 2,501 | 2,993 |
| **Level 3 Towns** | Abbeyfeale | 2,206 | 290 | 25-40 | 11.6 | 13.56 | 309 | 374 | 439 |
| | Kilmallock | 1,761 | 223 | 25-40 | 8.92 | 20.97 | 411 | 512 | 613 |
| | Rathkeale | 1,231 | 202 | 25-40 | 8.08 | 9.62 | 207 | 263 | 319 |
| | Caherconlish | 1,569 | 172 | 25-40 | 6.88 | 8.43 | 180 | 274 | 337 |
| | **Level 3 Aggregate** | **6,767** | **887** | **-** | **35.48** | **52.58** | **1,107** | **1,107** | **1,107** |
| **Level 4 Large Villages** | Adare | 1,224 | 200 | - | 9.09 | 16.87 | 330 | 330 | 330 |
| | Askeaton | 1,236 | 163 | - | 7.40 | 23.62 | 386 | 386 | 386 |
| | Ballingarry | 570 | 74 | - | 3.36 | 5.71 | 78 | 78 | 78 |
| | Bruff | 887 | 114 | - | 5.18 | 5.92 | 113 | 113 | 113 |
| | Bruree | 641 | 53 | - | 2.40 | 2.13 | 38* | 38* | 38* |
| | Cappamore | 668 | 89 | - | 4.04 | 0.84 | 11* | 11* | 11* |
| | Croom | 1,240 | 143 | - | 6.5 | 10.56 | 174 | 174 | 174 |
| | Doon | 651 | 72 | - | 3.27 | 2.69 | 48* | 48* | 48* |
| | Dromcolliher | 509 | 75 | - | 3.40 | 2.42 | 44* | 44* | 44* |
| | Foynes | 512 | 75 | - | 3.40 | 3.49 | 56 | 56 | 56 |
| | Glin | 644 | 81 | - | 3.68 | 3.06 | 56* | 56* | 56* |
| | Hospital | 674 | 88 | - | 4.0 | 3.32 | 61* | 61* | 61* |
| | Kilfinane | 757 | 112 | - | 5.09 | 3.39 | 56* | 56* | 56* |
| | Murroe | 1,432 | 161 | - | 7.31 | 5.82 | 105* | 105* | 105* |
| | Pallasgrean | 572 | 83 | - | 3.77 | 2.49 | 42* | 42* | 42* |
| | Pallaskenry | 610 | 86 | - | 3.90 | 1.97 | 32 | 32 | 32 |
| | **Level 4 settlements Aggregate** | **12,827** | **1,668** | **-** | **75.79** | **94.3** | **1,630** | **1,630** | **1,630** |
| **Level 5** | Small Villages | 5,711 | 431 | - | - | | | | |
| **Level 6** | Rural Clusters | 2,160 | 125 | - | - | | | | |
| **Level 7** | Open countryside | 60,170 | 760 | - | - | | | | |
| **City and County** | **Total** | **209,536** | **21,438** | **-** | **495.01** | **599.93** | **23,004** | **42,157** | **61,081** |






# 3
# Spatial Strategy

# Section 1: Introduction and Overall Objectives

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the spatial strategy for the sustainable population growth of Limerick, in accordance with the Core Strategy, whilst achieving a balance between social, economic and environmental factors. This chapter comprises the following sections:

- Section 1 Compact Growth which sets out the key concepts and objectives for achieving the spatial strategy, including compact growth, place making and active land management initiatives;
- Section 2 Spatial Strategy which sets out the pattern of envisaged development including:
  - Section 2a Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick), which outlines the strategies accompanying this Plan which combine to inform the overall spatial strategy, the key revitalisation initiatives to help transform Limerick City Centre, the key opportunity sites and areas which will enable the transformation of the City's urban environment and an outline of the spatial development of the remainder of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick).
  - Section 2b Limerick County, which outlines the spatial strategies for the Level 2 to 6 settlements and initiatives facilitating the revitalisation of towns and villages.

Key concepts in the setting out of the spatial strategy include revitalisation and compact growth. Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, towns and villages in Limerick have significant capacity for revitalisation of the built environment and the development of infill, brownfield and underutilised urban lands. Development within existing settlements will ensure the efficient use of infrastructure, achieve compact growth objectives and cater for the residential and employment targets for Limerick set out in the National Planning Framework, in a sustainable manner. The highest quality-built environments will be achieved through the principles of place-making outlined in this chapter. This chapter also outlines the various types of sites which will facilitate the achievement of compact growth in our urban settlements and the measures of active land management in place, to stimulate development on public and private owned lands.

Place-making, compact growth, active land management, as well as addressing the impact of climate change, are some of the key themes to be considered in terms of the spatial strategy for Limerick. There is also the key objective, which is to create attractive and liveable environments, where more people will choose to live. In order to deliver compact growth, whilst ensuring a high quality of life for residents in Limerick, it is imperative that the Council protects and enhances residential amenities, through enabling the creation of vibrant, sustainable neighbourhoods. This will be facilitated through access to good housing choice, regeneration and revitalisation,

open space and recreation, a range of quality and sustainable transport options and appropriate levels of retail, social and community infrastructure to support our residential communities as set out in the various chapters of this Plan.

Limerick has plans for unprecedented, transformative, dynamic and compact revitalisation that will reposition it as an extremely attractive European destination in which to invest, work and live, now and in the future. The economic, physical and social revitalisation of Limerick is changing the face of the City and County and leading the transformation of the Mid-West of Ireland, into an attractive and dynamic national and international destination.

Further to the concept of compact growth, a number of accompanying strategies have combined to develop and inform the spatial strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick). In this regard, the spatial strategy is underpinned by the Housing Strategy, Limerick 2030 Plan, the Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS), the Building Heights Strategy and Retail Strategy. This chapter briefly introduces these plans, as well as a number of revitalisation projects and opportunity sites and areas, supported by the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan (LRFIP), which will contribute to the transformation of Limerick's urban environments.

## 3.2 Policy Context

### 3.2.1 National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework (NPF) aims to strengthen and grow our cities and metropolitan areas, harnessing the combined strength of our four regional cities, as a counterbalance to Dublin, through quality development, revitalisation and compact growth. The NPF envisages Limerick as the principal focus within the Region with the potential to generate and be the focus of significant employment and housing growth. The NPF First Revision supports ambitious growth targets to enable Limerick City to grow by at least 40% to 2040 and to enhance its significant potential to become a city of scale.

The NPF set out proposals for the preparation of a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) for the Limerick Metropolitan Area, incorporating Shannon. The NPF recognizes the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area's growth potential with existing third level institutes and international airport and port facilities. The NPF aims to build on these strengths, while improving liveability with key growth enablers, including proposals to implement and extend Limerick City Centre in accordance with the Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan, enhance opportunities for education and employment and road connectivity to Shannon Airport and Shannon Foynes Port, Cork and Waterford. The NPF also aims to provide a citywide public transport network with enhanced accessibility from the centre to the National Technology Park, university and airport, develop a strategic cycleway network, encourage inner city development and regeneration and develop and diversify the existing communities in the city.

The NPF recognises that in order to achieve more compact development, focus is required on the following four key areas:

- The 'liveability' or quality of life of urban places;
- Making the continuous revitalisation and development of existing built-up areas as attractive and viable as greenfield development;
- Tackling legacies such as concentrations of disadvantage in central urban areas;
- Linking revitalisation and redevelopment initiatives to climate action.

The National Planning Framework acknowledges that there are many examples of vibrant rural communities across Ireland in towns and villages, as well as within the open countryside. However, the NPF also acknowledges the challenges facing rural communities. The role of rural towns as local drivers for their surrounding area, supporting homes, jobs, clusters of services and transport hubs is recognised. The NPF acknowledges that changing settlement patterns have resulted in increased building vacancy within many towns and villages, adversely impacting on the vitality of these settlements. The NPF objectives therefore seek to strengthen and diversify rural towns to be a focus for local housing and employment growth, based on compact growth, revitalisation and development of vacant and derelict sites and utilising new technology and digital connectivity. The decline of villages also needs to be tackled by sustainable-targeted measures that address vacant premises and deliver sustainable reuse and revitalisation outcomes.

### 3.2.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES) is a 12-year strategic regional development framework to guide evolution of our society, environment, economy and use of land. The RSES supports the delivery of Project Ireland 2040 comprising the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan 2021-2030. The RSES includes a Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan for Limerick Shannon (MASP) to secure long term transformational and rejuvenation focused city growth.

In setting out the Spatial Strategy, consideration must be given to the Regional Planning Objectives (RPOs) of the RSES including those which support the compact growth, revitalisation, brownfield and infill development objectives of the National Planning Framework. To achieve compact growth, the RSES seeks to prioritise housing and employment development in locations within and contiguous to existing urban footprints, where it can be served by public transport, walking and cycling networks such as proposed under the Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy. Strategic initiatives, which will achieve the compact growth targets on brownfield and infill sites, are sought, including site assembly for revitalisation and the promotion of brownfield lands over greenfield developments in all urban areas. The RSES also seeks the targeting of measures to reduce vacancy in our building stock and investment in refurbishment, to bring underutilised properties into residential use. These concepts set the basis for the formation of the spatial strategy for settlements across the Limerick Metropolitan Area and County Limerick and are a cross cutting theme of the various chapters of this Development Plan.

### 3.2.3 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) Policy Objectives aim to promote a cohesive Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area with:

- The City Centre as the primary location at the heart of the Metropolitan Area and Region;
- Compact growth and revitalisation of Limerick City Centre and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty;
- Active land management initiatives to deliver housing and employment locations in a sustainable, infrastructure led manner.

The MASP supports the consolidation, revitalisation and continued investment in Limerick City through Limerick 2030 and Limerick Regeneration, to drive its role as a vibrant living, retailing and working City, as the economic, social and cultural heart of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Region. The MASP supports innovative approaches to securing long term transformational and rejuvenation focused compact City growth, including unlocking the potential of centrally located sites. Sustainable densification will be facilitated through the assembly of brownfield sites for revitalisation of the City Centre. High quality, mixed-use sustainable and transformative projects will set national and international good practice standards in innovation, quality design, exemplary urbanism and place-making.

The MASP supports a number of key infrastructure and transformative projects within Limerick City of relevance to setting out the spatial strategy including:

- City Centre Consolidation and Revitalisation based on Limerick 2030, comprising social, physical and economic revitalisation and formation of a higher density Georgian Living City with all essential services and community facilities;
- Densification of development in the City Centre, including identification and assembly of brownfield sites for development;
- Development of key strategic sites including Opera Square, Cleeves, Arthur's Quay and continuation of the riverside links;
- Continued investment in the City's Regeneration Areas;
- Public realm improvements in the City Centre including the development of a City- wide interconnected set of public parks, urban renewal within the Georgian Neighbourhood;
- Progressing the sustainable phased development of areas for housing and the development of public transport and infrastructure, in areas such as Mungret;
- The continued expansion of the City's third level institutions and integration with the wider City and Region, including the provision of specific facilities to address educational and social deprivation;
- The World Class Waterfront Project along the River Shannon to reinvent the City Quays as the main entertainment and leisure destination for the City.

**In addition to the above, Limerick City and County Council will have regard to the following plans, guidance documents and initiatives (and subsequent relevant publications):**

- ***Limerick 2030: An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick;***
- ***Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan;***
- ***Urban Regeneration and Development Fund; Living City Initiative;***
- ***Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025;***
- ***Rural Regeneration and Development Fund.***

### 3.2.4 A Collaborative Approach

The Southern Region's three Cities (Cork, Limerick and Waterford) and their Metropolitan Areas are primary economic engines for the Region. The RSES promotes a co-ordinated, co- operative, and collaborative intra-regional partnership between the Region's three Cities and their Metropolitan Areas and Galway in the Northern and Western Region. Limerick City and County Council is committed to a collaborative intra-regional partnership approach between the Limerick-Shannon, Cork, Waterford and Galway regions.

Limerick City and County Council recognise that it is a national and regional priority that the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area achieves its full potential and are committed to achieving the objectives set out therein. In this regard, Limerick City and County Council are committed to continuing the collaborative approach undertaken with Clare County Council to ensure the sustainable and co-ordinated development of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.

There is a history of public and private stakeholders working together for the betterment of the area, including the collaborative preparation of the Mid-West Strategic Area Plan, the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary and the Joint Retail Strategy. In addition, a current example is the Shannon Consortium, comprising a collaborative alliance between the three higher-level institutes of UL, Mary Immaculate College and Technological University of the Shannon, aiming to establish the region as an area of excellence in teaching, learning and learner support.

## 3.3 Compact Growth

The National Planning Framework's National Strategic Outcome of Compact Growth is fundamental for achieving the sustainable growth of our urban settlements. Limerick City and County Council acknowledges the social and economic benefits of more compact settlements and is committed to delivering compact growth, through active land management and initiatives to revitalise urban settlements. The policies and objectives in this Plan promote the efficient use of urban lands to achieve compact growth, through the intensification, consolidation and positive revitalisation of the City, towns and villages throughout Limerick.

The compact growth concept requires the provision of higher densities and mixed-use developments in urban settlements, in order to ensure a more efficient use of scarce lands and optimise public investment in infrastructure. This requires the integration of land use and transport, an intensification of use of existing underutilised lands and the consolidation of the built environment through the development of brownfield and infill lands, as well as the reuse of vacant and derelict buildings in urban settlements. In conjunction with the provision of social and green infrastructure, the principles of compact growth set the foundations for a higher quality of life, through the promotion of mixed-use settlements, served by sustainable modes of transport and the creation of an attractive environment in which to live, work and do business.

Successful compact growth requires enhanced connectivity and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as the provision of viable public transport services through the concentration of higher density developments at strategic employment locations and along public transport nodes. There are many sustainability benefits of the compact growth concept compared to that of urban sprawl or greenfield developments at the edge of settlements. Such benefits include maximising the viability and cost efficiency of providing public transport and other infrastructure, as well as reduced car dependency and commuting times, which will facilitate the mitigation of climate change, through a reduction in traffic congestion, energy

consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Strategies such as the *Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy* and the *Climate Action Plan* are essential elements which support the objective of compact growth.

In accordance with the National Strategic Outcome of Compact Growth, the National Planning Framework requires 50% of all new housing in Limerick City to occur within the existing City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty footprint, through the development of brownfield and infill sites and revitalisation. Outside of Limerick City, 30% of all new homes are to be provided within the existing built-up footprints of settlements.

The Local Authority acknowledges the social and economic benefits of more compact settlements as outlined above. Therefore, this Plan will continue to support the sequential approach to the delivery of development, with priority given to the revitalisation of settlements and the consolidation of the existing built environment, through the development of brownfield, infill and backland urban sites.

**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 CGR O1**
**Prevention of Urban Sprawl**
It is an objective of the Council to prevent linear roadside frontage development on roads leading out of towns and villages in order to retain the identity of towns/villages, to prevent sprawl and to ensure a distinction in character between built up areas and the open countryside.

### 3.3.1 Place-making

Place-making is a collaborative approach to shaping, improving and creating high quality public places that are at the centre of every community. The concept is essential for the successful revitalisation of settlements and achieving compact growth in an attractive manner for all. Place-making involves the planning, urban design and management of public spaces in order to achieve an inclusive high quality of life and create a strong character, sense of place and belonging. Place-making should have cognisance of the physical, environmental, cultural and social characters that define a particular place. The key contributor to and component of good place-making is community engagement.

Urban design principles such as those set out in the *Best Practice Urban Design Manual*, (2009) and *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (2013), play a key role in place-making. Good urban design aims to create public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe, secure and accessible and which promote and facilitate social interaction.

The following principles of place-making should be incorporated into the design of any projects:

- Creation of character and sense of place through valuing and understanding the cultural, built and natural heritage;
- Creating diversity of functions and activities to enable viability and vitality;
- Provision of a highly adaptable urban structure for the future proofing of society and the economy;
- Providing an inclusive, high quality and safe network of connected streets and spaces;
- Providing priority for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, avoid unnecessary street clutter and providing opportunities for improved health and wellbeing;
- Coherent, legible and attractive streetscapes – providing continuity and a strong sense of enclosure, variety of frontages, vibrancy and interest;
- Integration of various characteristics of quality places.

Place-making offers the opportunity to differentiate Limerick from other locations by delivering competitive and attractive urban areas in which to reside, work, invest and do business. The creation of urban areas that offer an attractive environment and a range of services and facilities to achieve a good quality of life are essential to allow investors attract and retain the skilled workforces and talent necessary to support and facilitate business and economic growth. Limerick City and County Council is committed to place-making and improving the quality of life for all.

#### 3.3.1.1 Universal Design

Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible, by all people regardless of their age, size or ability.

Universal Design involves a considered approach to place-making based on an integrated assessment and understanding of the context and user needs. Universal Design permeates the principles that underpin our national and regional planning priorities and can add value at all levels in our planning system, creating responsive, functional and inclusive place-making and enabling the sustainable development of cities, towns and villages across Limerick.

By considering the diverse needs and abilities of everyone in the design process, Universal Design creates products, services and environments that meet the needs of all people who wish to use them. This concept is not a special requirement for the benefit of a particular cohort of the population, but is a fundamental basis for good design. In this regard, an accessible, usable, convenient and pleasurable environment is of benefit to all of society.

The National Disability Authority's Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) was established in 2007 under the Disability Act 2005. CEUD is dedicated to the achievement of Universal Design, enabling people to participate in a society that takes account of human difference and interact with their environment to the best of their ability. The CEUD sets out seven principles of Universal Design to guide the design of public spaces, products and communications. The Seven Principles of Universal Design include:

- Equitable Use;
- Flexibility in Use;
- Simple and Intuitive;
- Perceptible Information;
- Tolerance for Error;
- Low Physical Effort;
- Size and Space for Approach and Use.

#### 3.3.1.2 Public Realm

The public realm generally refers to all areas to which the public has access, including roads, streets, lanes, footpaths, cycle lanes, signage, street furniture, parks, squares, open spaces and public buildings and facilities. The public realm therefore can create character and identity and has a significant impact on how the urban fabric functions, on social interaction and quality of life and on competitiveness and attractiveness as a place in which to live, work, invest, hold events or as a tourism destination. The planning, design and management of the public realm is therefore fundamental to successful revitalisation and is a cross cutting theme of this Plan.

Responsibility for the public realm rests with both the public and private sector landowners and service providers. Elements such as overhead cables, utility boxes, excessive or poorly designed signage and shopfronts and a poorly considered mix of street furniture can combine to form poor visual amenity in the public realm. A simple, uncluttered and consistent design approach is fundamental to achieving a successful public realm. In areas of historic importance, traditional style signage, lighting columns and benches should be considered in any project.

The National Planning Framework references the Limerick 2030 Plan, which aims to create a modern City Centre that includes world-class office accommodation and residential developments, linked through a series of transformational City Centre public realm projects, including the Great Streets Programme. Limerick City and County Council is committed to improving public realm and support projects, which contribute positively to the revitalisation of the public realm of Limerick including for example the O'Connell Street Revitalisation Project and the Wayfinding Strategy.

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

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure that all developments are designed to the highest quality with respect to the principles of place-making, universal design and public realm including the guidance set out under the *Urban Design Manual – A Best Practice Guide* (2009) and the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (2013) the Whole of Government National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022 and the 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid 19 Pandemic Response.

b) Prepare and facilitate implementation of Public Realm Plans for settlements including Limerick City, Adare and Rathkeale.

c) Ensure the construction of the highest quality and innovative designed buildings, in particular on the approaches to Limerick City, along the Riverfront/Quays, on important street corners or junctions, corner sites, the end of vistas and gateways, Town Centres and the edges of public squares or open space.

### 3.3.1.3 Brownfield Sites

Brownfield land is a term used to describe previously developed land that is not currently in use and which has the potential for redevelopment. Often such lands are of large scale and have previously been in use for industrial or commercial purposes and became derelict due to obsolescence, vacancy or demolition of structures. Some brownfield sites may have a legacy of contamination from operational activities or waste disposal.

Redeveloping brownfield sites provides opportunities for revitalisation of the built environment and reuse of existing infrastructure including roads and utilities. The Planning Authority will encourage the redevelopment of brownfield sites in settlements throughout Limerick, in accordance with the concept of compact growth and the Development Management Standards of this Plan.

A number of strategic brownfield consolidation sites have been identified for redevelopment in Limerick City Centre, which will have transformational effects on the revitalisation of the City. Such strategic consolidation sites include, for example, Opera Square, Cleeves  Riverside Quarter, the University of Limerick Riverside Campus and Colbert Station Quarter. Some of these projects are briefly outlined under the Strategic Revitalisation section further below.

### 3.3.1.4 Infill Sites

Infill land is a term used to describe vacant or underutilised sites of all scales within existing developed areas of settlements. Such sites tend by definition to be relatively small and comprise lands that fill gaps in otherwise continuously built-up frontages. A large number of infill type sites have been identified for development throughout Limerick City and County. The development of infill sites will facilitate the most sustainable use of urban land and existing infrastructure, while facilitating compact growth. Infill development can often form one aspect of larger revitalisation schemes, including in the Regeneration Areas in Limerick City.

The Planning Authority will encourage the appropriate development of infill sites in accordance with the Development Management Standards of this Plan. However, in certain limited circumstances the Planning Authority may consider a justified relaxation of planning standards in the interest of achieving sustainable compact growth. Infill developments should be appropriate to the character of the streetscape, enhancing its context and integrating with its surroundings. In this regard, infill development should respect and complement the prevailing scale of the built environment while ensuring the preservation of the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

#### 3.3.1.5 Backland Sites

Backland is a term used to describe sites which are located to the rear of existing buildings, often with no street frontage and usually within predominantly residential areas. A backland site is usually a section of large garden with road access at the rear or side of a property. Larger backland sites can be formed through the amalgamation of a number of large adjoining rear gardens. Along with rear gardens, which may contain garages or other ancillary buildings, backland sites often comprise larger areas of lands left over after development, or perhaps, industrial or other non-residential structures.

The Planning Authority will encourage the development of backland sites where appropriate opportunities exist in accordance with the Development Management Standards of this Plan. When poorly designed, the development of individual backland sites can conflict with the established pattern and character of development in an area and result in the loss of potential access to larger amalgamated backland areas. Therefore, the Planning Authority will encourage landowners to prepare masterplans for the development of all backland sites in a particular row to avoid a piecemeal approach and ensure the long-term maximum development potential of such lands are realised. The design of any backland development shall avoid significant loss of amenity to existing residential properties by reason of loss of privacy, overlooking and excessive overshadowing.

**Objective CGR O3**
**Urban Lands and Compact Growth**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Deliver 50% of new homes within the existing built-up footprint of Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty and 30% of new homes within the existing built-up footprint of settlements, in a compact and sustainable manner in accordance with the Core and Housing Strategies of this Plan.
b) Encourage and facilitate sustainable revitalisation and intensification of brownfield, infill, underutilised and backland urban sites, subject to compliance with all quantitative and qualitative Development Management Standards set out under Chapter 11 of this Plan.
c) Continue to work proactively with key state agencies, such as the LDA to bring forward, brownfield urban underutilised state land, which can contribute to the delivery of compact growth within an urban context, subject to Development Management Standards set out under Chapter 11 of this Plan.
d) Encourage residential development in the City Centre zone by requiring at least 20% of new development to comprise residential use. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, where residential use is not deemed compatible with the primary use of the site e.g. museums/tourist attractions etc.

e) Require owners of urban sites, in instances where phased development is proposed, or where such land adjoins other undeveloped, zoned land in third party ownership, to develop a masterplan for the coherent and sustainable development of such lands, addressing issues of the sustainable use of available lands, preservation of existing residential amenity, access, urban design and connectivity. These Masterplans shall set out the framework for the sustainable, phased and managed development of a particular area. The Masterplan should include the written consent of all landowners, where applicable, a conceptual layout, infrastructure proposals including any consultation with service providers and phasing details. The Masterplan should clearly detail how adjoining undeveloped, zoned land in third party ownership, can be accessed and serviced in an integrated and coherent manner.

**Policy CGR P2**
**Monitoring of Brownfield/Infill Sites**
It is policy of the Council to monitor the development of brownfield and infill sites and their contribution to delivering the targets established over the lifetime of the plan.

### 3.3.2 Active Land Management

The creation of compact, dense and sustainable urban centres as envisaged in the National Planning Framework, requires the use of active land management to bring vacant and underutilised land in urban areas into beneficial use. Such management ensures a more effective return on State investment in infrastructure and counteracts unsustainable patterns of development, namely urban sprawl. Publicly owned land plays an important role in active land management allowing for integrated urban development, the construction of high-quality affordable housing and the provision of timely and cost-effective infrastructure.

Through the functions of the Council in relation to paint schemes, vacant homes, dereliction, vacancy and re-use initiatives, the Local Authority will continue to actively pursue the revitalisation of settlements across Limerick. In addition, through the development of projects by Limerick 2030 and the Land Development Agency, significant tracts of brownfield lands in Limerick City Centre will be revitalised in a compact manner.

Limerick City and County Council envisages that effective approaches to revitalisation by the public sector will facilitate and encourage the mobilisation of development land in private ownership, to generate housing supply and create high quality neighbourhoods in the settlements. Key legislative components of active land management with respect to private owned lands are the Vacant Site Levy, Derelict Site Levy and incentives of the Development Contribution Scheme. This Plan sets a framework to secure the revitalisation of areas in need of renewal and supports the active land management mechanisms to address areas of urban decay, dereliction and vacancy in the urban environment.

**Objective CGR O4**
**Active Land Management**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Promote an active land management approach through cooperation with relevant stakeholders and infrastructure providers to deliver enabling infrastructure to achieve compact growth.
b) Support and facilitate the reuse and revitalisation of derelict, vacant and underutilised sites and disused buildings throughout Limerick for residential, economic, community and leisure purposes.
c) Establish a database of strategic brownfield and infill sites in the City Centre to be updated on an annual basis to monitor the progress of the active land management measures.

### 3.3.2.1 Vacant Site Levy

The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (the Act) provides for the imposition of a vacant site levy. The vacant site levy is a key active land management tool in delivering the goals of the NPF, such as ensuring the efficient use of land, limiting the sprawl of urban development, regenerating urban areas and in doing so making a positive contribution to meeting housing needs. The levy is aimed at incentivising the use of vacant sites and buildings in urban areas for residential and regeneration purposes.

Limerick City and County Council will continue to examine lands within the City and County, as appropriate, for the purposes as set out in the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015, in relation to the vacant site levy.

The vacant site levy aims to promote the appropriate development and renewal of urban sites and areas, identified having regard to the core strategy, that are in need of regeneration, in order to ensure there is no:
i) adverse effects on existing amenities and facilities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land;
ii) urban blight and decay;
iii) anti-social behaviour; or
iv) shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses.

This objective shall relate to all zoned lands in Limerick.

Under the Act, Limerick City and County Council has compiled a register of vacant sites within its functional area that are suitable for the provision of housing, but are not being progressed for development. The Vacant Site Register was established on January 1st 2017 with levies being charged on an annual basis since January 2019. An identified vacant site can be entered onto the Register when the Local Authority is of the opinion that it has been vacant for a minimum of 12 months preceding its entry onto the Register. The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018 amended certain provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act including an increase in the vacant site levy from 3% to 7% of the market value of the lands.

**Objective CGR O5**
**Vacant Site Levy**
It is an objective of the Council to utilise the provisions of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (as amended), including the continued maintenance of a Vacant Site Register to facilitate the appropriate re-use and development of vacant and underutilised sites on zoned lands in Limerick that are in need of renewal or revitalisation.
a) This objective shall also apply to all lands in the ownership of Limerick City and County Council;
b) This objective shall not apply to any lands where public utilities are not available or are deemed inadequate.

### 3.3.2.2 Derelict Sites

While the Vacant Site Levy is a land activation mechanism aimed at encouraging landowners in urban areas to develop residential or regeneration land, primarily for the purposes of housing, the Derelict Site Levy is a mechanism aimed at improving the character of an area, by addressing derelict buildings and sites. In accordance with the Derelict Sites Act 1990 (the Act), a Derelict Site is defined as any land which detracts, or is likely to detract, to a material degree from the amenity, character or appearance of land in the neighbourhood in question because of:

a) Structures which are in a ruinous, derelict or dangerous condition;
b) The neglected, unsightly or objectionable condition of the land or structures on it, or;
c) The presence of litter, rubbish, debris or waste on the land.

Derelict Sites can have a negative impact on the social, visual and commercial aspects of a neighbourhood. The Act places a duty on every owner and occupier of land to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the land does not become or continue to be in a derelict state. The Local Authority maintains a Derelict Sites Register and actively takes all reasonable steps to ensure that any land situated in this administrative area does not become or continue to be a derelict site.

Under the Act, the Local Authority is entitled to:

- Serve a Notice on the owner/occupier specifying works to be carried out to prevent or abate dereliction;
- Acquire by agreement or compulsorily any derelict site situated within its administrative area;
- Impose an annual levy on any derelict site, which is considered to be urban land, within its administrative area which stands entered on the Derelict Sites Register on the 1st of January of that year. The levy shall be 3% of the market value of the land or site.

Limerick City and County Council is proactive in identifying and seeking the improvement of such sites to address incidences of decay, prevent deterioration of the built fabric of our urban settlements and bring buildings back into active use. There are a small number of unfinished housing estates in Limerick, which are being pursued through the Derelict Sites Act. The Council will continue to work with developers, residents and all relevant stakeholders to secure the satisfactory completion of all developments in the County and to ensure that residential developments are taken in charge in accordance with the requirements of Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended).

**Objective CGR O6**
**Derelict Sites**
It is an objective of the Council to utilise the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990, including the maintenance of a Derelict Site Register and CPO powers to address instances of dereliction and decay in the urban and rural environment and bring properties back into active re-use.

**Objective CGR O7**
**Unfinished Estates**
It is an objective of the Council to actively work with all relevant stakeholders to secure the satisfactory completion of unfinished developments in the County in accordance with *Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments (DoECLG 2011).*

# Section 2: Spatial Strategy

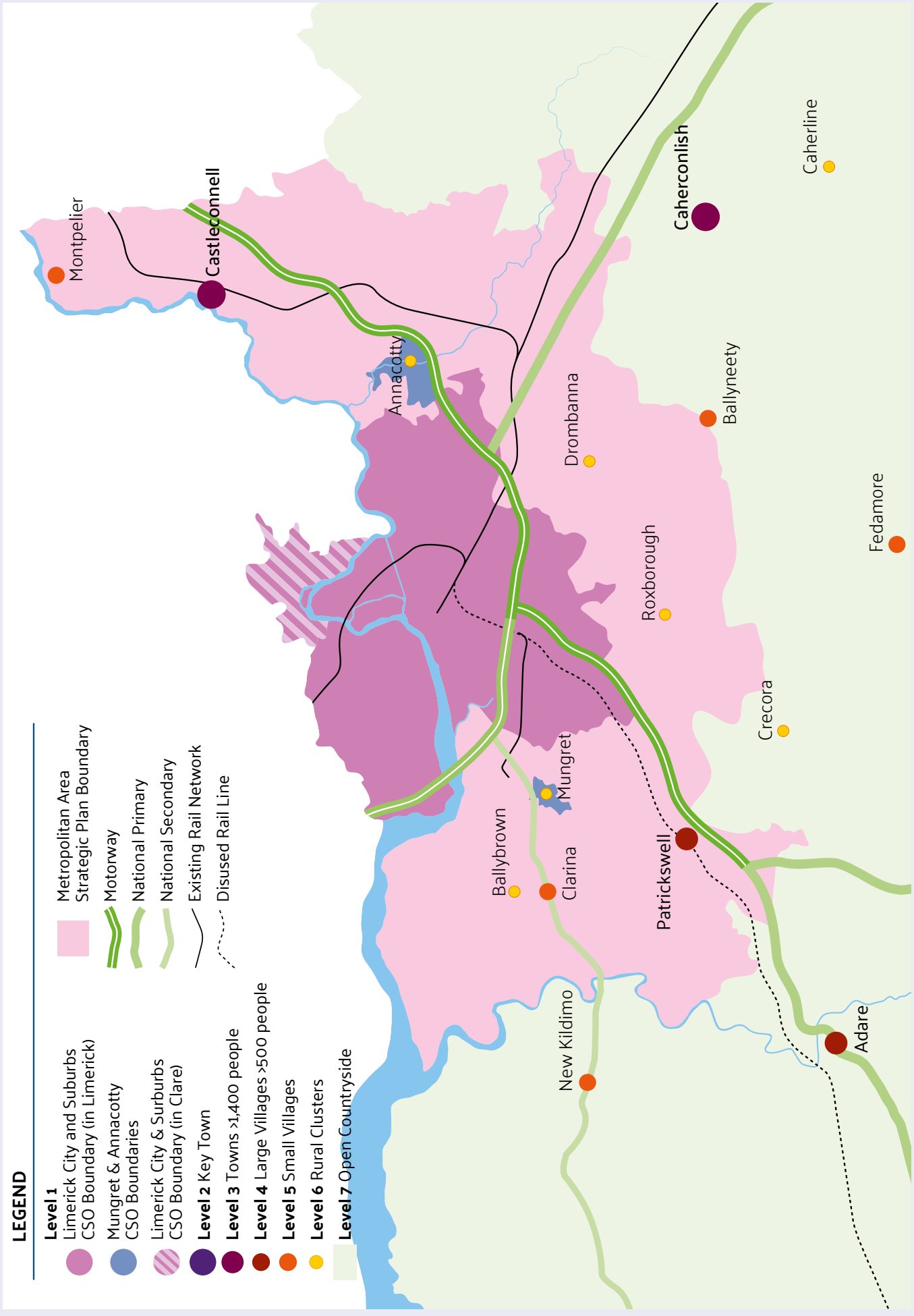
Further to the Settlement Strategy set out in Chapter 2: Core Strategy, the following sections sets out the role of each settlement in the hierarchy (Section 2a Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) and Section 2b County Limerick) and the Spatial Strategy to achieve the objectives for targeted population growth. Development of each of the settlements are supported by the Compact Growth and Active Land Management objectives set out under Section 1 of this chapter, in conjunction with the Development Management Standards set out under Chapter 11.

## Section 2a: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) Spatial Strategy

### 3.4 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) Spatial Definition

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Spatial Plan covers the functional areas of both Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council. The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) subject of the Spatial Strategy set out in this chapter includes Limerick City Centre, the continuous built-up area of Limerick City Suburbs (as defined by the CSO) and the settlements of Mungret, Annacotty, Castleconnell, Patrickswell, Clarina and Montpelier. The spatial strategy for each of these areas is set out below.

Map 3.1: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick)



### 3.4.1 Strengths, Constraints, Opportunities and Threats

Table 3.1: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) SCOT

| Strengths | Constraints | Opportunities | Threats |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Strategic location in relation to the other regional cities and Dublin;<br>• Global and national trade and tourism connectivity via Shannon Airport, Shannon Foynes Tier 1 port, Shannon Estuary and Limerick Docklands;<br>• Location on the Atlantic Economic Corridor;<br>• Highly educated and skilled workforce;<br>• Third level institutes University of Limerick, Technological University of the Shannon and Mary Immaculate College;<br>• World-class infrastructure;<br>• High-quality lifestyle;<br>• Collective approach of its stakeholders. | • Movement of retail away from the City Centre;<br>• Increasing online retail platform;<br>• Loss of vitality and vibrancy on some streets;<br>• Lack of investment in public transport;<br>• Lack of centrally located high density developments and underutilised lands;<br>• High levels of deprivation and social inclusion;<br>• High unemployment in parts of the city, combined with a lack of social services, low education attainment. | • Strategic economic locations including Limerick City Centre, Raheen Business Park, Castletroy National Technology Park and Troy Film Studios;<br>• Existing range of major multinational and national employers;<br>• Strong base in ICT and Life Sciences (Med Tech/ Pharma);<br>• Investment in active travel and public transport;<br>• Cost competitive environment;<br>• Learning, training, research and development and innovation;<br>• Wild Atlantic Way Gateway designation;<br>• Tourism assets Thomond Park, King John's Castle, The Hunt Museum and the Shannon Estuary.<br>• Culture and the night time economy. | • Changes to international corporate tax reduce Ireland's competitiveness at attracting FDI;<br>• Housing supply is insufficient to meet existing and future demand, potentially acting as a barrier to growth;<br>• Risk that economic recovery does not materialise as expected, nationally or that growth in Mid-West is relatively lower;<br>• Climate change outturn deteriorates in 2020s, requiring faster and deeper adaptation and mitigation measures;<br>• Covid 19 pandemic does not dissipate, with new emerging variants dampening growth until mid 2020s. |

### 3.4.2 Introduction to Level 1: Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) Mungret and Annacotty

Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) has a population of 97,852 with a wide range of services, employment, leisure and retail facilities of regional significance for the surrounding catchment area. Mungret and Annacotty also play an important role with populations of 372 and 3,398 respectively. The NPF supports ambitious growth targets to enable Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty to grow by at least 50% to 2040 and to achieve its potential to become a City of scale.

The Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan, as set out under the RSES, recognises that for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area to prosper and develop in a sustainable manner, a strong Limerick City is paramount. As the largest urban centre in the Mid-West, focus must be on the growth in population and employment, so that Limerick City can compete effectively for investment and jobs. To do this, growth must complement and consolidate the development of the City as a whole, to create a compact City region with improved supporting infrastructure, public transport improvements to provide linkages to local residential populations and

the provision of high levels of community facilities and amenities. Provision must be made to bring about increased density and height of development within the footprint of developing sustainable mobility transport corridors and networks.

**Policy CGR P3 - Level 1**
**Growing Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) Mungret and Annacotty**
It is a policy of the Council to strengthen and consolidate Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty as a key driver of social and economic growth in Limerick and become a vibrant living, retailing and working City. In accordance with national and regional policy it is a requirement that at least 50% of all new homes will be located within the existing built-up footprint of the settlement, in order to deliver compact growth and reduce unsustainable urban sprawl.

**Objective CGR O8**
**Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Promote development which incorporates a high quality, sustainable and inclusive approach to proposals in the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, which is supported by sustainable means of travel and which creates locally distinctive neighbourhoods and positively contributes to the existing built and natural heritage.
b) Promote residential development in the historic areas of Limerick City, provided development is consistent with the architectural integrity and character of the area.

#### 3.4.2.1 Developing a Spatial Strategy

The policies and objectives of this Development Plan will support and enable the delivery of the key growth enablers and transformational change envisaged for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area in the NPF, RSES and MASP. The Local Authority will continue to seek investment through various funding mechanisms including the National Development Plan and Regeneration Development Funds.

In order to achieve the growth envisaged in the NPF First Revision of 150,000 population and to achieve projected population growth in a compact and sustainable manner, this Development Plan has identified 364.74ha. of land available over 152 no. of sites in the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), with zoning for residential, or residential and a mixture of uses, in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty to 2040. This growth must be supported by the Housing Strategy and opportunities for employment. Community and educational facilities and amenities must be provided in tandem with this envisaged growth. Infill and brownfield lands comprise 82% of the lands identified across the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty.

To support employment growth this Development Plan, in addition to the City Centre, District Centre and Local Centre zonings, has identified 269.9ha. of undeveloped/ underutilised land available for Enterprise and Employment, Industry and High Tech/ Manufacturing in the Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty.

In setting out the Land Use Zoning strategy, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has played a key role in informing the appropriateness of the zoning of lands with respect to the vulnerability of uses in the different flood zones, in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities. Subsequently, a Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) was carried out for residential and undeveloped employment land. The SCA and accompanying maps as set out in Volume 2, examined the suitability of each of the sites in the land bank, with respect to the availability of infrastructure under Tier 1 (serviced) and Tier 2 (serviceable). In the case of the residential SCA, the tables also indicate the density standards applicable to each site and the indicative potential yield achievable (subject to consideration with respect to compliance with all relevant planning criteria, development management standards etc.). In this regard, as set out in the Core Strategy, the SCA identifies the potential for a minimum of 17,570 no. of units across the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty. In a medium density scenario, there is potential for 35,911 no of units.

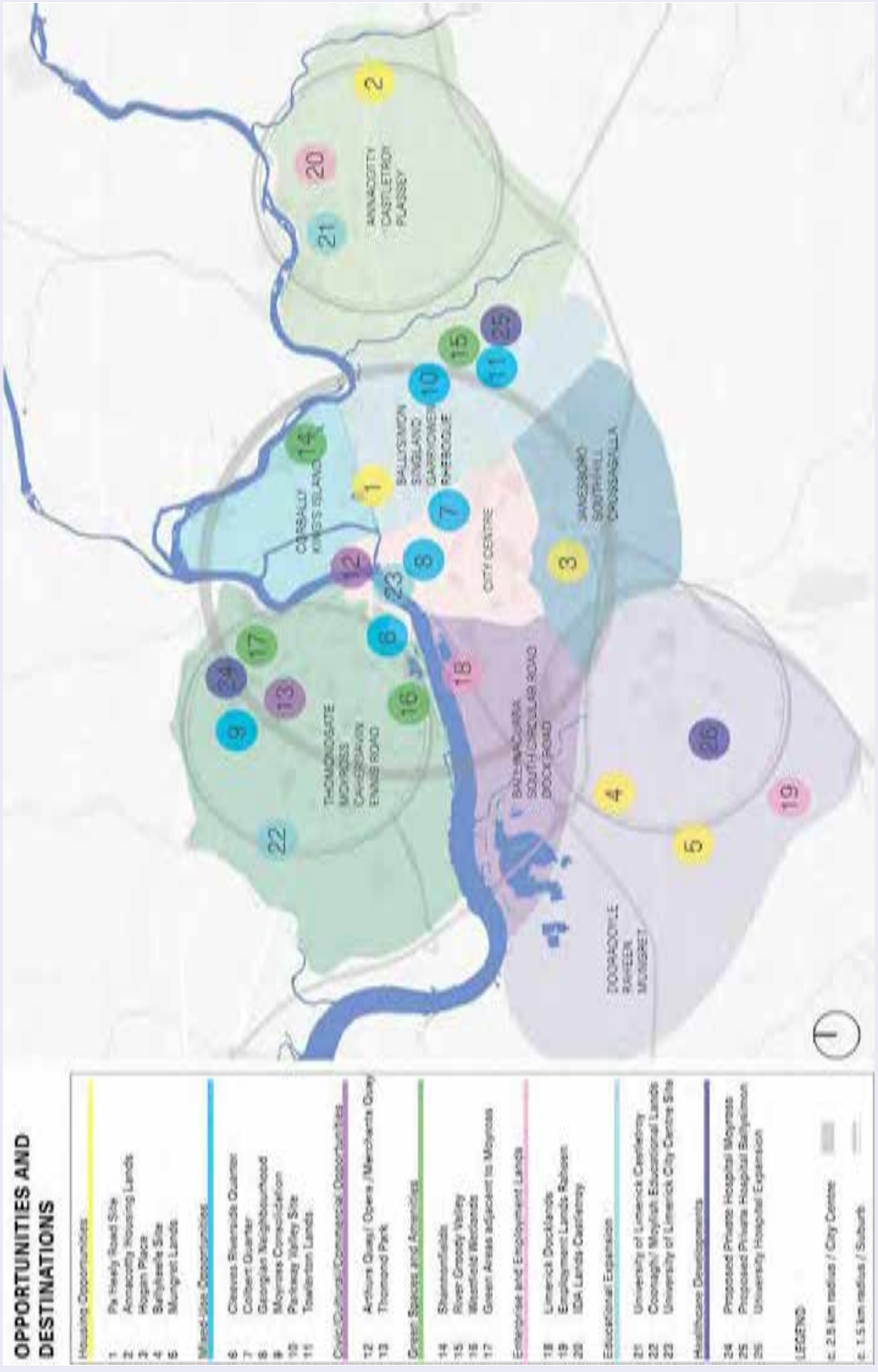
The Land Development Agency (LDA) and Limerick 2030 plans to facilitate high density and mixed-use developments on underutilised and brownfield sites in the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), will create opportunities to achieve a critical mass of residential and employment population at an international level, to enhance the viability and vitality of the City Centre, while addressing instances of urban blight and decay. Some of the key transformational city consolidation sites identified for development, including the Colbert Quarter are set out further below. The development of such sites will be informed by the guidance set out under the Building Height Strategy.

LSMATS will enhance active and public modes of transport and provide opportunities to improve health and wellbeing, while reducing carbon emissions and traffic congestion. The proposals set out under LSMATS with respect to the public transport corridors have facilitated determination of the density zones, with higher densities proposed in areas within walking distances of transport services. The Joint Retail Strategy will aim to re-establish the City Centre at the top of the Mid-West Region's retail hierarchy, maximising opportunities arising from Local Authority initiatives to enhance the customer experience of the City Centre.

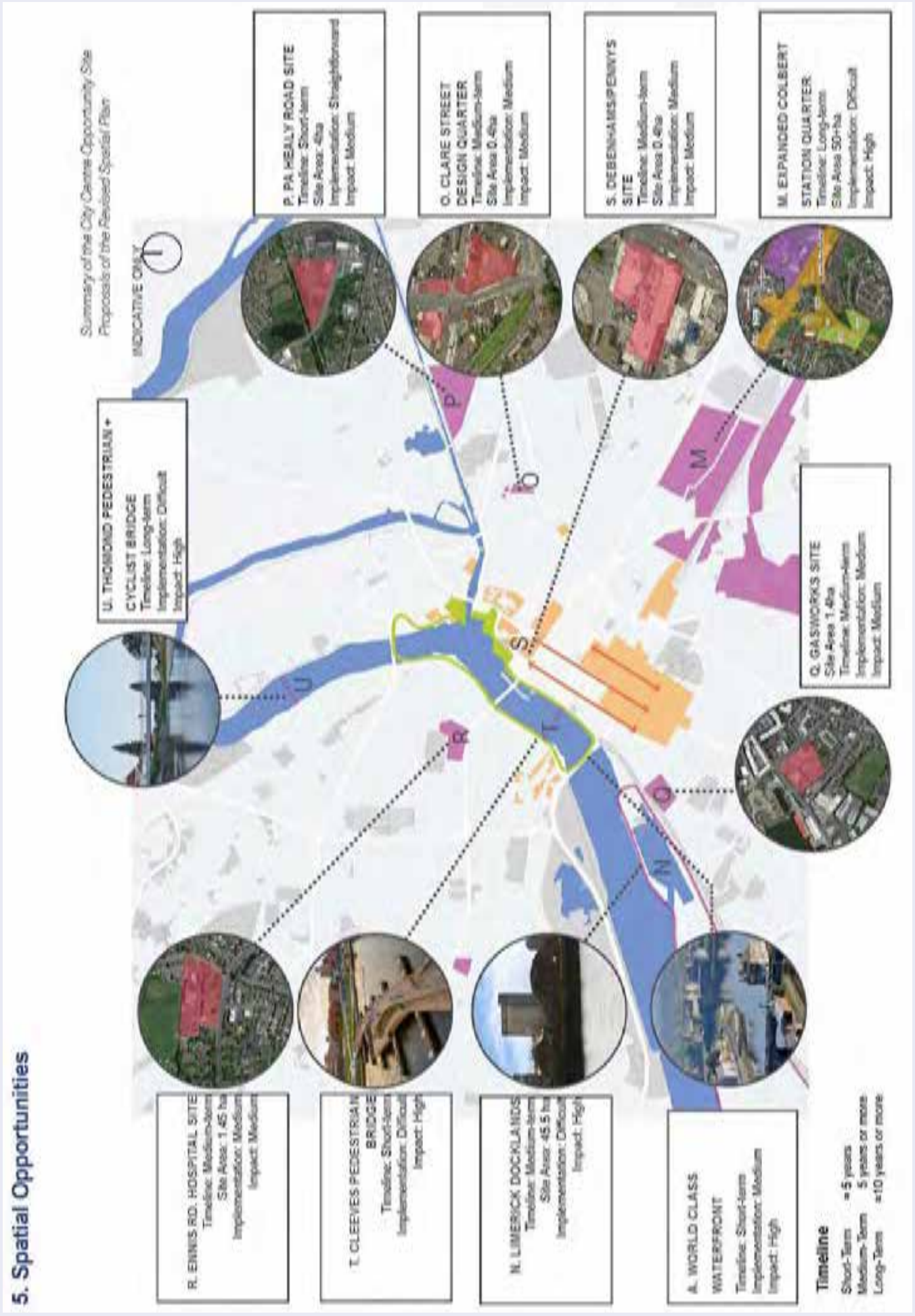
The opportunities presented by the Regeneration Areas through the Limerick Regeneration Integration Framework Plan (LRIFP) will address services, facilitate education and training and provide additional housing stock and employment opportunities, which is supported through the objectives of this Plan. The objectives for the Regeneration Areas are set out further below in this chapter.

The aforementioned strategies combine to develop a strategy for the spatial development of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick), which will facilitate the achievement of NPF objectives for Limerick to become a city of scale over the lifetime of the Development Plan and demonstrate how the vision for the Limerick Shannon MASP will be implemented.

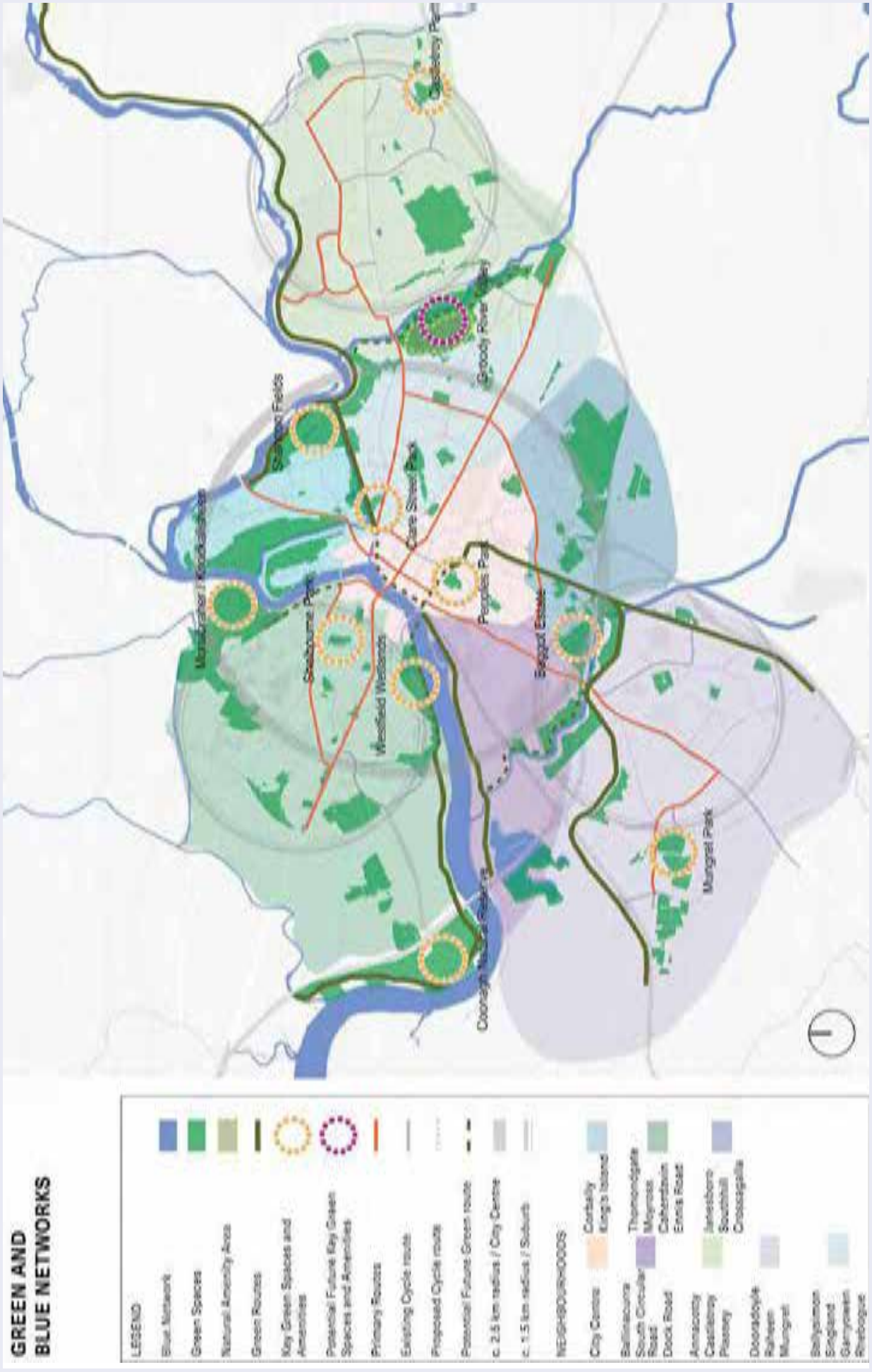
Map 3.2: Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty Opportunities and Destinations



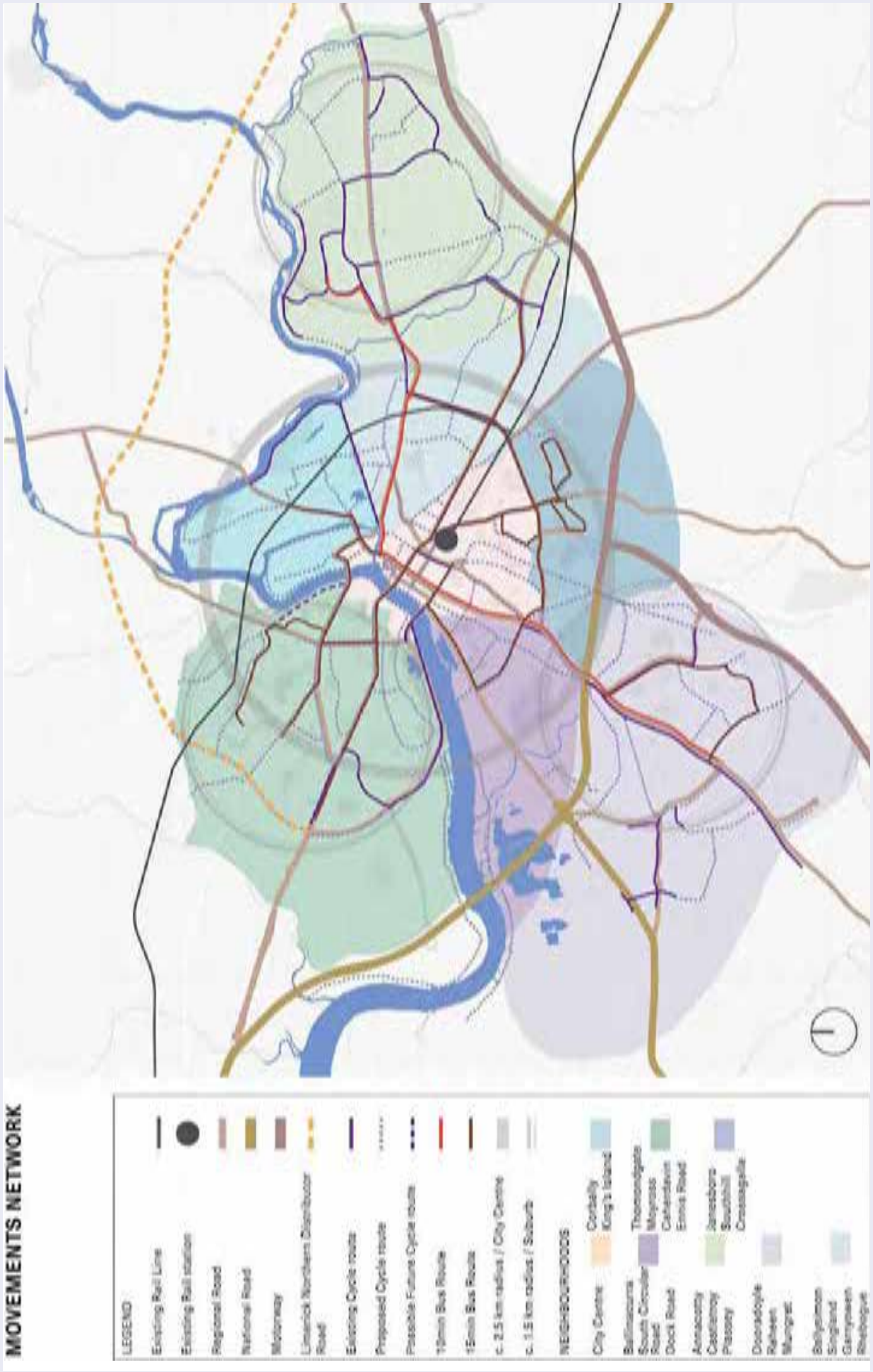
Map 3.3: City Spatial Opportunities



Map 3.4: Green and Blue Networks



Map 3.5: Movements Network



#### 3.4.2.2 Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS)

The Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy is being prepared by the National Transport Authority in conjunction with Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council. The RSES objectives, underpinned by the NPF, provide a strong framework for LSMATS to shape the distribution of growth targets integrating land use and transport planning. It is an objective of the MASP to achieve the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF, through the sustainable and infrastructure led regeneration, consolidation and growth of strategic residential, employment and nodal locations along strategic bus network corridors. LSMATS will provide the opportunity to integrate new mixed-use development at appropriate densities with high-capacity public transport infrastructure, in conjunction with more attractive walking and cycling networks and public realm improvements.

The NPF identifies the provision of a citywide public transport network as a key enabler for Limerick. The BusConnects Limerick programme will provide a reliable, high-frequency public transport service to improve connectivity of Limerick City and Suburbs. The strategy sets out a long-term framework for the delivery of an integrated transport system to achieve more sustainable travel patterns, reduce car dependency and increase permeability.

Limerick City and County Council will continue to provide for all components of the transportation system, which are within its remit and will encourage and facilitate the development of those other elements provided by external agencies, such as the National Transport Authority and Transport Infrastructure Ireland.

#### 3.4.2.3 Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick

The MASP envisages the City Centre as the primary commercial area, supporting a range of retail, tourism, social and cultural activities. The MASP required the preparation of a Joint Retail Strategy for the Metropolitan Area by Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council. The Joint Retail Strategy is set out in Volume 6 of this Development Plan, while Chapter 5, Section 1 Retail sets out the policies and objectives in relation to retail development.

The Local Authority will support initiatives and improvements to the customer experience of the City Centre, including a number of projects which will be undertaken over the lifetime of this Plan. Such initiatives and projects include the preparation of a City Centre Public Realm Strategy, the revitalisation of O'Connell Street, the Limerick Laneways Project, the Wayfinding and Orientation Strategy, the Living Limerick City Centre Initiative and the World Class Waterfront. The Retail Strategy identifies the development potential of key consolidation sites that are essential for the creation of critical mass and the revitalisation of a competitive retail sector. Redevelopment of Arthur's Quay will secure the City's role as a premier retail destination, increasing visitors, footfall and spin off benefits for restaurants, hotels, tourism and cultural destinations. In addition, the Colbert Station development has the capacity for a new neighbourhood supported by employment, education, retail, health, transport and leisure facilities.

### 3.4.2.4 Building Height Strategy

Implementation of the National Planning Framework requires increased density (Refer to Chapter 2: Core Strategy), scale and height of developments, including an appropriate mix of living, working, social and recreational spaces in urban areas. While achieving higher density does not automatically imply taller buildings alone, increased building height is an essential component in the optimisation of the capacity of urban sites to facilitate compact growth and achieve the transformational objectives of the MASP.

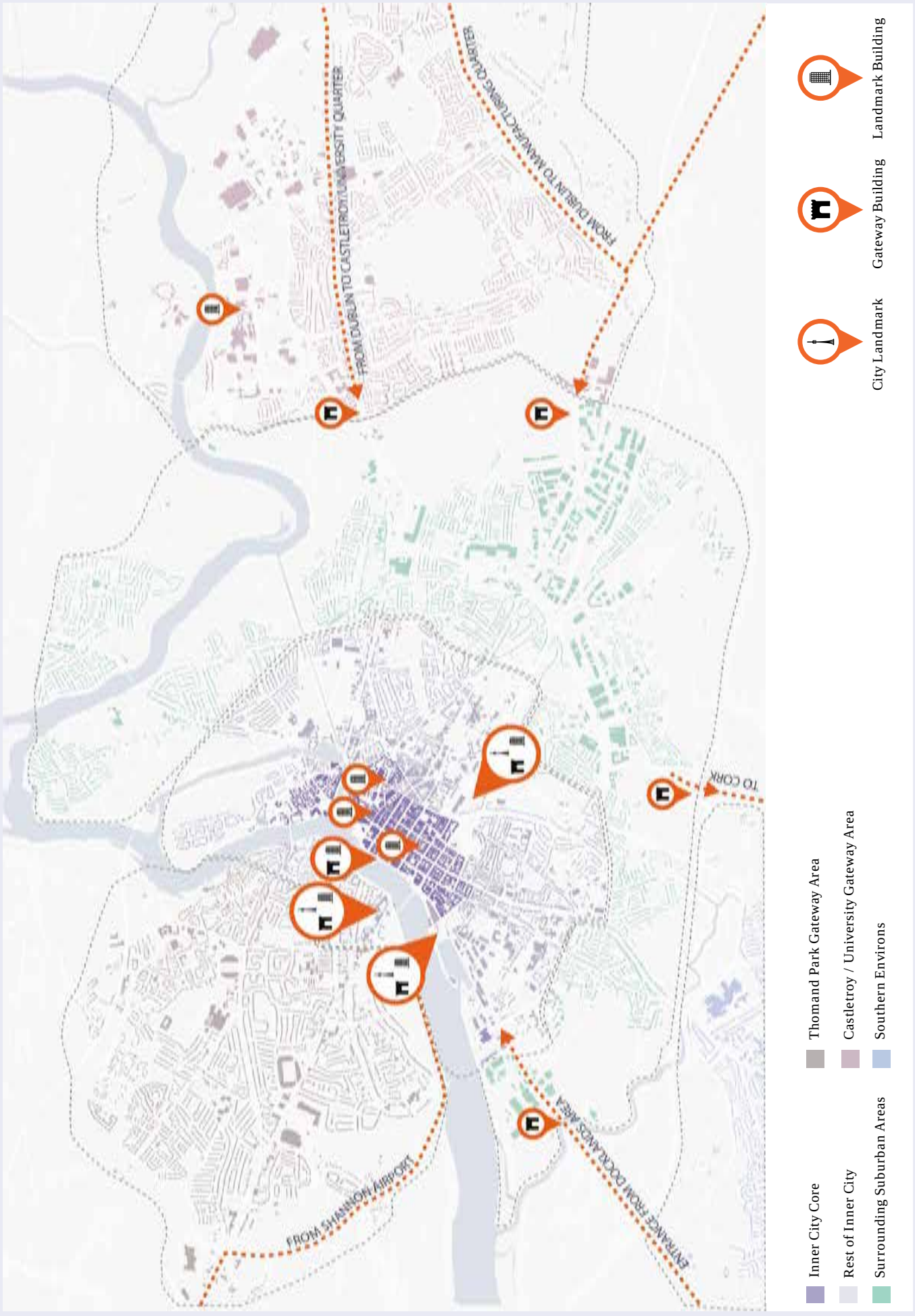
In accordance with the requirements of the *Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2018), a Building Height Strategy for Limerick City has been prepared to accompany this Plan as set out in Volume 6 and should be read in tandem with this chapter. The strategy aims to ensure the preservation of Limerick's character and provide guidance and criteria on the development of new buildings with an appropriate scale and mass in areas across the City and suburbs. The Strategy defines a series of gateways between the city and wider area and from this proposes a series of urban character areas. The character areas and gateway locations are intended to allow for the identification and plotting of the key characteristics and sensitivities of the City as they pertain to a greater understanding of building height and their implication on development management. The Building Heights Strategy for Limerick City provides guidance for building height at the Character Area level for the City Centre as set out in the Development Management Standards. New developments will be required to comply with the criteria set out in the Building Height Strategy.

**Objective CGR O9**
**Building Heights**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure that all new tall buildings in Limerick City are designed in accordance with the character area objectives, tall building recommendations and criteria set out in the Development Management Standards. All such buildings shall be of an exceptional architectural quality and standard of design and finish.
b) Focus delivery of tall buildings in the City Centre Centre (Inner City Core and Rest of Inner City as per Map 3.6: Tall Buildings at City Level below), in particular the areas that have been identified as having potential for increased building height. In particular, tall building clusters will be encouraged at The Quays, Colbert Station Quarter, Cleeves Site and The Docklands in accordance with the building classification criteria set out in the Building Height Strategy. Generally tall buildings outside of the City Centre will also be considered at designated District Centres, at Local Centres, where justified on infill and brownfield sites identified in the Settlement Capacity Audit, at Strategic Employment Locations, at appropriate locations within the Regeneration Areas or in accordance with the locations shown on Map 3.6 below - Tall Buildings at City Level.
c) Protect the unique intrinsic character, scale and significant views of Limerick City, the skyline and key landmark buildings in the delivery of increased building heights, through the application of the Tall Building Classifications, Recommendations, High Level Principles and Assessment Tools and Criteria set out in the Building Height Strategy.
d) Ensure applications for tall buildings are supported by the following assessments and any additional assessments required at the discretion of the Planning Authority - Environmental Assessment, Wind Analysis, Sunlight and Daylight Analysis, Verified View Analysis, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Architectural Design Statement, Traffic Impact Assessment including a Mobility Management Plan for non- residential uses, Building Services Strategy.

## Map 3.6: Tall Buildings at City Level



### 3.4.2.5 Urban Character Area Objectives

The Urban Character Areas comprise the various Neighbourhoods of Limerick City Centre and Environs, including Mungret and Annacotty as set out in brief in the table below. These Urban Character Areas were identified in the Landscape Character Assessment and analysed in the Building Height Strategy and are underpinned by the Neighbourhoods set out under the Limerick 2030 Review and Update.

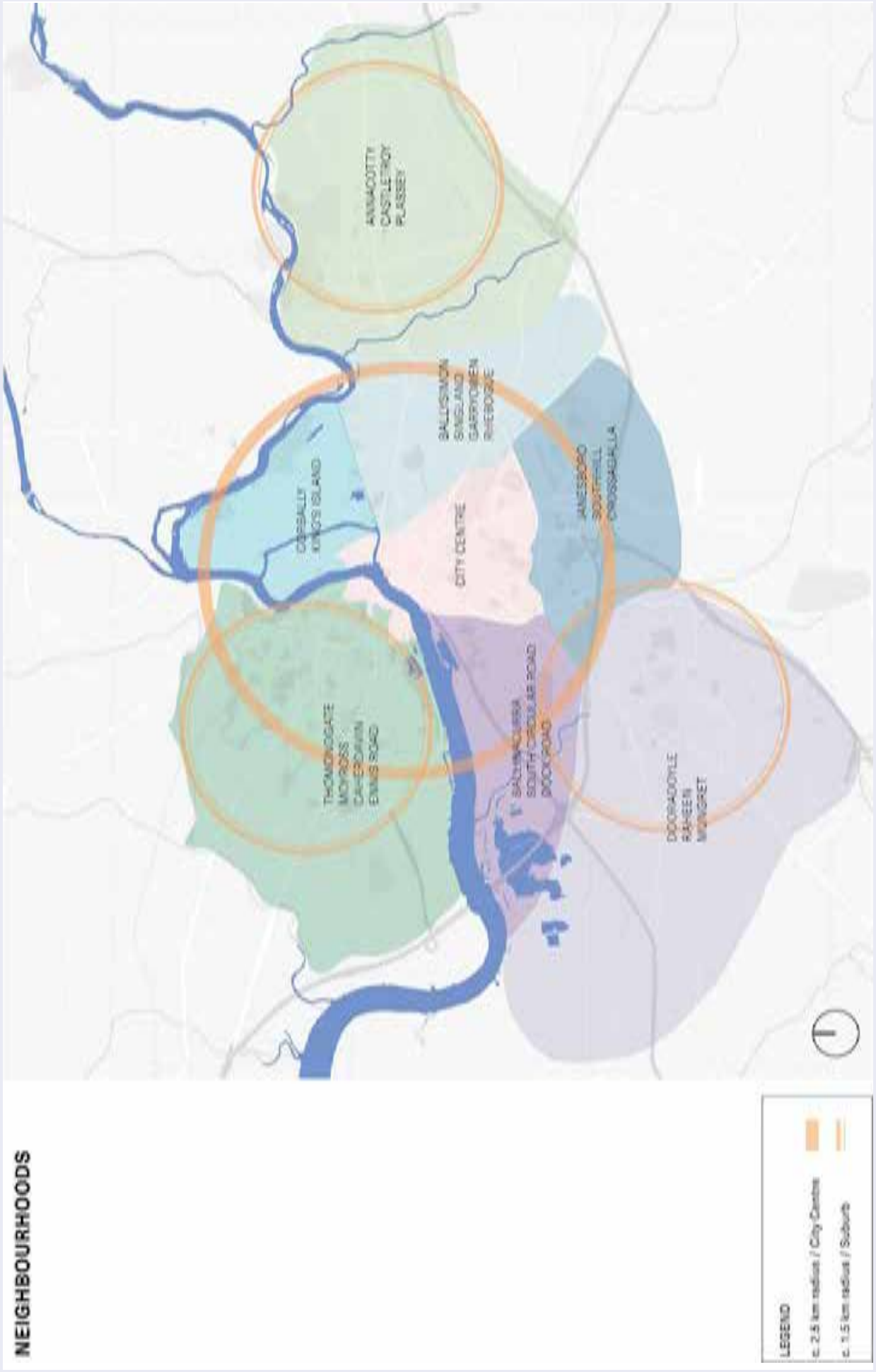
Table 3.2: Urban Character and Objectives

| Area | Urban Structure / Character | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| **UCA 1 City Centre** | This area broadly covers the historic city centre comprising:<br><br>**English Town**, encompassing the Medieval heart of the city. While little of the original medieval structures remain, this area is distinctive due to its network of narrow streets, generally low 2 storey buildings and the materiality of its historic buildings, including King John's Castle, St. Mary's Cathedral and Bishop's Palace. English Town also remains the location of important civic buildings with Limerick City and County Council Offices and the Circuit Court.<br><br>**Irish Town's** character is derived from its historical development around John's Square and the Milk Market. The street pattern is irregular, with no clear visual connections to the commercial core. There is a mixture of building typologies, with a rich history of industry visible in the remnants of old mills and granaries. The area also takes in part of St. John's Hospital, with the adjacent St. John's Cathedral and its tall spire forming a landmark in the city skyline.<br><br>**Newtown Pery**, known as Limerick's Georgian core is located within the Inner-City Core Area. The area is the commercial and cultural heart of the City, characterised by 18th and 19th Century Georgian architecture, interrupted by buildings of the 20th Century, which replaced original buildings as the City expanded. The mixed urban grain is characterised by a regular grid pattern, which becomes fully evident from Sarsfield Street continuing south and southwest.<br><br>**Transition Area** - The buildings in this area were developed between the time period of Irish Town and Newtown Pery. Many buildings, particularly those within the Opera Square site, served as areas of production and storage due to their proximity to the Customs House. The area retains a mixed variety of functions including offices, residential, car parking, commercial and storage. Past uses remain visible in the remnants of old stone storehouses and the iconic Granary building. | a) Create a pedestrian friendly river focused City Centre environment.<br>b) Development to take into account the existing Architectural Conservation Areas and Protected Structures set out under Volume 3.<br>c) Infill and brownfield development patterns to be favoured.<br>d) New developments shall have regard to the Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan, the LDA Framework Plan for Colbert Quarter and the LSMATS when completed.<br>e) New buildings within the City Centre should respond closely to the fundamental character and general scale of existing buildings and streetscape. The Building Height Strategy shall guide development within this area, particularly taller buildings.<br>f) In the Quays, the Docklands Area, Colbert Quarter and Cleeves Site, where there are larger scale and vacant or lower density sites, taller buildings should be provided within a cluster of varying height, creating a coherent grouping of buildings that relate to each other and to their surrounding urban context in terms of street layout, massing and design. |

| Area | Urban Structure / Character | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| | **The Quays** are concentrated on the urban blocks fronting the River Shannon. The area has a mix of primarily residential and commercial development. Buildings are more modern and notably taller, ranging between 6 to 10 storeys. Remaining historic buildings include the Limerick Museum and Hibernian House on Henry Street.<br><br>**Docklands Area** contains a working dock on the southern bank of the River Shannon. The historic use as a port is visible in the old mills and stone structures along Dock Road. The area contains a limited number of taller buildings, most notably the Ranks Silo, a local landmark at 10 storeys, as well as the 6 storey Bannatyne Mills building. Land uses to the south of the Dock Road are more varied, with a mixture of light industrial, residential and commercial, including the Docklands Business Park and remediated Gasworks Site.<br><br>**Colbert Quarter** is a substantial area around Colbert Station which is in multiple ownership. This characterises the range of uses, including Colbert Station a transportation hub for the City, St. Joseph's Hospital and the educational campus on Sexton Street.<br><br>**Cleeves** comprises a number of distinct parts, including the Flaxmill Site with 2 Protected Structures and other significant historic buildings, the Shipyard Site directly across the road from the Flaxmill Site and the Stonetown Terrace Site. The site has been in industrial use since its construction in the mid- nineteenth Century as visible in the original stone industrial buildings and its iconic chimney structure, which dominates the skyline on the northern banks of the Shannon. | g) The Georgian Neighbourhood will experience on-going renovation of its building stock with a substantial increase in the number of residents and level of business activity to create a bustling and vibrant mixed use residential and business district. The distinct qualities of the area are well established and there is a need to preserve the Georgian fabric, as well as the complex elements, which contribute to the character of the built environment of Newtown Pery.<br>h) Important vertical landmarks that are of key and local significance which should be protected by future development include:<br>**Newtown Pery:**<br>• Tait's Clock<br>• People's Park, Rice's Memorial<br>• St. John's Cathedral<br><br>**English Town:**<br>• King John's Castle<br>• Bishops Palace<br>• City Hall<br>• St. Mary's Cathedral<br><br>**Irish Town:**<br>• The Milk Market<br>• St. John's Cathedral<br>• St. Michael's Church<br>• John's Square. |
| **UCA O2 - Surrounding Suburban Area** | This area covers the suburbs immediately adjoining the Inner-City Area to the north, south and east. It encompasses the neighbourhoods of Ballysimon, Garryowen, Singland, Rhebogue, Corbally, King's Island, Janesboro, South Circular Road/ Ballinacurra and Southill. This area is substantially residential in character with a range of services. | Infill and brownfield development patterns to be favoured.<br><br>Building Height Strategy to inform design of higher buildings and in line with Objective CGR O9 - Building Heights. |
| **UCA O3 Castletroy/ Plassey/ Annacotty** | This area is located to the east of the City Centre and covers the urban areas of Castletroy, Annacotty, Monaleen and Plassey as well as the University of Limerick. This area is substantially residential, served by a range of uses including the Castletroy Shopping Centre, Castletroy Park Hotel, recreational facilities such as the Castletroy Golf Club, educational institutions and business parks. | a) Infill and brownfield development patterns to be favoured.<br>b) River Groody Green Wedge to be retained. |

| Area | Urban Structure / Character | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| | A substantial character area is the University of Limerick campus. The gateway flagpoles at University of Limerick are an established high point within the surrounding environs of Limerick City. Its significance as a gateway is due to its development as a University quarter. The campus is expansive at over 130 hectares and located both north and south of the River Shannon in Counties Limerick and Clare. The campus is largely self-contained and is substantially enclosed. Its presence has attracted technology companies to the area, with the National Technology Park located to the east. | c) Building Height Strategy to inform design of higher buildings in line with Objective CGR O9 - Building Heights, in particular:<br>– Proposals for taller buildings within this gateway area must be designed to complement the University's established prominence. |
| **UCA O4 Southern Environs - Dooradoyle/ Raheen/ Mungret** | This area covers the Southern Environs of the city and contains many modern housing developments dating in large part from the 1960s. Major housing initiatives are currently under way in the area. The area also accommodates a range of other uses including the Regional Hospital, Raheen Business Park, the Crescent Shopping Centre, educational institutions and recreational facilities. | a) Infill and brownfield development patterns to be favoured.<br>b) Building Height Strategy to inform design of higher buildings and to direct high buildings to the areas in the City Centre that have been identified as having potential for increased building height, subject to comprehensive case by case assessment at planning application stage. Tall buildings outside of the City Centre shall be in line with Objective CGR O9 - Building Heights.<br>c) Special Control Area in Mungret College Area to be retained, together with protected views.<br>d) The Framework for Mungret to guide development in this location including the development of a new local centre in Mungret.<br>e) Existing green spaces to be retained. |
| **UCA O5 Thomandgate/ Moyross/ Caherdavin/ Ennis Road** | This part of the City is the gateway from the west. Thomond Park acts as a gateway building, marking the entrance to the wider city. This area contains many housing developments from the 1960s, but also contains the Technological University of the Shannon, the Maternity Hospital, the Gaelic Grounds and the Jetland Shopping Centre, all of which are low rise, in keeping with their surroundings. | a) Infill and brownfield development patterns to be favoured.<br>b) Building Height Strategy shall inform design of higher buildings, in particular any proposed buildings of height in this gateway area should respect and reinforce the landmark status of Thomond Park. To create a strong streetscape taller buildings should be considered along Moyross avenue and adjacent to the proposed railway station.<br>c) Existing green spaces to be retained. |

Map 3.7: City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty Neighbourhoods



### 3.4.3 Strategic Revitalisation

Limerick City and County Council will encourage and facilitate the continuous revitalisation and redevelopment of existing settlements across the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick), to create more desirable places in which people can live, work and visit.

With respect to Limerick City, parts of the City Centre suffers from a lack of concentration of economic activity, urban decay and social issues including:

- Urban decay in parts of the City core;
- High commercial and residential vacancies in the City Centre. A land use and vacancy survey, undertaken in January 2020 revealed vacancy rates of 23% amongst commercial properties and 8% amongst residential units;
- A low employment rate and above average unemployment rate in some areas;
- A relatively slow rate of population growth for an urban area;
- A legacy of social inequalities including neighbourhoods with concentrations of poverty and social problems.

The National Planning Framework seeks to secure long term transformational and revitalisation focused compact City growth and address issues such as those outlined above. In accordance with the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy Objectives, Limerick City and County Council has a number of proposals for revitalisation over the lifetime of this Plan. Such projects aim to capitalise on the potential of underutilised, publicly owned, centrally located and strategic sites and their potential to have transformational effects, boosting the residential population, employment opportunities and economic output levels of a compact and sustainable City Centre as a driver for the wider Mid-West Region.

The following sections set out examples of some of the key initiatives and strategic sites proposed to facilitate the revitalisation of Limerick City Centre in a consolidated and compact manner.

**Objective CGR O10**
**Revitalisation**
It is an objective of the Council to promote and support the utilisation of targeted incentives, investment opportunities and various funding sources such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund and the Town and Village Renewal Scheme to facilitate the revitalisation and transformational renewal of Limerick's City, towns and villages for residential, employment, community and recreation purposes.

#### 3.4.3.1 Limerick 2030

The development of centrally located and strategic brownfield and underutilised lands present Limerick City with an opportunity to achieve the economic and social objectives associated with the targeted population growth for Limerick City in a sustainable manner. The key tool for the revitalisation of Limerick is the *Limerick 2030 – An Economic and Spatial Plan*. KPMG have recently prepared an Interim Review and Update of the Limerick 2030 Plan as set out in Volume 6. The Update builds on the original Limerick 2030 Plan's ambitions based around the economic and spatial objectives. The Limerick 2030 Plan sets out a blueprint for the economic and spatial revitalisation of Limerick City, to reposition it as a world-class City in Ireland and Europe. The NPF sees its implementation as a growth enabler, which can act as an exemplar to other cites not just nationally but internationally.

The establishment of the Limerick Twenty Thirty Strategic Development DAC (Designated Activity Company) has accelerated the implementation of the Limerick 2030 Plan, with actions proposed over a 20-year period. The DAC is the first entity of its kind created by a Local Authority to deliver a City and countywide programme of investment. It is the biggest single Irish commercial property development programme undertaken outside of Dublin.

Over €1 billion is being invested in enterprise and investment infrastructure as part of the Limerick 2030 vision, which aims to transform Limerick through economic, social and physical investment. The revitalisation and densification of Limerick City Centre is identified as a key objective of the National Planning Framework, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan. The MASP supports initiatives including the development of Opera Square, Cleeves Riverside Quarter, Mungret College lands and the proposed World Class Waterfront project, which will link strategic brownfield sites and enhance the amenity and attractiveness of Limerick's waterfront.

#### 3.4.3.2 Living Limerick City Centre Initiative

The Living Limerick City Centre Initiative (LLCC Initiative) was awarded funding in 2021 under the Urban Regeneration Development Fund. The LLCC Initiative seeks to make positive, innovative and transformational change to revitalise the centre of Limerick City. The regeneration of the City Centre is identified as a growth enabler under the NPF. The Initiative is a 7-year programme focused on targeted interventions to:

- Renew vacant and underutilised building stock by embedding emerging economic and employment opportunities in derelict buildings;
- Lead the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient City, deliver compact growth, strengthen the economy through the development of innovation and enhance existing public amenity and heritage;
- Transform the public realm of the City through a targeted programme of renewal that will increase footfall and support the development of the emerging economic, employment and residential models.

These interventions are underpinned by the integration of innovative and proactive collaboration practices from the outset, which include not just public organisations but private companies, communities of interest and the wider population. Together these interventions aim to develop a City that is more resilient to economic and environmental events. The interventions are briefly outlined below:

1. The Living Georgian City Programme supports two key pathfinder projects demonstrating new residential living in the City Centre in two vacant historic properties in Limerick City and County Council ownership. These developments are delivered by a Revolving Fund managed by a structured Governance model overseeing Investment Modelling and Feasibility for differing forms of housing provision and groups. A Smart Design Code is also to be developed recording the methodologies used in the restoration.
2. The Digital Innovation Cluster will develop a block within the City Centre to attract new companies, start-ups, accelerators and other related entities, creating a dense cluster of innovators and entrepreneurs to enable rapid innovation in the region. The cluster will offer niche features enabling the growth of the film and creative arts sectors. The project will develop two current vacant building (No.s 29 and 30 Cecil Street) and will incorporate the existing Engine building and Digital Collaboration. The proposal comprises development of a new 6-storey building and the refurbishment of the Theatre Royal building into a Film School and City Cinema. The project includes the creation of a Citizen Observatory to act as an access point for community-based collaboration, data gathering and analysis. The Digital Innovation Cluster will be connected to the existing Mid-West E-hub network to drive employment and job creation in towns and villages of the Mid-West.
3. The Futureproofing Place Programme reimagines the logic of the grid of streets and the supporting laneways of the City Centre. This element will support the vision in the Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (LSMATS) by reinforcing the physical spine of the City Centre

to achieve compact growth. This programme will accommodate new mobility and energy services, future data infrastructure and enabling rapid problem solving of liveability and business issues in the City Centre, together with the users of these spaces. A critical element of this is to animate the streets with installations, events, markets, etc. while demonstrating the new Limerick brand.

4. The Citizen Collaboration Programme is the first of three programmes of work that are elevated by their integration with each other and by being supported by the Innovation ecosystem, established as part of the +CityxChange programme of works in three cross cutting activities:
   - Liveable Limerick City Centre Strategic Framework: A review and update of the Limerick 2030 strategy will align existing strategies to address the complex needs of the City, including a local liveability and urban condition survey;
   - City Animation Partnerships: The development of new programmes and partnerships with all stakeholders to support the social, cultural and economic viability of the City Centre specifically:
   - A canopy on Cruises Street and potentially adjoining streets;
   - The installation of public infrastructure to support public events;
   - Lighting of signature buildings;
   - A digital retail and business strategy to support the digital transition with a specific emphasis on supporting the food strategy through the development of a City Centre food hub;
   - Citizen Solutions Programme: The development of an active programme of citizen led solutions targeted at liveability issues in the City Centre.

#### 3.4.3.3 Limerick Laneways Project

The Limerick Laneways Project is part of the wider Living Limerick City Centre Initiative. This project will develop a strategy to guide the repurposing of twenty-five laneways in the City Centre, through examining issues such as movement, planting, lighting and refuse. The strategy will initially include detailed design proposals for seven laneways. The laneways are an important asset to the City that provides not just alternative routes through the City Centre, but are also capable of providing important recreational and amenity space, as well as supporting new development in the curtilages of older buildings. The strategy will complement a number of other initiatives such as LSMATS, the Wayfinding Strategy and other public realm initiatives.

**Objective LL O1**
**Limerick Laneways**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote reuse of vacant buildings and support existing uses within the City Centre.
b) Improve connections and maintain linkages within and through the City Centre.
c) Promote high design quality and improve the public realm.

#### 3.4.3.4 Opera Square

The Opera Square development represents Limerick 2030's principle response to transform the social and economic profile of Limerick City Centre and stimulate growth that will benefit not just its immediate environs but also the entire Mid-West Region.

Opera Square, under construction on a 1.62ha. site zoned City Centre, will be a landmark commercial development reflecting Limerick's status as a leading destination for inward investment. Works have commenced on the development which will be a LEED Gold and nZEB standard Campus, consisting primarily of commercial offices supported by a range of retail and non-retail services, an Apart Hotel and new City Library in the historic Georgian Town Hall. The

development will extend to over 555,000 sq. ft. of accommodation with over 5,800m² of public realm and high-quality streetscapes. The campus will provide a day-time employment hub, transforming into a bustling night-time destination complete with restaurants, bars and open entertainment spaces. The design will also be entirely complementary to and protect important Georgian architecture on the site.

Opera Square will be a key driver for increased economic activity in the City Centre, delivering significant employment opportunities on brownfield lands while acting as a catalyst for other major City Centre investments.

### 3.4.3.5 World Class Waterfront

The World Class Waterfront development is a key revitalisation and transformation project under the Limerick 2030 Plan. The World Class Waterfront project comprises three elements – the Riverside Infrastructural Works, Cleeves Riverside Quarter and the University of Limerick City Campus. The project focuses on mixed-use brownfield regeneration, adaptive re-use and reversal of vacancy and dereliction in Limerick City Centre.

The World Class Waterfront project will deliver on the NPF objectives of compact growth, sustainable mobility and place-making/public realm, which has the potential to make a transformational difference to Limerick City. In combination, the three elements of the project will facilitate an increase in the population residing and working in the City Centre, thus enhancing critical mass and footfall and the City's retail, hospitality and service sectors. In addition, the project will create cross-cutting benefits for the City Centre in terms of an increase in the viability of land and infrastructure, enhancement of the City's natural and built heritage, as well as contributing to Limerick's unique riverside skyline. The project will provide health and well-being benefits though the inclusion of green infrastructure which itself will create improved air quality, reduced heat stress and lower storm runoff rates through the inclusion of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).

1. The design and development of the Riverside Infrastructural Works' public realm and sustainable travel links proposed on the waterfront is being progressed in conjunction with the Office of Public Works' Flood Relief Scheme for the City Centre as part of the Shannon CFRAM programme. The Limerick 2030 Plan recognises that the City's quays represent a principal asset. The plan advocates their re-invention as the main entertainment and leisure destination for the City. This element will provide a cohesive linear link to other revitalisation sites being progressed under the Limerick 2030 Plan as outlined above.

   The World-class Waterfront Riverside Infrastructural Works include:
   - Public realm works along the quayside from Limerick Docks to the south along the central Quays to Merchant's Quay, King John's Castle and George's Quay and returning along the north bank of the River Shannon;
   - Proposed walkways/cycleways and pedestrian bridges, one of which will cross the Shannon and three smaller bridges that will span the Abbey River;
   - Re-alignment of the public road at Arthur's Quay and Honan's Quay to facilitate a comprehensive re-development project at Arthur's Quay including a new riverside park and public square.

2. The Cleeves Riverside Quarter is proposed at the former Cleeves factory site near O'Callaghan Strand in Limerick City. The property is a brownfield site zoned City Centre and will be regenerated by Limerick Twenty Thirty. The iconic 10-acre former Cleeves factory site is located on the northern banks of the River Shannon. The site is divided into two sections which straddle both sides of the North Circular Road /

O'Callaghan Strand. The potential of the Cleeves site is recognised by Limerick 2030, with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region also identifying it as a key strategic site. A masterplan for Mixed Use development has been prepared for the site, and a planning application was made to An Coimisiún Pleanála (October 2025) for 234 residential units, 299sm of commercial space, a purpose-built creche, 270 purpose-built student units and work to the public realm.

The development will include conservation and adaptive re-use of a number of protected structures and other historic buildings. The site will provide public spaces and is likely to benefit from improved connectivity via a pedestrian bridge to be constructed across the River Shannon by Limerick City and County Council. This new bridge will connect the Cleeves Riverside Quarter on the Western side, to the core City Centre and Georgian Neighbourhood on the Eastern side of the river. The project will deliver City Centre living, education and employment creation opportunities, while addressing the economic and social dereliction of this area of the City through large-scale revitalisation.

**Objective CRQ O1**
**Cleeves Riverside Quarter**

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the following are addressed in any redevelopment:

a) Implement a high-quality urban design solution with a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, education, tourism/ancillary retail and amenities connecting to the City core.
b) Respond to the site context to generate a sustainable solution that creates a distinct riverside quarter, respecting the significant historic buildings, enabling the potential for greater height and density, while creating a landmark City gateway.
c) Investigate, assess and integrate the historic buildings and industrial heritage of significance, protect key features of historical merit and implement conservation principles to assist in the appropriate management of protected structures, in a manner that facilitates the practical regeneration and reuse of the site.
d) Enhance permeability of the public realm by removing and/or decreasing the effects of existing barriers to and within the site, through initiatives including:
   - Public access, walking and cycling networks;
   - Enhanced streetscape and legibility;
   - Removal of section(s) of the existing Cleeves wall; and
   - Improving road and traffic circulation.
e) Enhance the legibility of the natural and built environment and landscape and connections between place and space, whilst ensuring delivery of a high-quality public realm that relates and links to the City core and the River Shannon.
f) Identify and enhance natural heritage areas and features, particularly where opportunities exist to improve biodiversity and provide for quality public realm.
g) Support sustainable modes of transport and use of the public realm.
h) Facilitate a holistically sustainable and low carbon development that is energy efficient and future proofed for a changing climate.
i) Promote a site-specific approach, reflecting emerging best practice, in addressing flood risk and in the adaptation of protected structures and buildings of significance.

3. The University of Limerick City Campus is proposed at the former Dunnes Stores site (0.4ha.) at Sarsfield Bridge zoned City Centre. The UL campus development on this central brownfield site will include two linked buildings comprising a university teaching building and a student accommodation residence. The project will support the delivery of a number of objectives as outlined in the University of Limerick's

Strategic Plan *UL@50*. The proposal also directly links to the NPF growth enablers for Limerick through the implementation of the Limerick 2030 strategy, the revitalisation of a key brownfield City Centre site and the expansion of the third level institute. The project will deliver an educational, economic and social footprint, which will stimulate the transformation of industry, commerce, housing and amenity in the core of the City Centre.

**Objective ULCC O1**
**UL City Campus**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Facilitate and support the establishment of the UL Limerick City Campus at the former Dunnes Stores site at the junction of Sarsfield Bridge and Honan's Quay.
b) Deliver a mixed use development which should provide a high quality educational and residential campus and ancillary facilities.
c) Develop a landmark tall building on this gateway site in accordance with the provisions of the Building Height Strategy.
d) Ensure the highest quality design of the public realm.
e) Ensure the provision of green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout including connections to existing green infrastructure assets.
f) Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance.
g) Incorporate pedestrian and cycling connectivity and facilities.

### 3.4.3.6 Arthur's Quay

Arthur's Quay encompasses the Arthur's Quay Shopping Centre, the surrounding streets, Arthur's Quay Park, Sarsfield House and the Debenham's/ Roches Stores site all zoned City Centre. These areas have the potential to form a single consolidation site with significant potential for transformational benefits to the centre of the city, subject to the preparation of a Framework Plan. Such a Framework Plan may consider the potential for inclusion of the adjoining UL City Campus site as outlined further above. The Framework Plan shall be supported by a survey of the existing area together with an options analysis.

Under the Limerick 2030 Plan, Arthur's Quay will be transformed through major redevelopment of the existing Arthur's Quay Shopping Centre and adjoining lands, to provide a new mixed-use retail, residential, leisure and office development. A new City Square will be created connecting across O'Connell Street to Cruises Street. The Retail Strategy envisages that the redevelopment of Arthur's Quay will secure the City's role as a premier retail destination, increasing visitors, footfall and spin off benefits for restaurants, hotels, tourism and culture destinations.

**Objective AQ O1**
**Arthur's Quay**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Facilitate creation of a mixed-use retail, residential, leisure and office development, including a new retail development to replace the Arthur's Quay Shopping Centre and expand onto a series of new blocks addressing Arthur's Quay Park, with a retail anchor and a range of other shop units/bars and restaurants fronting onto a new City Square.
b) Create a more pedestrian focused character and active uses that engages with the public realm along the River.
c) Ensure the highest quality of landmark design and public realm with active facades and entrances creating frontage to the Waterfront.
d) Facilitate renovation of the Penneys and Debenhams Stores sites, including redevelopment of the underutilised and brownfield lands to the rear of the Penneys store.
e) Ensure delivery and service arrangements are updated to minimise impact on the public realm, particularly during daytime and evening hours.

### 3.4.3.7 Ellen Street

Limerick City and County Council acknowledges the potential opportunity for the development of surface car parks throughout the City Centre. In particular, the Council notes the potential opportunity for development of a large brownfield site located on Ellen Street, which is currently utilised as a surface car park. The brownfield site zoned City Centre is located in a prime City Centre location, opposite Opera Square. Development of these underutilised lands would contribute to the overall revitalisation of this area of the City, which has suffered from dereliction and decline over recent years. Development of this site would facilitate improvements to the visual amenities of Ellen Street, which is a key tourist route linking O'Connell Street to the Milk Market.

**Objective ES O1**
**Ellen Street Car Park**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Facilitate the creation of a mixed-use City Centre development incorporating employment and residential opportunities.
b) Enhance the character of the area through the highest quality urban design and public realm.
c) Ensure integration of connectivity to surrounding streets.
d) Ensure the provision of green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout.
e) Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance.

### 3.4.3.8 Mungret

The Limerick Shannon MASP recognises the potential for sustainable residential development in Mungret. Funding was secured through the Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF) to deliver a link street, which has unlocked substantial lands within public and private ownership to allow construction of residential development supported by community and employment uses. The Mungret link street has allowed for the extension of existing bus services which provides a service to Raheen, the City Centre, University of Limerick and Castletroy/Monaleen. This opportunity area has the potential to deliver approximately 2,000+ dwelling units. A number of housing developments have recently been granted planning permission in this area. The first phase will deliver approximately 250 dwelling units. All dwellings will be located within 100m of a pocket park and 400m of a small park.

In addition, a further stage of the Mungret LIHAF Road will link to the R526 Patrickswell Road. This final link will not only support route proposals under BusConnects but help unlock significant future housing delivery within the area. The proposed project will create an extension to the existing active and sustainable links to the two new primary school campuses (Educate Together and Gaelscoil An Raithin) a secondary school (Mungret Community College) and other key local amenities such as Mungret park, Mungret GAA and a proposed Dooneen AC running track. In addition, a Neighbourhood Park of 11ha. including a fully equipped inclusive playground and walking track has already been completed. The pedestrian connection between these facilities and Mungret Village has undergone public realm improvements along the R859 and in Mungret Village. Additional cycle facilities have also been introduced on the R859. These measures, in addition to delivering a more connected network of walking routes that can enable people to walk to and from destinations within the neighbourhood and wider area are essential to create a shift away from use of the car and facilitate a more sustainable form of development.

Objective MF O1 below sets out the framework for development in Mungret. The framework will facilitate the creation of a vibrant neighbourhood that accommodates and encourages a variety of uses that nurtures a strong sense of community. The framework seeks to ensure that the new neighbourhood at Mungret is a place that is safe, with people friendly streets and spaces that relates well to its surroundings, including Mungret Village and the adjacent neighbourhoods of Dooradoyle and Raheen. The framework is set out in the map below.

The framework will have cognisance of the environmental and historical assets in the area including Loughmore Common proposed Natural Heritage Area and the Mungret Monastic Complex.

**Objective MF O1**
**Mungret Framework**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Deliver an exemplar new neighbourhood with a clear identity and character that responds to the natural and historic environment and provides a great place to live.
b) Deliver a green neighbourhood that encourages healthy lifestyles, offering easy and safe access to amenities and opportunity for play, recreation and learning.
c) Create a strong and legible structure that leads people to a mixed-use centre at Mungret College, integrates the site with the wider area and strengthens existing centres.
d) Grow the existing community hub at Mungret College and facilitate the development of a new local centre so that it forms a heart for the new neighbourhood and is accessible to all residents.
e) Protect and celebrate the site's historic assets including the College, Mungret Abbey and medieval ringforts.
f) Embrace the wider landscape and create a green framework across the site that retains the site's green assets and enhances biodiversity.
g) Create a walkable and cycle friendly neighbourhood that provides easy access to schools and amenities through a safe and attractive network of streets and paths.
h) Create a legible network of streets defined by new buildings and laid out as part of a clear hierarchy.
i) Incorporate bus routes through the heart of the neighbourhood, reducing the need to travel by car.
j) Provide a mix of dwelling sizes and types of the highest quality design, materials and energy efficiency, that give the opportunity for every stage of the life cycle and to up or downsize within the neighbourhood.
k) Residential development shall be designed to create a streetscape along the main spine roads, with properties fronting onto the road where appropriate.
l) Higher density development e.g. apartment blocks are encouraged along the LIHAF Road, at the local centre and at block corners in particular.

### 3.4.4 Land Development Agency

Under Project Ireland 2040, the Land Development Agency (LDA) is tasked with building 150,000 new homes over the next 20 years. The LDA has a focus on managing the State's own lands to develop new homes and regenerate under-utilised sites. In the long term, the LDA will assemble strategic land banks from a mix of public and private owned lands, making these available for housing in a controlled manner, which will bring essential long-term stability to the Irish housing market. In Limerick, the LDA is responsible for overseeing the development of the Colbert Quarter area and a number of additional strategic sites in the City.

**Objective LDA O1**
**Land Development Agency**
It is an objective of the Council to support and work with the Land Development Agency in the planning, co-ordination and development of large-scale and strategic land banks, particularly lands in state ownership, in order to achieve compact growth, sustainable development and economic and physical revitalisation.

#### 3.4.4.1 Colbert Quarter

The Land Development Agency is preparing plans for the development of the proposed Colbert Quarter area. The Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework Strategy 2021 – 2041, which is currently being prepared, will aim to develop a 69ha. brownfield site zoned City Centre, surrounding Colbert Station including the railway and bus stations, St. Joseph's Hospital Campus, recreational lands and lands in private ownership. The redevelopment of the lands is being led by the LDA along with other State Bodies including Limerick City and County Council, CIE and the HSE.

The Colbert Quarter site has the capacity for the development of a walkable neighbourhood of new homes for 6,300 people, employment, education, health, transport and leisure facilities, with a connected public realm and high-quality architectural design to characterise and punctuate the area. The new quarter will be compact, dense and sustainable, based around an important regional and national transport hub. The Colbert Quarter provides an opportunity to create a model for potential future urban revitalisation in Limerick and other cities. The potential for designation of the Colbert Station Quarter as an Urban Development Zone in accordance with the Housing For All Strategy is recognised and supported by the Local Authority.

The strategy for the Colbert Quarter will analyse the land banks, set out a vision for redevelopment and the actions necessary for a coherent and integrated redevelopment to be facilitated. The Framework Strategy will be used to guide the future development of the area.

**Objective CSQ O1a**
**Colbert Quarter**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Create a vibrant and sustainable new urban quarter with work, living and recreational opportunities, based around high-quality public transport nodes.
b) Create a place with distinctive urban character, based on urban design principles with strong linkages to the City core.
c) Provide for sufficient densities to sustain public transport and a viable mix of uses.
d) Provide for an integrated sustainable mobility network, with walking, cycling and public transport as the main components.
e) Provide for the integration of new and established communities.
f) Provide for a balanced mix of residential tenure.
g) Enhance the new identity of the area by providing for buildings of City, gateway and landmark design and heights, which act as place-markers, signifiers and location finding identifiers. (Refer to Volume 6: Building Height Strategy).
h) Provide for a mix of residential, employment and leisure uses in the area and ensure that the key historic and existing deficits with regard to access, layout and movement are addressed in any redevelopment.

**Objective CSQ O1b**
**Colbert Quarter**

It is an objective of the Council to support the implementation of the Colbert Quarter Spatial Framework along with its principles, which include the creation of 8 distinctive Neighbourhoods which form the Colbert Quarter as follows:

a) **Station District** – The Colbert Station area is a key transport hub surrounded by the Colbert Plaza. There is potential to enclose and intensify the area, to optimise and enhance its functionality as a gateway and key sustainable travel hub. The district has the potential to provide for new Civic/ community uses, workplaces, new homes, hotel and leisure uses, the starting point for the Limerick Link and landmark buildings all around the plaza and station.

b) **Sexton District** – The Sexton District's character builds upon the existing education uses, allowing for expansion and infill to suit future demands. Other proposed uses could include higher education, student homes and workplaces, together with new high quality public realm, rail crossing points and links between Parnell Street and Roxboro Road.

c) **Roxboro District** –The Roxboro District contains existing healthcare and community uses, the chapel and other hospital protected structures. The district has the potential to develop as a new sustainable neighbourhood comprising new homes including age friendly homes, enhanced accessibility, and community space for this district.

d) **Ballysimon District** – This district incorporates proposed development plots to address HSE priorities with flexibility for review, adaptation and expansion depending on future needs and priorities. Proposals seek to enhance accessibility and the public realm around the buildings and site and provide for research and innovation space.

e) **Careys District** – The Carey's District has the potential to provide a high-quality urban living environment with access to expansive green spaces and local services, amenities and public realm. There is the opportunity to integrate the proposed reinstated Foynes Line to create a retail/leisure destination in the heart of the district and to utilise and activate the railway infrastructure to ensure vibrancy and safety and to create better connections across the railway line. The area has significant potential to provide a new mixed tenure residential neighbourhood.

f) **Caledonian District** – The Caledonian District can provide a high quality and varied residential neighbourhood with well-integrated pedestrian and cycling routes with access to generous green spaces and public park. There is an opportunity to create a civic heart with the provision of a new Central Park and the People's Pavilion. New primary and nursery school uses are integrated into the surrounding neighbourhood to support existing and new families.

g) **Kennedy District** – The Kennedy District is currently an operational bus depot with plans for further expansion. However, further to additional future study, the area has the potential to become an exciting and creative district, with community and recreation uses paired with creative and light industrial industries, which could inform a creative character that integrates with the bus depot use. Taller buildings aligned with or constructed over existing operational uses, could be a draw for light industrial/ creative uses.

h) **Janesboro District** – The Janesboro District has the potential to become a vibrant sport and activity zone through enhancing and aligning recreational facilities and with the existing clubs as the anchors for the area. The addition of a municipal hall with cafe could provide much needed recreational facilities for the wider community.

In order to achieve the key objectives for Colbert Station Quarter, the Council supports the activation of lands and other key opportunity sites as relevant which seek to achieve the key objectives as part of proposals for early-stage developments which includes the Guinness Site, HSE lands and the areas closest to Colbert Station. Furthermore, the Council will work with the LDA and partners to progress implementation of key infrastructure requirements where appropriate through working collaboratively and seeking out appropriate funding paths.

### 3.4.5 Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) Opportunity Sites

Further to the sites identified under the Limerick 2030 Plan above, the following sites have been identified for re-development which would contribute to the revitalisation of the area of the City and Suburbs (in Limerick) in which they are located while contributing to compact population and employment growth.

#### 3.4.5.1 Thomond Park

Limerick City and County Council acknowledges the potential economic opportunities arising from development of Thomond Park and the Munster Rugby brand. The Thomond Park Stadium and adjoining lands have the potential to accommodate a mixed-use development such as a multi-functional event centre and hotel, creating opportunities for employment in this area of the City. The development of an event centre would also enhance Limerick's tourism assets and ability to attract national and international scale concerts, festivals, exhibitions, conferences and trade shows.

**Objective TP O1**
**Thomond Park**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Facilitate creation of a mixed-use development providing employment, tourist and leisure related opportunities.
b) Enhance the character of the area through urban design and place-making, incorporating buildings of landmark design, having cognisance of the Thomond Park Stadium.
c) Require provision of an integrated sustainable mobility network, with walking, cycling and public transport as the main components.
d) Ensure green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout.
e) Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance.

#### 3.4.5.2 The Bays, Moyross

These mixed-use zoned opportunity lands of 1.85ha. are located adjoining The Bays in the Moyross Regeneration Area. The principle uses shall be for employment creation and the provision of a broad range of employment opportunities. The vision for development of these lands will be focused on job creation in a high-quality environment in terms of design and layout. A deficit of convenience retail floor space has been identified in Moyross. On this basis, a convenience retail element will be open for consideration, but is seen as ancillary to the primary use as an employment zone. No residential use will be permitted in this zone.

**Objective BM O1**
**The Bays, Moyross**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Facilitate creation of a mixed-use employment zone enhancing a broad range of employment opportunities for the local community. No residential use shall be permitted in this zone.
b) Consider provision of a single convenience retail unit, which shall not exceed a net floor area of 1,500m$^2$ subject to a Retail Impact Assessment.
c) Require the highest quality environment in terms of design and layout. Surface car parking shall be adequately screened and integrated into the site.
d) Ensure the maximisation of connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.
e) Ensure open spaces, where proposed, are positioned to provide passive and active surveillance.

### 3.4.5.3 Parkway Valley

The former Horizon Mall brownfield site of 16.04ha. comprising a mixed-use zone is located adjacent to the Parkway Retail Park in the townland of Singland. The vision for development of these lands will be focused on the creation of a high-quality environment in terms of design and layout, a mixture of functions, tenure types, unit sizes and the provision of a broad range of on-site facilities for residents, visitors and employees. The principal uses shall be for residential development. A range of other uses are considered open for consideration but are seen as ancillary to the primary use as a residential scheme. The retail needs of the area are being sufficiently met by the adjoining retail parks and shopping centres and the provision of retail development will not be permitted.

**Objective PV O1**
**Parkway Valley**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Require preparation of a masterplan by a suitable qualified person, with accompanying design statements showing how the design concepts are consistent with the following principles:
   i) Residential development shall constitute the primary use on site and the masterplan shall identify the layout of each block, the detailed design of individual buildings and spaces, including private and collective amenity areas, hard and soft landscaping, materials, finishes, street furniture, signage and lighting. Finishes and materials shall be consistent across the whole site.
   ii) Given the strategic location of the site on the R445 Dublin Road, there is potential for landmark buildings.
   iii) The purpose of the link street is to improve connectivity within the area and the layout, location and design of new streets/roads will be determined at planning application stage.
b) Support development of the area with supporting facilities such as crèches and amenity areas for residents, employees and visitors. A high standard of urban design will be required throughout the site in order to create a high-quality environment with a defined sense of place, functionally and physically connected to the existing and permitted development on surrounding lands.
c) Support development of a civic square and streets ensuring engagement and surveillance between the proposed development and the public realm. The public realm will be characterised by a high standard of finishes and treatments. A network of high-quality spaces formed by the highest quality of buildings, paving and landscaping is required. Architecturally designed buildings and open plazas, using high quality finishes will define civic spaces. Development shall be double fronted and shall address the Groody Park, the Dublin Road and streets and civic spaces within the development.
d) Ensure a sufficient mix of uses, which shall be appropriately integrated with the residential development on site to create a successful mixed-use development.
e) Encourage the use of underground parking, which shall be sensitively located and adequately screened.
f) Ensure provision of a network of pedestrian and cycle routes through the lands linked to the Groody Valley Green Wedge. Details of these linkages will be required in the masterplan.
g) Enable access via one entry point only along the R445 Dublin Road, with potential for a new access point to link with the Tipperary Road.
h) Ensure adequate provision of social and community facilities within the site, to serve existing and future residents. Provision shall be made for childcare facilities, playground and facilities suitable for a range of age groups including walking paths and community meeting space.
i) Integrate noise-minimising design responses at the earliest stages of site layout design and master planning, including the use of buffers, landscaped noise-attenuation features, building orientation, and careful positioning of noise-sensitive rooms as necessary.

### 3.4.5.4 Groody Valley

The New Residential zoned lands comprising 2.44ha. is located in the north-eastern corner of the Groody Valley area at the junction of the R445 and the Groody Road. Development of this brownfield site would complement the amenity use of the Groody Valley Green Wedge and facilitate creation of a dual frontage landmark building with the highest quality public realm on the approach to the City from Castletroy. The site has potential to provide student accommodation given the proximity to the University. Connectivity to the Groody Valley Green Wedge shall be central to any development proposals.

**Objective GV O1**
**Groody Valley**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Require a high-quality landmark design. The proposal shall include an integrated development incorporating the fuel depot site along the R445 Dublin Road.
b) Facilitate purpose-built student accommodation where deemed appropriate.
c) Require car parking to be located to the rear of any building, or adequately screened and sympathetically integrated within the site.
d) Require connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to the Groody Valley zoned lands.
e) Ensure the design facilitates access to enable complementary development on the Groody Valley zoned lands.

### 3.4.5.5 Towlerton

The partially developed Towlerton opportunity site of 16.04ha. is located in a highly visible location on one of the main approaches to Limerick. The lands are bound by the Groody River Valley, the Bloodmill Road, the link road between the Groody Road and the N24 and agricultural lands.

This opportunity site will secure a comprehensive, high quality development, which is architecturally distinctive, but respects and makes a positive contribution to the wider locality. The Bloodmill Road Extension Scheme in Towlerton, Ballysimon delivered a newly realigned and extended section of road that connects the existing Bloodmill Road to a new link road at Towlerton, significantly improving access to the Educate Together Secondary School, the Bon Secours Hospital and adjoining future development lands.

**Objective TN O1**
**Towlerton**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote and facilitate the sustainable, coordinated development of the remaining undeveloped lands at Towlerton, including lands zoned Mixed Use and Enterprise and Employment, through an integrated and coherent development approach.
b) Ensure residential development shall be the primary component of the remaining Mixed Use zoned lands with supporting secondary uses and amenities. All future development proposals to demonstrate excellence in urban design, delivering a coherent sense of place and a high quality, integrated mixed use environment that supports residential uses, employment activity, innovation, and a vibrant community.
c) Ensure that new development incorporates high levels of accessibility, providing safe and convenient connections for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users, where feasible, and contributing to a permeable and well connected urban structure

d) Integrate the portion of land zoned Groody Valley Green Wedge into any future residential scheme, ensuring its protection, enhancement, and appropriate incorporation as part of the wider green infrastructure network.
e) Require all development proposals to be accompanied by a Mobility Management Plan, Traffic and Transport Assessment, and Road Safety Audit, prepared in accordance with Chapter 3 of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines, to support sustainable movement patterns and safeguard road safety and to assess the cumulative impact of development in the area and incorporate measures to safeguard the continued capacity, safety and efficiency of the national road networks and associated junctions.
f) Ensure that building heights and finishes respect the established character of the surrounding area.
g) Locate car parking underground, to the rear of buildings or in multi-storey provision, with any necessary surface parking adequately screened, landscaped, and fully integrated into the site design in line with high-quality urban design and placemaking principles.

### 3.4.5.6 Crossagalla

The Crossagalla site encompasses a large land bank of 24.5ha which is largely flat and undeveloped. It is bounded on the southwestern side by the R512 and lies within the 60kph speed limit, on the south easterly side by the motorway flyover and the L1153 which links the Old Cork Road through to the Ballysimon Road. This local road is characterised by a significant amount of traffic, and the road is very narrow with a railway overpass. This large residentially zoned site provides an opportunity for a significant housing development and to make a positive contribution to the wider locality. The site shall be developed in accordance with an agreed masterplan, addressing access, movement, phasing, open space, infrastructure, surface water management, urban design principles and residential layout, to ensure the coordinated and sustainable development of the site.

**Objective CA O1**
**Crossagalla**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Require the comprehensive, coordinated and plan led development of these lands through the preparation of a single, integrated masterplan for the entire landholding. The masterplan shall be prepared by suitably qualified professionals and shall be subject to consultation with, and agreement by, the Planning Authority prior to the submission of any planning application. The masterplan shall include relevant stakeholder consultation, with Limerick City and County Council and other relevant bodies including the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Iarnród Éireann, to ensure a coordinated and plan-led approach to development.
b) The masterplan shall establish a clear and robust spatial framework for the phased and sustainable development of the lands and shall demonstrate how residential development will be delivered in tandem with the timely provision of supporting community, social, recreational and physical infrastructure, having regard to the needs of both existing and future residents.
c) Development shall provide for an appropriate range of residential densities, in accordance with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, the principles of compact growth and the efficient use of serviced land. Higher densities shall be focused in accessible locations within the site, subject to high quality urban design and residential amenity standards. Pending the delivery of key infrastructural elements on this site and to facilitate delivery of housing, flexible density ranges may be considered in the early phases of the development subject to ensuring that later phases facilitate the overall achievement of density targets across the whole masterplan site. This shall be addressed clearly in a phasing plan within the masterplan.

d) The masterplan shall incorporate a high quality, connected network of public open spaces and green infrastructure, including the provision of usable and accessible open space and play and recreation facilities which incorporates the strategic Blue Green Infrastructure corridor route in accordance with the objectives and Development Management Standards of the Limerick Development Plan. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) shall be fully integrated into the layout and design of the development and shall contribute to surface water management, biodiversity enhancement, climate resilience and placemaking.

e) The development shall deliver a coordinated, developer led road network linking the R512 and the Old Ballysimon Road, including the construction and delivery of those sections of the road network within the ownership/control of the developer, in accordance with Map 6 in Volume 2(A) of the Development Plan and in agreement with the Planning Authority. The design and delivery of this infrastructure shall have regard to the requirements of relevant transport bodies, including Iarnród Éireann and the National Transport Authority, and shall ensure the appropriate integration of the proposed route with existing and planned transport infrastructure, including the railway line.

f) Any proposal shall require a Transport and Traffic Assessment and Road Safety Audit to assess the cumulative impact of development in the area and incorporate measures to safeguard the continued capacity, safety and efficiency of the national road networks and associated junctions.

g) A Design Statement shall be prepared demonstrating how Protected Structure RPS 1639 (Hurley's House), including its curtilage and setting, is to be integrated into the overall development, ensuring that the masterplan appropriately responds to and safeguards the building's special interest and setting.

h) The masterplan shall also address:
- the integration of the site with surrounding lands and communities;
- permeability, legibility and prioritisation of walking, cycling and public transport;
- appropriate phasing to ensure infrastructure and amenities are delivered concurrently with residential development; and
- a high standard of urban design, layout and place making, consistent with national and local planning policy.

i) No development shall be permitted on these lands unless it is consistent with the agreed masterplan and the objectives of the Limerick Development Plan.

### 3.4.5.7 Rosbrien

The Rosbrien lands comprise a strategic landbank of approximately 23.12 hectares, characterised by a generally flat topography. The site is bounded to the west by the L 1144-1 Rosbrien Road, to the rear by the M20 Motorway, and to the northeast by a cul de sac laneway providing access to a small number of residential properties and agricultural buildings.

Forming the southern edge of the built up area of Rosbrien, the lands present a significant opportunity to consolidate development within close proximity to Limerick City Centre. The site is well located in relation to established social and community infrastructure, including educational facilities, healthcare services, sports clubs and retail amenities.

The frontage of the site has been identified as being at risk of flooding and is accordingly zoned for Open Space and Recreation. Any future development proposals must be supported by a comprehensive Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) in accordance with the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines.

Development of the lands shall be guided by an agreed Masterplan, which should include relevant stakeholder consultation and a framework agreement, prepared in consultation with Limerick City and County Council and other relevant bodies including TII and the NTA, which shall address matters including access and movement, phasing, public open space provision, infrastructure delivery, surface water management (inclusive of SuDS), urban design principles and residential layout. The Masterplan shall ensure a coordinated, high quality and sustainable approach to the development of these lands.

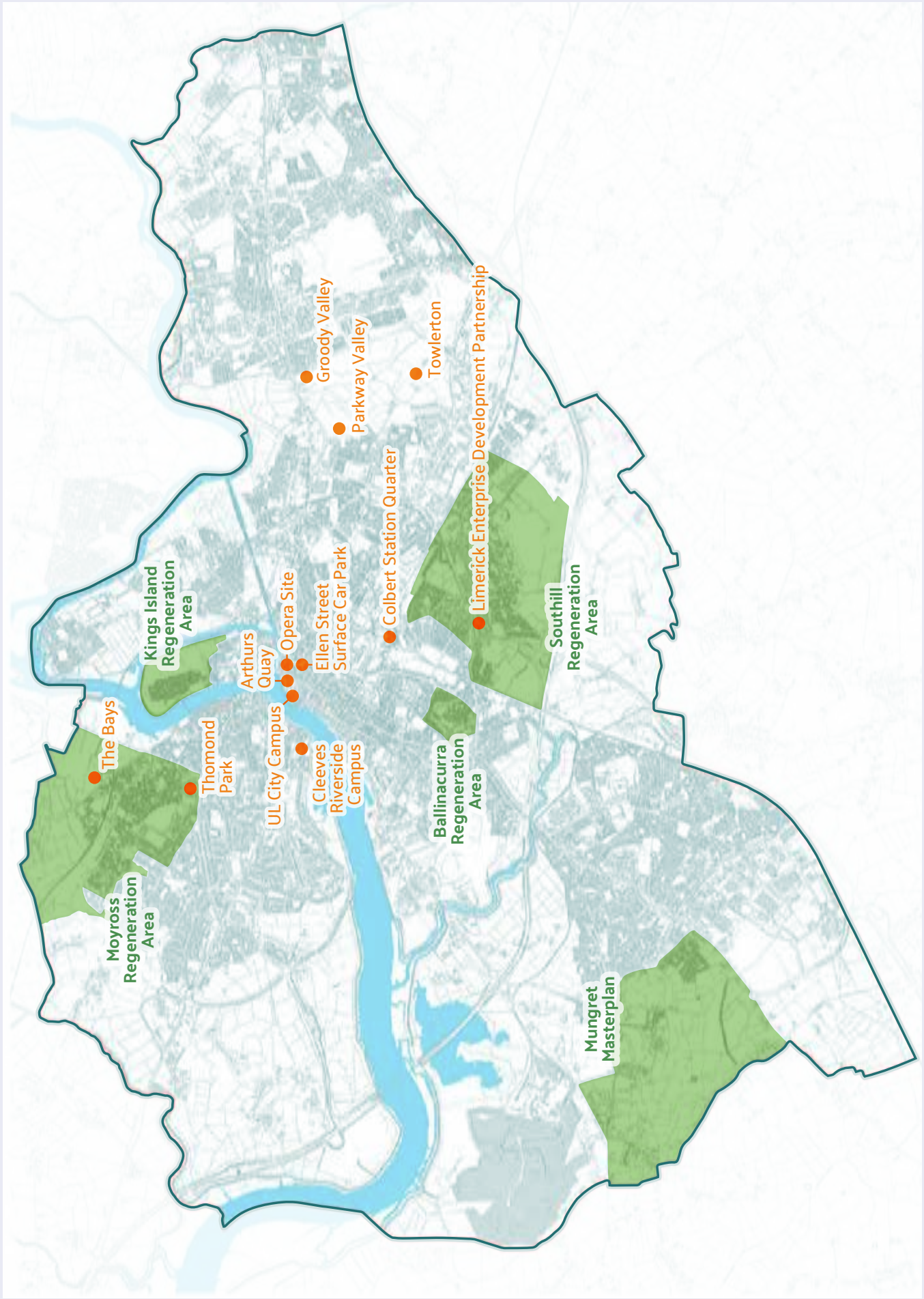
**Objective RN O1**
**Rosbrien**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Require the comprehensive, coordinated and plan led development of these lands through the preparation of a single, integrated masterplan for the entire landholding. The masterplan shall be informed by the Local Transport Framework as per objective TF O1 prepared by suitably qualified professionals and shall be subject to consultation with, and agreement by, the Planning Authority prior to the submission of any planning application. The masterplan shall include relevant stakeholder consultation, with Limerick City and County Council and relevant bodies including the National Transport Authority and Iarnród Éireann, to ensure a coordinated and plan-led approach to development.
b) Development shall provide for an appropriate range of residential densities, in accordance with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, the principles of compact growth and the efficient use of serviced land.
c) A Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment which shall provide detail on the most suitable point of access to this site from the Rosbrien Road in line with the provision of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2009.
d) A Transport and Traffic Assessment shall be undertaken to assess the impact of the proposed development and setting out mitigation measures, including the delivery by the developer of a continuous footpath to include active travel measures along the full Rosbrien Road site frontage and the provision of safe, accessible, and permeable pedestrian connections within the site.
e) The masterplan shall provide for high quality public open space and recreational facilities and shall incorporate design measures that integrate with and complement the adjoining lands zoned for Open Space and Recreation, respond sensitively to any archaeological features on site, and deliver a coherent, high quality environment. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) shall be fully integrated into the layout and design of the development, contributing to effective surface water management, enhanced biodiversity, climate resilience and placemaking.

**Objective TF O1**
**Local Transport Framework**
It is an objective of the Council to:
Prepare a local transport framework for the wider lands at Rosbrien (taking account of the Area Based Transport Assessment methodology or similar) in consultation with National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Iarnród Éireann to include the following:

i) appropriate provision of sustainable transport options to serve future residents of the area.
ii) Pedestrian and cycle linkages through the area and over the railway line towards Dooradoyle to provide greater connections to retail and community facilities.

Map 3.9: City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty Consolidation and Opportunity Sites



### 3.4.6 Limerick City Opportunity (Regeneration) Areas

The four Limerick Regeneration Areas of Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St. Mary's Park present substantial opportunities for growth, investment and employment creation in the suburbs of the City.

In accordance with the National Development Plan 2021 – 2030, continued investment in the Limerick Regeneration Programme will see the completion of the works identified in the 2013 Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan (LRFIP), which should be read in tandem with this chapter. The regeneration programme includes the delivery of some 593 new homes within a 10-minute walk of primary schools and community hubs and the upgrading of 1,504 homes, across the areas of Moyross, Southill, Ballinacurra Weston and St Mary's Park in Limerick City.

A programme of social and economic initiatives will also be advanced over the coming years to address unemployment blackspots and low education rates. While the scheme is scheduled to be completed by 2023, the cross-cutting objectives of this Plan will support the continuation of all programmes for the physical, social and economic regeneration of the most deprived areas of Limerick City.

The vision of the LRIFP is to create:

**'Safe and sustainable communities of opportunity where people of all ages enjoy a good quality-of-life, a decent home and a sense of pride about their place. Well-serviced and attractive neighbourhoods will be physically connected and fully integrated with the social, economic and cultural life of Limerick'.**

The aim of the LRIFP is two-fold:

- To improve the quality of life and wellbeing of communities in the Regeneration Areas by responding comprehensively to the problems (physical, social, community safety and economic) that exist, addressing the identified needs of people and adopting a sustainable development approach;
- To promote the social and economic inclusion of the Regeneration Areas into the mainstream life of the City, reducing the gaps between the Regeneration Areas and the average for the City as a whole. This will be achieved by opening access to training, education and work opportunities, harnessing and promoting existing resources and making early interventions.

**Policy RA P1**
**Regeneration Strategy**
It is a strategic policy of the Council to support the implementation of the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan, in a coordinated and sustainable manner and to co-operate with other agencies in the Region to deliver the goals and objectives set out in the Plan.

### 3.4.6.1 Tenure Diversification

Tenure diversification aims to foster greater social, economic and community mix and in turn support thriving and sustainable communities. In 2014, the Local Authority owned 65% of the original 1,125 units in Moyross, 48% of the original 1,125 units in Southill, 37% of the original 464 units in St. Mary's Park and 28% of the original 337 units in Ballinacurra Weston. A number of the original units were vacated over time and many have been demolished to make way for better place-making and strategic connections in line with the LRFIP.

Given the capacity of residentially zoned lands and lands within the overall areas, it is envisaged that the Regeneration Areas are capable of catering for substantial new and infill residential development over the lifetime of the Plan. Such development would enable the maintenance and achievement of a more diverse tenure mix over time. The delivery of a much stronger social mix of social and affordable/ privately owned dwellings is paramount to the success and sustainability of new developments in the Regeneration Areas. Such a mix has to be greater than just mixed tenure, it is essential that over the period of the Plan these areas achieve a population that has a greater level of income than at present. This will be achieved by the development of private/ affordable housing, the expansion of home-ownership within the existing community and more importantly, improving the prospects of the child population through education and job opportunities, which clearly highlight the sheer importance of Social and Economic Regeneration.

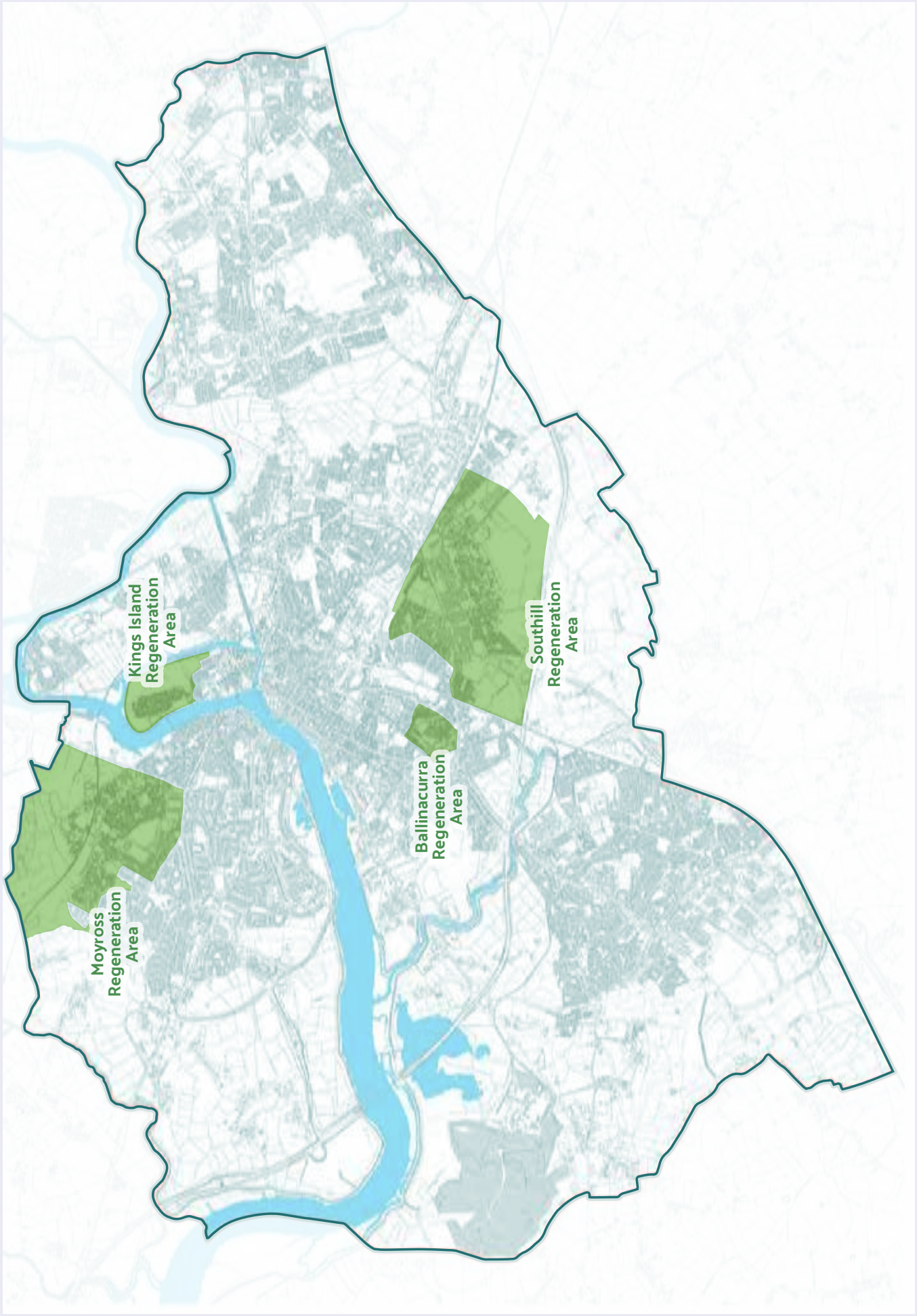
The specific objectives and associated interventions of the Framework Implementation Plan are structured around three pillars, Social, Physical and Economic as outlined in this chapter.

**Objective RA O1**
**Regeneration Opportunity Areas**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the social, economic and physical regeneration of Moyross, St. Mary's Park/King's Island, Ballincurra Weston and Southill.
b) Support and facilitate the physical, economic and social framework strategies for the Regeneration Areas in accordance with the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan. All developments in the Regeneration Areas will be assessed in accordance with the principles and objectives for each area, as set out in this section. All proposed developments within these areas will be assessed in the context of the impact on the local area and on the City as a whole.
c) Integrate Regeneration Areas and communities into the mainstream social, economic and community life of the City through a long-term commitment to support social, economic and physical regeneration of the most deprived areas.
d) Improve the tenure diversity within the Regeneration Areas.
e) Deliver the Social, Physical and Economic Framework Strategies of the adopted Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan.
f) Undertake an annual Monitoring Report of the adopted Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan to establish key trends emerging and measure progress.
g) Actively support the implementation of the Key Local Objectives set out in the Physical Framework Strategy for each of the Regeneration Areas.

Map 3.10: Regeneration Areas



### 3.4.6.2 Social Framework Strategy

The Social Framework Strategy of the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan is a robust and evidence-based strategy reaching across key service areas. The key focus is to 'bend' the mainstream as part of a 'whole of government' approach, with a focus on the State working in tandem with local resources. The plan recognises that implementing such an approach is challenging, requiring multi-agencies to work together.

**Objective SF O1**
**Social Framework Strategy**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Improve the quality of life of residents in the regeneration communities, focused on improving health and well-being, closing gaps in health with the average population, improving the social environment and safety on the estates, stabilising community life and supporting civic engagement in the community.
b) Address the needs of the population so that they can access opportunities, closing gaps with the average population. This covers improved access to economic and social opportunities linked to preventive interventions in early years, interventions to improve attainment in education from the earliest stages and access to further education, training and work.
c) Improve the coherence of service provision across the statutory and voluntary/community sector, with a view to improving effectiveness in responding to needs of the population and to achieve better value for money invested by the totality of the services.
d) Continue to support and develop Community Enterprise Centres as Community Hubs.
e) Continue to support sport, recreation and cultural activities.
f) Enhance and build civic engagement and community participation.
g) Continue to support community safety through CCTV, improved communication and community policing.
h) Enhance monitoring and review of the Social Intervention Fund by providing training and follow up support to local projects.
i) Progress and strengthen through the role of the Local Strategic Advisory and Monitoring Group, to ensure a whole of Government approach.
j) Connect the Social Intervention Fund to mainstream programmes so that different funding streams can work together to sustain quality services that meet the needs of the regeneration residents.
k) Continue to fund a balance of preventative interventions, working with children and young people and targeted interventions to support individuals and families with more complex needs.

To achieve the social objectives, the Social Framework Strategy is structured around five vertical themes and three cross-cutting or horizontal themes in order to achieve stable communities, good quality of life and access to opportunities, as set out in the Figure below:

Figure 3.1: Social Framework Strategy



### 3.4.6.3 Economic Framework Strategy

The creation of long-term employment locally and for local people, is a central theme for the Economic Regeneration Pillar. Currently, high unemployment levels, running way above the national average, exist in the Regeneration Areas and serve to exacerbate social exclusion. Successfully tackling the dearth of employment opportunities in these areas will make a very significant contribution towards the overall goal of regeneration but can only be achieved through a multi-agency approach.

The Economic Framework Plan of the adopted Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan is strongly focused on inclusive growth and a range of bottom-up and community-level measures while also considering the wider macro-economy.

**Objective EF O1**
**Economic Framework Strategy**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote sectoral training, work experience, work placements and job creation initiatives.
b) Deliver an economic engagement platform bringing together all stakeholders.
c) Deliver social innovation/social enterprise hubs with supports for start-ups.
d) Develop niche economic activities that can develop in line with national opportunity sectors such as green technologies.
e) Develop a 'knowledge economy' sub-sector in community development and enterprise as skills are built locally.
f) Strengthen inward investment through incentivisation such as long-term revolving loan financing for new public, social and educational infrastructure.
g) Develop ICT infrastructure, skills training and usage projects to support economic and social development.
h) Continue a priority focus on young people and youth unemployment.
i) Focus on projects of scale that will become a citywide catalyst for economic development that will have a transformational effect on the Regeneration Areas.
j) Develop and strengthen a Sector Focused Skills Development – Skills training approach to support economic focus on sectors of strength and growth opportunities.
k) Create platforms for increased levels of private sector engagement in enterprise, training, work experience and employment development (e.g. Corporate Social Responsibility).
l) Replicate the successful model employed for the Hospitality Education and Training Centre for economic sectors with growth potential through inter agency collaboration and private sector involvement.
m) Embed the Social Contracts Clause – develop an increased focus on the monitoring and stewardship of the social contracts clause.

### 3.4.6.4 Physical Framework Strategy

The Physical Framework Strategy sets out the basis for a more coherent and sustainable use of land in the Regeneration Areas, which makes socio-economic development more likely, improves housing quality and place-making (including safety), making the areas more accessible. Furthermore, a range of strategic infrastructure improvements are identified (both in terms of the natural environment and ICT). The approach is coherent and recognises both past failures and ongoing challenges in improving the liveability of the areas. The Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan correctly identifies the very distinct sets of issues confronting each Regeneration Area. This includes the severity of issues each area faces, not least the varying extent of dereliction and prior poor estate design.

In setting out the Physical Framework Strategy objectives, it is recognised that no single aspect alone will be effective in delivering the change agenda for the physical Regeneration Areas.

**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.

The physical framework strategies for each Regeneration Area sets out the key local objectives that guide the physical development of the areas into the future. The local objectives shall differ for each of the areas, however the strategic objectives shall remain consistent for each Regeneration Area set out above.

The progress on the Physical Framework of the LRFIP as of November 2020 is set out in Figure 3.2 below:

Figure 3.2 Physical Framework of the LRFIP



### 3.4.6.5 Moyross

The Limerick Development Plan identifies Moyross as a key Regeneration Opportunity Area and emphasises the need for social, economic, and physical renewal that integrates the neighbourhood into the wider city. As outlined in the LFRIP, several objectives remain central to future planning: improving connectivity, diversifying tenure, enhancing local services, delivering new public spaces, and supporting employment opportunities across the area.

The imminent opening of the Moyross Train Station marks a generational shift in the area's strategic position. The station will provide a high capacity transport node at the heart of the neighbourhood, significantly increasing accessibility and enabling higher densities in accordance with Section 28 Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines. The new rail stop - combined with the planned 15 minute frequency BusConnects service along Moyross Avenue - establishes the transport foundations for a compact, walkable, mixed use urban neighbourhood.

A RIAI Design Review was carried out to support Moyross's continued transformation into a vibrant, connected and resilient urban neighbourhood. The Design Review presented a number of high level ideas for the future of Moyross across which, several common themes emerged including: the need for higher densities close to the train station; the importance of a vibrant "Main Street" along Moyross Avenue; the opportunity to integrate new green networks, parks and public spaces; and the importance of creating a connected, legible and permeable neighbourhood with strong north–south and east–west links. The review also reinforced the need for phased, flexible development that can evolve over time while remaining rooted in community needs, sustainability principles and best practice urbanism.

The focus is to build on existing work already achieved and to guide the further development of Moyross as a resilient urban neighbourhood that supports its existing community while welcoming future generations.

**Objective M O1**
**Moyross**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) To establish Moyross Avenue as the principal Main Street and primary service spine of the neighbourhood by promoting an intensified mix of uses along the mixed-use zoned lands. New development will support active frontages and a strong relationship between buildings and the street, creating a safe, welcoming environment that strengthens community presence and supports a vibrant, well defined social and commercial core. This includes:
   i) Promoting higher density development in the vicinity of the proposed rail station to maximise sustainable transport accessibility and support the growth of a compact, connected urban centre.
   ii) Creation of a new civic plaza on Moyross Avenue, designed with the future rail station as its core, to support and integrate community, civic, residential and educational facilities and act as a welcoming gateway to the station.
   iii) Encourage a balanced mix of commercial, community, residential, and service functions including office accommodation and other professional uses, supporting a vibrant and economically resilient Main Street complementing surrounding land uses and enhancing local access to jobs and services
   iv) To promote active, outward-facing street frontages that enhance natural surveillance, support continuous pedestrian activity, and contribute to a vibrant, safe, and well-defined streetscape.
   v) Support the relocation of Corpus Christi National School to a suitable alternative site to facilitate higher density mixed use development next to the new railway station. The relocation should provide improved and expanded facilities, better accessibility, and safe

walking and cycling connections, while integrating well with the surrounding community and emerging transport infrastructure.

b) Provide a range of housing options that accommodate all life stages, enabling residents to remain within the community as their needs evolve over time.
c) Support future job creation and economic investment on the northside of the city by leveraging the improved accessibility delivered through the Coonagh–Knockalisheen road and the proposed Moyross Rail Station.
d) Promote Watchhouse Cross as the District Centre for the area of Moyross, Kileely, Ballynanty and Parteen in accordance with the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick.
e) Promote the redevelopment of the 'Bays' site to add additional local capacity and contribute to the formation of a natural training cluster.
f) Reinforce existing Employment and Enterprise uses at Moyross Enterprise Centre.
g) Protect the existing alignment of the Limerick/Galway rail line and support the provision of a passenger rail station at Moyross.
h) Enhance the quality, connectivity, and usability of the public realm across Moyross by delivering safe, attractive, and inclusive streets, open spaces, and community amenities that support social interaction, active travel, local identity, and long term neighbourhood regeneration.
i) Establish Moyross as a connected, walkable neighbourhood by prioritising active travel and public transport, reducing reliance on private vehicles, and ensuring that daily services and amenities are easily accessible.
    i) Prioritise enhanced north-south and east-west permeability, including new crossings over the rail line alongside a legible urban network bringing together the northern, central and southern areas of Moyross and reconnecting the neighbourhood to TUS, Thomond Park, the Cratloe Road and the wider city
j) Strengthen the role of University Avenue as a key linkage connecting education facilities within Moyross and providing an important route onwards to Cratloe Road.
k) Facilitate the enhancement, development, or redevelopment of sporting facilities, including those serving TUS, St. Nessan's Community College/Thomond Community College, and local sports clubs.
l) Develop a large public park that connects the River Shannon, Moyross and Caherdavin for a range of active and passive recreational uses creating an integrated green and blue network in an ecologically sensitive manner.
m) Protect the integrity of all Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity. In this regard, the development proposals developed shall be subject to HDAA and SEA.
n) Protect the existing biodiversity of the area and to provide interpretation for the public.
o) Protect and enhance the special landscape character and setting of Delmege Estate.

### 3.4.6.6 St. Mary's Park and King's Island

King's Island extends over an area of 170 acres and is bounded on the east by the River Abbey and on the west by the River Shannon. This area represents an important asset to the City, particularly in terms of its ecological importance, archaeological significance and tourism potential. St. Mary's Park and King's Island presents the following key challenges:

- Poor connectivity and accessibility which has resulted in St. Mary's Park becoming physically, economically and socially isolated;
- Unattractive public realm with an over-dominance of hard surfaces with limited soft landscaping;
- Several under-used and vacant infill-housing sites, which currently detract from the overall appearance of the estate;
- The layout of the houses to the east of St. Munchin's Street backs onto the landfill therefore providing little in the way of natural surveillance;
- A key challenge in St Mary's Park is the designation of the majority of the area as Flood Zone A;
- The designation of a Special Area of Conservation with the potential of disturbance to birds as a result of amenity use of lands adjacent to the wetland, loss and fragmentation of habitat resulting from the construction of new replacement housing, streets and new connections;
- The lack of active play facilities for those persons under the age of 15 years and non- sporting related open space recreational amenities;
- Lack of maintenance, repair and care of the overall historic fabric of the wider King's Island area;
- Significant number of derelict sites in key locations, particularly along Mary Street and vacant properties, particularly along Nicholas Street;
- Presence of under-utilised historic assets, e.g. upstanding remains of Fanning's Castle and remains of house with carved stone fireplace on Nicholas Street.

**Objective MK O1**
**St. Mary's Park and King's Island**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote the development of the waterways, subject to detailed environmental considerations and requirements to include St. Mary's Park, Moyross to Grove Island and the City as a flagship project with training, employment and tourism potential.
b) Environmentally improve the existing street network of St. Mary's Park to provide a safe, attractive, accessible and well-designed network of streets in tandem with supporting Irish Water in the upgrade to the existing water network if required and refurbishment works to existing houses.
c) Protect the integrity of all Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity. In this regard, the development proposals developed shall be subject to Habitat Directive Assessment and SEA.
d) Provide opportunities to maximise the educational value of the passive open space surrounding St. Mary's Park.
e) Support delivery of the CFRAM Limerick Flood Relief Scheme Programme.
f) Develop a strategy to integrate King's Island into the City Centre core through selective site redevelopment and improved connections.
g) Return the eastern side of St. Munchin's Street to parkland once demolition of the area has taken place.
h) Restrict development on the strip of land east of St. Munchin's Street which, was used as a landfill site and filled with domestic refuse.
i) Examine options to improve connectivity at Island Road from St. Mary's Park to the Medieval Quarter by transforming from a route that is predominantly designed for the movement of vehicles, to a traffic calmed street where the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users are prioritised; whilst ensuring protection of the integrity of the environmentally designated sites.

j) Provide crossings for pedestrians and cyclists which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
   i) At Star Rovers Football Club;
   ii) At the Primary Health Care facility at Island Road;
   iii) At St. Mary's Community Centre, Verdant Place.
k) Promote the development of key strategic sites within Nicholas Street and Bridge Street for potential enterprise development attracting further inward investment.
l) Promote employment growth in King's Island and St. Mary's Park through the re-use of underutilised sites, derelict buildings and the upgrading of sites already in employment uses.
m) Improve local connections converging on the existing St. Mary's Park Community Centre including a new street, at Island Gate, from Verdant Place to Dominick Street.
n) Support the provision of an extended multi-use community centre at St. Mary's Park Community Centre, to provide flexible and accessible spaces adaptable to the communities' needs. The provision of an extended centre at this location, within easy access to the City core will ensure that the centre is used not only by residents of St. Mary's Park but the wider community also.
o) Explore the potential to upgrade Eel's Weir to provide a connection to the New Road and beyond and ensure that any development proposed does not have a negative impact on habitats.
p) Support the redevelopment of Opera Square, adjacent to King's Island/ St. Mary's Park, which is seen as an economic catalyst for the area, City and region.

### 3.4.6.7 Ballinacurra Weston

The Regeneration Area of Ballinacurra Weston extends over an area of 14.46ha. and is located in a suburban residential setting to the south-west of Limerick City Centre. Ballinacurra Weston presents the following key challenges:

- Poor connectivity, accessibility and/or awareness of routes to key locations due to the cul-de-sac layout of the area;
- Unattractive public realm with an over-dominance of hard surfaces (especially to Byrne Avenue) and rock armoury with limited soft landscaping;
- Poorly overlooked pedestrian routes;
- A significant amount of vacant land within the Regeneration Area at the site formerly occupied by Clarina Park;
- Several under-used and vacant housing sites, which currently detract from the overall appearance of the estate;
- Due to the demolition of Clarina Park, there is a significant amount of vacant land within the Regeneration Area. A key challenge is to identify interventions for the land in the short to medium term to ensure its protection from anti-social activities;
- Limited overlooking of internal public open space. A key challenge is to provide functional, safe and well-overlooked open spaces within the estate.

**Objective BW O1**
**Ballinacurra Weston**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Improve permeability and connections from Ballinacurra Weston to its wider context at the following locations in the short-medium term:
   i) Provide a new vehicular connection from Clarina Avenue to Byrne Avenue. The lack of permeability at this location has resulted in high incidences of anti- social behaviour and crime;
   ii) Provide a new vehicular connection from Clarina Park to Lenihan Avenue. Upgrade the existing laneway (Alley Lane) to allow greater access to Prospect Hill and Rosbrien Road to the north;

iii) Provide a new street from Beechgrove Avenue to Crecora Avenue.

b) Support the redevelopment of Our Lady of Lourdes Community Centre as a multi-use centre to meet the evolving needs of its community and examine opportunities to integrate additional compatible uses - including residential development, where such uses enhance the overall regeneration of the area.

c) Provide new and improved crossings for pedestrians and cyclists which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
   i) At Rosbrien Road, to the west of Our Lady of Lourdes Community Centre;
   ii) At Childer's Road, north of Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School;
   iii) At Hyde Road from Crecora Avenue;
   iv) At Hyde Road from Lenihan Avenue to Hyde Villas;
   v) At Byrne Avenue from Clarina Park.

d) Promote potential enterprise development in Ballinacurra Weston through the reuse of underutilised sites at the existing local centre, Our Lady of Lourdes Community Centre and lands associated with the ESB Depot and Adapt House.

### 3.4.6.8 Southill

Southill is located in the southern fringe of Limerick City Centre. The masterplan aims to redefine the south City as a distinctive and popular neighbourhood. Southill presents the following key challenges:

- Poor connectivity and accessibility with adjacent neighbourhoods which has resulted in Southill becoming physically, economically and socially isolated;
- The Radburn layouts that characterise Southill create a place that is difficult to navigate;
- Poorly observed rear courts (as part of the Radburn layouts);
- Poorly observed and confusing pedestrian routes;
- Over-provision of underutilised public open space;
- Several under-used and vacant infill housing sites, which currently detract from the overall appearance of the estate;
- Due to the demolition of some blocks to date, many houses have exposed boundaries, which provide little in the way of natural surveillance. This undermines the safety and security of the area;
- The lack of strategic access into Southill from the M7 Motorway. This greatly limits possible opportunities to attract employment into the area and acts as a barrier to permeability;
- Roxboro roundabout represents a key challenge to pedestrian and cycle movement;
- The lack of connectivity to the wider area, including the University of Limerick to the northeast, presents a key challenge;
- The lack of active play facilities for children under 15 years old within each of the estates.

**Objective OK O1**
**O'Malley Park and Keyes Park**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Investigate the provision of a more direct access from the M7 and N20 into Southill (subject to a feasibility study examining potential options).
b) Promote the Galvone Industrial Estate as a hub for green sector focused development.
c) Consider alternative uses (further education and training) for Southill Junior School.
d) Expand the footprint of the Southill Area Centre to improve the quality and choice of community focused uses available.
e) Promote the following local connections within O'Malley and Keyes Park, Southill:
    i) A new street at eastern boundary of Churchfields site to the church;
    ii) A new street through the centre of the Churchfields site to the Southill Area Centre;
    iii) A new east-west connection, south of Rose Court, Keyes Park from the Roxboro Road to the community hub;
    iv) A new north-south connection from Childer's Road to O'Malley Park through the Fulflex site;
    v) A new north-south connection from O'Malley Park to the Childer's Road;
    vi) A new east-west connection from Pike Rovers Football Club to Kilmallock Road;
    vii) A new connection from Kennedy Park, adjacent to proposed Integrated Educational Campus at St Kieran's, to the Roxboro Road.
f) Provide crossings for pedestrians and cyclists which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
    i) At Childer's Road: from O'Malley Park to Kennedy Park and the new Integrated Educational Campus at St. Kieran's;
    ii) At Roxboro Cross: From Roxboro Road to the District Centre (Roxboro Shopping Centre).
g) Create a direct connection from Roxboro roundabout (through the 'Galvone Arms' site) to the heart of Southill – the community hub containing the church, health centre and Southill Area Centre.
h) Enhance the junction of Childer's Road and Roxboro Road as a District Centre in order to fulfil its role as the commercial and retail hub serving Southill and the wider area.
i) Develop a new integrated educational campus to serve the needs of the entire area.
j) Support the operation and enhancement of sports development in the Southside and ensure that proposals provide high quality, flexible and accessible sports and youth spaces capable of meeting the evolving needs of the Southside community.
k) Promote the development of strategic sites within Southill for the construction of landmark/gateway buildings, subject to urban design and built form parameters.
l) Promote mixed and employment generating uses along key strategic routes, allowing for a higher efficiency of existing land resources.
m) Explore the potential to re-establish and environmentally improve the west-east link through the Galvone Industrial Estate from the Roxboro Road to the Kilmallock Road.
n) Create a new community park at the centre of the community hub to provide recreation and play facilities in a safe, overlooked location and provide a focus for local events and celebrations.

o) Support the continued use and any potential future expansion of the Kilmallock Road Campus (formerly St. Enda's) as a key educational facility and promote the consideration of its reuse for enhanced education, training and sports related projects. Facilitate the potential development of new sports infrastructure and associated facilities on the campus, ensuring the site's long term role as a strategic centre for learning, community development and sporting activity. Support the provision of high quality pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the site, facilitating safe and direct links between Banemore Road and Kilmallock Road.

p) Promote mixed and employment generating uses at Kilmallock Road Enterprise Centre.

q) Ensure any future development of the Clonlong site be in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 - 2024 and any subsequent programme adopted by the Council.

**Objective KC O1**
**Kincora and Carew Parks**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Transform the Roxboro Road, the main access road dividing O'Malley Park and Keyes Park from Kincora and Carew Parks, from a route that is predominantly designed for the movement of vehicles to a traffic calmed street where the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users are prioritised.

b) Support the sustainable development of Barry's Field for residential purposes and associated community development, including the delivery of high quality playing pitches. Ensure that any future residential development positively interacts with Carew Park in order to promote permeability, natural surveillance, and a positive interface with the residential and recreational area. All proposals shall give due consideration to the historic landscape character of the site, with regard to the protection of key views and the avoidance of adverse visual impacts on the setting of Southill House. Higher residential densities will be considered at this location in recognition of its strategic location, supporting compact growth and maximising the site's integration with existing and future community and leisure amenities.

c) Promote the following local connections within Carew and Kincora Parks, Southill:
   i) Create a new east-west connection from John Carew Park to Yeats Avenue;
   ii) Create a new north-south connection through the green at Carew Park to improve accessibility;
   iii) Create a new east-west connection from Elm Place, Rathbane to John Carew Park Links Road;
   iv) Create a new north-south connection from Childer's Road through the LEDP site and the Aldi Discount Store to connect with Kincora and Carew Park;

v) Create a pedestrian link from Markievicz Drive across Collins Avenue to the community hub.

d) Provide crossings for pedestrians and cyclists which will provide direct and convenient access between local amenities at the following locations:
   i) At Collins Ave from Keyes Park to Southill House;
   ii) At Collins Ave from Lilac Court in Keyes Park to Markievicz Drive in Kincora Park.

e) Provide new traffic-calming measures at O'Higgins Drive in Carew Park to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists and slow traffic speeds.

f) Ensure any future development of the Toppin's Field site is in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 and any subsequent programme adopted by the Council.

The Limerick Enterprise Development Partnership (LEDP) campus at Roxboro comprises 3.87ha. of Enterprise and Employment and 2.49ha. of Local Centre zoned lands. The campus provides for a broad range of employment opportunities, community and education and training facilities of significant benefit to the disadvantaged area in which the campus is located. The vision for development of the campus will be focused on job creation. The redevelopment of a vacant unit (Innovation Hub) of 33,000 sq. ft. to provide a new multi- functional Creative and Innovation Industries Centre, comprising Ireland's first virtual production studio and space will facilitate and encourage indigenous SME sub-suppliers to the film industry to locate in a regeneration area.

**Objective LEDP O1**
**Limerick Enterprise Development Partnership**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support and facilitate expansion of the existing employment uses and training facilities, enhancing the broad range of employment opportunities for the local community.

b) Facilitate the reuse of the vacant Innovation Hub for employment uses such as a multi- functional Creative and Innovative Industries Centre.

c) Facilitate and encourage employment creation by SMEs.

### 3.4.7 Metropolitan Settlements in Limerick outside the City and Suburbs

The settlements of Mungret, Annacotty, Castleconnell, Patrickswell and Clarina, aswell as a large rural area are located in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick).

The settlements of Mungret in the Southern Environs and Annacotty to the east of Castletroy, adjoin the suburban areas of Limerick City. In Mungret village, under the Settlement Capacity Audit, 1 no. site has been identified with a potential yield of 153 no. units over the lifetime of this plan. This includes a site with an area of 31.95ha. located within the Framework Plan area. In Annacotty, the Settlement Capacity Audit identifies 5 no. sites with a potential yield of 377 no. units. Development of these sites will enable the consolidation and compact growth of these settlements while achieving projected growth in a sustainable manner.

Castleconnell is a Level 3 Town in the settlement hierarchy. In accordance with National Policy Objective 3c, a growth target of 28% has been incorporated into the Core Strategy. Development in Castleconnell shall accord with the objectives for the Level 3 Town settlements as set out under Section 2b below, with the exception of projected growth.

Patrickswell is a Level 4 Large Village in the settlement hierarchy. Following a survey of services and infrastructure and having regard to the unique situation in the village, the limited growth over a prolonged period and the location of the village in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick), a growth target of 36% has been incorporated into the Core Strategy. Development in Patrickswell shall accord with the objectives for the Level 4 Large Village settlements as set out under Section 2b below, with the exception of projected growth.

Clarina is a Level 5 Village in the settlement hierarchy. Having regard to National Policy Objective 3c, a growth target of 28% has been incorporated into the Core Strategy. Development in Clarina shall accord with the objectives for the Level 5 settlements as set out under Section 2b below.

Further details in relation to development in these settlements are set out under Section 2b below. Development in these settlements shall take place in accordance with the Core Strategy, compact growth and active land management objectives and all Development Management Standards as set out under this Development Plan.

Development in the rural areas of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) shall comply with the rural housing policy and all relevant planning criteria and Section 28 guidelines.

# Section 2: Spatial Strategy

## Section 2b: Limerick County Spatial Strategy

### 3.5 Level 2: Key Town

Newcastle West has been identified as a Key Town in the Southern Region. The Council acknowledge the importance of this designation. A Key Town is a settlement with a strong employment base and a broad range of services that serves a wide catchment area. The Key Town plays a critical role in underpinning the RSES objectives to ensure a consolidated spread of growth beyond the cities to the sub-regional level. It is envisaged that the Key Town will be a focus for significant growth.

The Southern Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy describes the location of Newcastle West as presenting opportunities for future economic development and employment growth. Newcastle West will play a critical role in ensuring a consolidated spread of growth beyond Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) to the sub-regional level. In this regard, the Core Strategy identifies 30% growth from a population of 6,619 in 2016 to 8,607 to 2028, equating to an additional 706 dwelling units. The RSES also identifies its location as an opportunity for future economic development and employment growth and highlights its strong sub-regional interdependencies with Listowel, Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale.

A Local Area Plan is in place for Newcastle West, which will be reviewed on completion of this Development Plan. The Local Area Plan (LAP) will deal with the more detailed approach to the development of Newcastle West in line with its ambition as a Key Town. The LAP will consider in detail employment and economic development opportunities, placemaking initiatives, upskilling, lifelong learning and social infrastructure. In addition to the LAP, the Council is committed to the preparation of a Local Transport Plan for Newcastle West, which will consider sustainable mobility and placemaking as a key element of the growth of Newcastle West.

**Objective CGR O11**
**Level 2: Key Town Newcastle West**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote Newcastle West as a key service centre and to promote the sustainable growth of the town to become a self-sufficient settlement and act as a service centre for its inhabitants and rural hinterland. At least 30% of all new homes shall be located within the existing built-up footprint of the settlement, in order to deliver compact growth and reduce unsustainable urban sprawl.
b) Support and promote the role of Newcastle West as a strategically located urban centre of significant influence in a sub-regional context. In particular, it is an objective to promote the opportunity for inter-regional collaborations across county boundaries with Abbeyfeale, Listowel and Rathkeale and locations identified in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary, which offer collective strengths and potential for project partnerships to drive sustainable economic growth in the West Limerick/ North Kerry area;
c) Support the initiatives of the Atlantic Economic Corridor to realise the full potential of the Newcastle West enterprise assets to support job creation, improve competitiveness, attract investment and create future economic growth;
d) Support the delivery of the infrastructural requirements identified for Newcastle West subject to the outcome of the planning process and environmental assessments;
e) Support and promote the tourism potential of Newcastle West's historical heritage to facilitate the expansion of the existing tourism offer and to develop connectivity to, and synergies with, Newcastle West and the Great Southern Greenway;
f) Support the identification of opportunities for investment in incubation and innovation infrastructure for ICT and related companies and capitalise on Newcastle West's ability to accommodate remote working, enterprise start-ups and up-scaling companies.

**Objective CGR O12**
**Newcastle West Local Area Plan**
It is an objective of the Council to monitor and review the Local Area Plan for Newcastle West to align with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028, which will recognise the role of Newcastle West as a Key Town for growth within Limerick.

### 3.6 Level 3: Towns

Towns with population of over 1,400 people will be promoted as secondary development centres for future population growth. They provide a wide range of services and their functions are complementary to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick), Newcastle West and each other. They also have an important regional employment function within their surrounding catchment areas. Acting as important local drivers, Level 3 Settlements provide a range of functions for their resident population and their surrounding catchments including housing, employment services and retail and leisure opportunities.

These settlements have experienced varying levels of commuter focused residential expansion, without equivalent increase in jobs and services. They require consolidation and targeted 'catch up' investment in services, infrastructure, suitable transport options, amenities and local employment, whilst balancing housing delivery and focusing on consolidation to become more self-sustaining. In line with National Policy Objective 3c, 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 3 settlements shall be within their existing built-up footprints.

**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

**Objective CGR O14**
**Scale of Development within Level 3**
It is an objective of the Council 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 generally. No one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 10 – 15% within the lifetime of the Plan, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the settlement has adequate capacity, in terms of both physical and social infrastructure to support additional growth.

### 3.7 Level 4: Large Villages

These are settlements generally with a population of over 500 and less than 1,400 persons that cater for the daily and weekly needs of their inhabitants and the needs of the surrounding wider catchment area. Level 4 settlements provide a range of employment opportunities and services appropriate to their size and function, such as secondary and primary schools, childcare facilities, sports grounds/complexes, libraries, Garda stations, medical centres and a good range of local services including shops, pubs, post offices and banks/credit unions.

There is considerable variation in the settlements from small towns and large villages, included in this level in terms of scale, character context and infrastructure. However, all have potential for appropriate levels of growth and consolidation. In line with National Policy Objective 3c, 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 4 settlements shall be within their existing built-up footprints. In order to realise the consolidation of these towns/villages, development will be encouraged to be delivered in a sustainable, sequential manner from the town/village core outwards, while promoting the reuse and redevelopment of vacant and derelict sites and buildings.

**Objective CGR O15**
**Requirements for Developments within Level 4 Settlements**
It is an objective of the Council within these settlements to facilitate development, subject to compliance with the following:

a) 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. Generally, no one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 10 – 15% within the lifetime of the Plan, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the settlement has adequate capacity in terms of both physical and social infrastructure to support additional growth.
b) The development of these centres shall provide for serviced sites and a variety of other house types and densities as appropriate.
c) New commercial developments shall generally be located within the core area and shall contribute positively to the village urban fabric and streetscape.
d) New community and social facilities shall be provided in conjunction with residential development as required.
e) Where there is no treatment plant or limited capacity in the existing treatment plant, sewerage treatment for serviced sites shall generally be by means of individual treatment systems, subject to satisfactory site assessment and compliance with EPA guidelines. All systems shall be constructed so as to allow connection to public sewers in due course when capacity becomes available.

**Objective CGR O16**
**Local Area Plans in Level 4 Settlements**
It is an objective of the Council to review existing and prepare new Local Area Plans for Adare, Askeaton, Croom and Patrickswell, to align with the Limerick Development Plan 2022 – 2028.

### 3.8 Level 5: Small Villages

These are smaller settlements generally ranging in population from 150 – 500 people with a range of infrastructural, social and community facilities. These settlements have some essential infrastructure (i.e. Irish Water's water and/or sewage facilities) and a range of community infrastructure that provide for convenience and daily needs of the local population and surrounding area. They also provide some small-scale employment opportunities and local level community facilities, such as primary schools, churches, local sporting facilities and a community hall. In line with National Policy Objective 3c, 30% of all new homes targeted within Level 5 settlements shall be within their existing built-up footprints.

**Objective CGR O17**
**Development within Level 5 Settlements**
It is an objective of the Council within these settlements to facilitate development, subject to compliance with the following:

a) The scale of new residential schemes shall be in proportion to the pattern and grain of existing development and shall be located within the development boundary, thus avoiding 'leap frogging' of development and delivering compact growth and providing for the organic and sequential growth of the settlement. Infill and brownfield sites will be the preferred location for new development. In this regard, any development shall enhance the existing village character and create or strengthen a sense of identity and distinctiveness for the settlement.
b) New commercial developments shall generally only be located within the core area and shall contribute positively to the village streetscape.
c) New community and social facilities shall be provided in conjunction with residential development as required.
d) The development of these centres shall provide for serviced sites and a variety of other house types and densities as appropriate.
e) Where there is no treatment plant or limited capacity in the existing treatment plant, sewerage treatment shall generally be by means of individual treatment systems, subject to satisfactory site assessment and compliance with EPA guidelines. All systems shall be constructed so as to allow connection to public sewers in due course when capacity becomes available.

**Objective CGR O18**
**Scale of Growth for Level 5 Settlements**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that, generally, no one proposal for residential development shall be larger than 5 – 7 units. A limited increase beyond this may be permitted where demonstrated to be appropriate, dependent on the extent of the settlement and the services in place to serve growth.

### 3.9 Level 6: Rural Clusters

Rural Clusters comprise largely of areas with limited essential infrastructure and services. They generally have one or more existing community or other local facilities. Development within Rural Clusters will be limited to incremental local growth appropriate to their size and character. It is anticipated that each cluster can cater for a small population increase from their current population base over the period of the Plan.

**Objective CGR O19**
**Development in Level 6 Settlements**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that:

a) Permitted growth will be very small scale and on an incremental basis and must be reflective of the rural nature of these settlements. New developments shall be located within or contiguous to the core identified for each settlement, thus avoiding 'leap frogging' of development and shall be designed, to deliver compact growth within the existing villages and provide for the organic and sequential growth of the settlement. Infill and brownfield sites will be the preferred location for new development.
b) Single units or very small-scale commercial or employment generating development will be encouraged, provided it is of a scale appropriate to the village setting, the infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate same and adjoining uses are not adversely affected.
c) Where there is public sewage and water infrastructure and where there is capacity within same, a limited number of units may be permitted around the core area. In this case, no one proposal shall be larger than 3 – 4 houses, depending on the existing housing stock and the pattern and grain of the village.
d) Where there is no sewage treatment plant or limited capacity in the existing treatment plant, sewage treatment shall generally be by means of individual treatment systems, subject to satisfactory site assessment and compliance with EPA guidelines.

### 3.10 Revitalisation of Towns and Villages

The towns and villages outside of Limerick City have distinctive roles to play in the County's economy and as places for communities to live, work and visit. Limerick's towns and villages are providing various levels of employment and services for people in the settlements and surrounding areas including education, retail, recreation, primary health and social activities. These settlements provide key resources that are essential to the economy and society of rural Limerick, with many being important drivers of their local economies as well as servicing their rural hinterlands.

The settlements provide many opportunities for people to live, work and do business. Limerick City and County Council acknowledges that some settlements are facing difficulties, with vacancy, dereliction and lack of services. Many towns and villages have suffered from a lack of investment, particularly in infrastructure. Such investment could improve their capacity to act as service, employment and residential centres in accordance with the Settlement and Core Strategies. The Local Authority is therefore committed to address vacancy and dereliction and supporting revitalisation and improving the viability of rural towns and villages, to enable economic, residential and social opportunities as well as improvements to the quality of life, in accordance with the objectives of the NPF and RSES. Limerick City and County Council is also committed to working with and supporting local communities seeking funding through various schemes, which contribute to the revitalisation of Limerick's rural towns and villages.

**Policy CGR P4**
**Revitalisation of Towns and Villages**
It is the policy of the Council to:

a) Actively address issues of vacancy and dereliction in settlements across Limerick.
b) Promote projects contributing to compact growth and the physical, social and economic revitalisation of the towns and villages throughout County Limerick.

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is a key initiative under the Action Plan for Rural Development *Realising our Rural Potential* and *Project Ireland 2040*. The scheme is designed to help rural areas achieve their full economic and social potential and aims to support the rejuvenation of towns and villages across Ireland to make them more attractive places to live, work and visit. The scheme facilitates initiatives in areas such as heritage, tourism, arts and culture, the re-use of vacant premises, energy efficiency and business supports. The scheme focuses on rural towns and villages of less than 10,000 population, with policies supporting economic growth and development of such settlements.

Limerick City and County Council administer the fund issued by the Department of Rural and Community Development under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme. Some examples of projects, which have been awarded funding under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, include:

- The creation of a pedestrian friendly Town Centre in Askeaton;
- Public realm improvements in Ballingarry;
- Refurbishment of the Parish Hall to create a community centre in Broadford;
- Creation of a village heritage trail and town park improvements in Dromcollogher;
- Development of a community wildlife area in Kilteely;
- A walkway and public lighting at Murroe Town Park;
- Refurbishment of the Countess of Dunraven Fountain and seating in Adare;
- Resurfacing of footpaths and universal access in Grove Public Park in Bruff;
- Improved access to Priory Walk, seating in the Pocket Park and amenities in Kilmallock;
- Sensory garden, walking track and universal recreational area in Pallasgreen.

The Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (RRDF) is a key component of Project Ireland 2040, which is the Government's plan for balanced regional development across the country. A number of projects in Limerick have been awarded funding including the examples briefly outlined below:

- The Rural Limerick Housing Development Project is being undertaken through the Rural Regeneration Development Fund. The towns and villages of Abbeyfeale, Ardagh, Askeaton, Bruff and Rathkeale have received funding to address dereliction, provide housing and bring life back to these settlements. The aim of this project is to bring derelict properties in the core of the towns and villages across rural Limerick back into active re- use, with an emphasis on the provision of housing, based on the delivery of demonstrator housing projects for social and affordable dwellings sold on the open market. The project will also develop plans for re-use of identified derelict properties/ brownfield lands in the same towns and villages as community, social and economic infrastructure with properties being acquired by the Local Authority by agreement or compulsorily under the Derelict Site Act, 1990. The need for housing has not been sufficiently utilised as a potentially effective mechanism for the revitalisation of rural towns and villages. There is demand for housing in rural towns particularly for housing that is affordable. The resettlement of populations in the core of towns and villages is essential for vitality, vibrancy and sustainable development and is supported in this Plan;
- RRDF funding has been awarded for the West Limerick Tourism Gateway. This proposal consists of the preparation of a comprehensive tourism plan for Newcastle West Town Centre. The project will centre around Fuller's Folly a historic building located on the bridge in the ownership of Limerick City and County Council. The funding for Fuller's Folly will allow further development and restoration of the building to act as a landmark tourist attraction in the town;

- Murroe Community Hub is a community driven project, which involves the construction of a two-storey multi-purpose building. The hub will include a hall for sports and community events, a scout den, meeting rooms, office, changing facilities and community café. The hub includes a "smart campus" which will provide fibre broadband, access for the community and hot desk facilities for local business people. An all-weather pitch and multi-access walkway have been constructed, while a skate park is also proposed. The Murroe Town Park Project aims to create public space for sport and recreation, while enhancing economic and social activity by drawing footfall into the village, creating employment opportunities and enhancing the attractiveness of the area as a high-quality place to live;
- The Glenbrohane Local Hub project seeks to significantly enhance the range of services available to local residents and businesses. The vision is to create a social enterprise hub, which will provide employment opportunities, address rural isolation and create a tourist attraction. The project involves the conversion of an old public house into a community facility housing a café, shops for local crafts and produce, a Men's Shed, office and meeting rooms;
- Ballyhoura has the potential to be a major centre of rural tourism in Limerick and provide revitalisation opportunities from spin off benefits in surrounding settlements. The International Mountain Biking Project forms part of a nationwide Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme, which has provided funding to develop a number of international standard Mountain Biking Trails across the country. The project will provide recreational and tourism related economic opportunities to the local community, surrounding settlements and wider region.

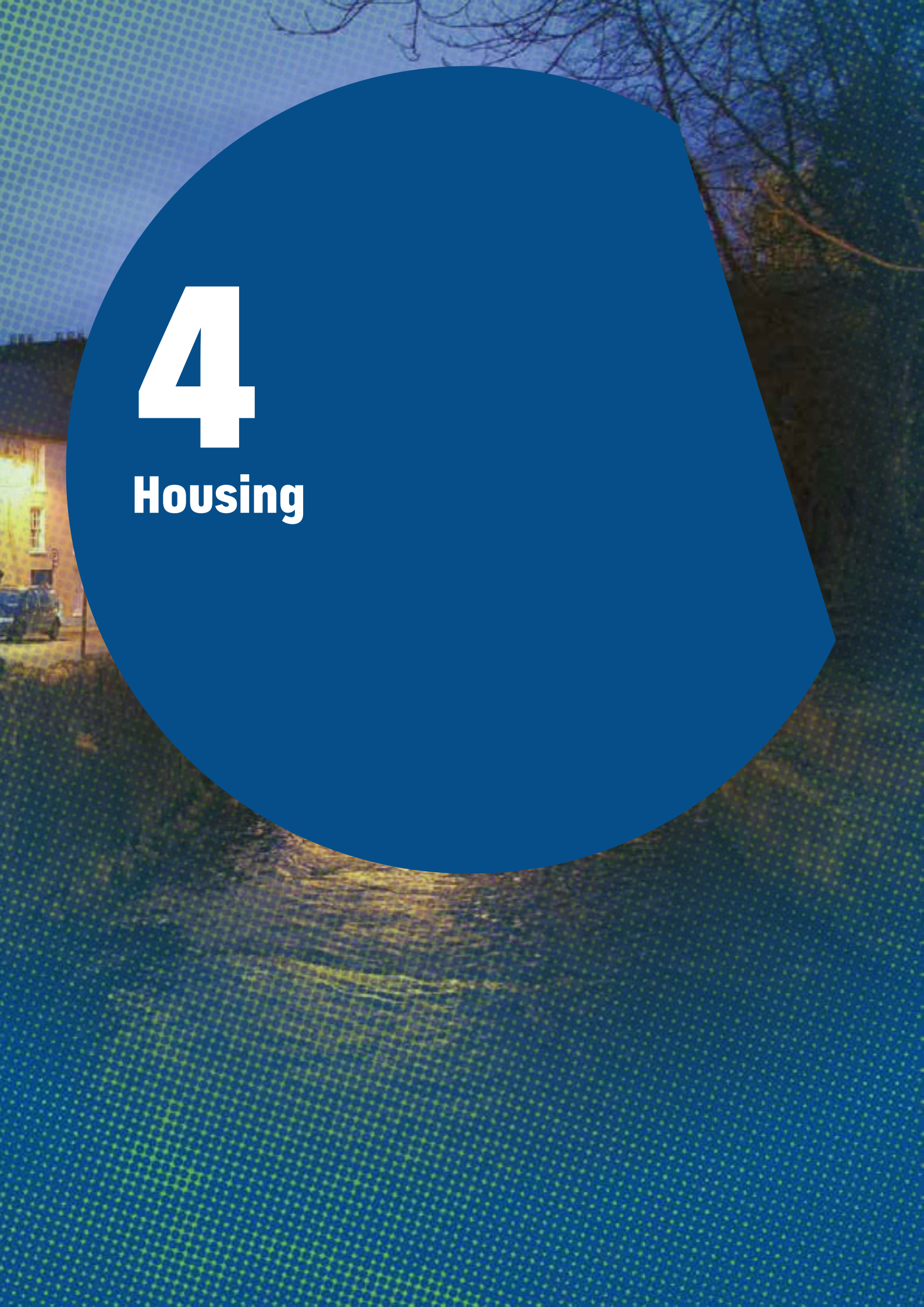
**Objective CGR O20**
**Town and Village Revitalisation**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote and support the renewal and revitalisation of rural town and village centres to enhance the vitality and viability of settlements as attractive residential and service centres.

b) Support and work with State Bodies, private landowners, community and voluntary groups to successfully achieve the renewal and revitalisation of Limerick's towns and village centres, including projects to re-use vacant premises and underutilised sites, enhance the unique characteristics and assets of main streets and improve the public realm.





# 4
# Housing

## 4.1 Introduction

The delivery of housing must comply with the Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 and must align with the principles established in the Spatial Strategy as outlined in Chapter 3. This chapter sets out the policies and objectives for the provision of housing in Limerick. Limerick, like the rest of the country is affected by the current housing crisis including supply shortages, increased demand for social and affordable housing, a pressurised rental sector, rising building costs and vacant homes. The Council has a key role to play in enabling the delivery of new housing, ensuring that best use is made of existing stock and delivering strong, sustainable communities. The Council as a Housing Authority has multiple roles in the facilitation of housing in Limerick, including formulating policies in the provision and management of social housing in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Approved Housing Bodies.

## 4.2 Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment

### 4.2.1 Introduction

The preparation of a Housing Strategy is a mandatory requirement formally under Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, (as amended) and now under Part 7 of the Planning and Development Act 2024. The purpose of a Housing Strategy is to evaluate the housing needs of the existing and future population in Limerick over the Plan period.

The NPF identified the need to carry out a Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA), in conjunction with the Housing Strategy, the purpose of which is to assist Local Authorities to develop long-term strategic views of housing need across all tenures, including social and affordable housing and specialist housing. The purpose is also to provide a robust evidence base to support decisions about new housing supply, wider investment and housing related services that inform an overall housing profile.

In tandem with a need to increase housing supply, is the need to facilitate improved housing choice to cater for evolving demographics across Limerick, as identified in the HNDA. By providing good housing choice, existing residents can remain within their local communities and new residents to Limerick will have better housing options to choose from.

An updated Housing Strategy and HNDA for Limerick has been prepared by way of Variation No.3 and is set out in Volume 6. It provides a detailed analysis of Limerick's existing housing profile, which forms a basis for housing demand generally and social housing provision. The provisions of the Housing Strategy will guide new residential developments in terms of the form of housing that may be required within Limerick over the lifetime of the Plan. The Housing Strategy and HNDA addresses the provision of housing for the existing and future population of Limerick and takes account of:

- The existing need and likely future need for housing for the purposes of the provision of social housing support and of housing for eligible households;

- The need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income;
- The need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the Planning Authority and including the special requirements of older people and persons with disabilities;
- The need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds;
- The provision of good housing mix in all developments will be encouraged to ensure that residents have access to a range of house types and tenures.

The Housing Strategy and the HNDA process compliments the Core Strategy in providing the quantitative evidence base to articulate the medium to long-term housing and spatial development strategy for the functional area of the Local Authority. In so doing, it demonstrates that the Plan and its objectives are consistent with national and regional development objectives.

### 4.2.2 National Policy

*Housing for All: A New Housing Plan for Ireland* was published in 2021, it represents the Government's housing plan to 2030, replacing Rebuilding Ireland. It reiterates the national target of building an average of 33,000 new homes every year from 2021 to 2030, including approximately 10,000 social homes and 6,000 affordable homes for purchase or rent. It provides a comprehensive strategy and an action plan across all tenures and elements of the Irish Housing system, guided by four main pathways to improving the housing system:

- Supporting home ownership and increasing affordability;
- Eradicating homelessness, increasing social housing delivery and supporting social inclusion;
- Increasing new housing supply;
- Addressing vacancies and efficient use of existing stock.

Local Authorities will play a key role (in partnership with Approved Housing Bodies) in delivering new social and affordable homes under Housing for All. Each Local Authority were tasked with producing a Housing Delivery Action Plan by December 2021, to translate national targets into clear local targets and actions, underpinned by an evidence–based assessment of local housing need. Limerick City and County Council has published a Housing Delivery Action Plan. The strategy also supports the role of the Land Development Agency (LDA) in delivering new social and affordable homes on major publicly – owned sites, with State land planned to be transferred to the LDA.

Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025–2030 is the Government's national housing plan (November 2025) and builds on Housing for All. It sets out a whole-of-government strategy to accelerate housing delivery, expand social and affordable housing, and intensify efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness. The Plan is built on two pillars of activating supply and supporting people.

Among the priorities set out in the plan, is Increasing Skill, Adopting Modern Methods of Construction. Priority Action 3.2 seeks to Increase the use of 3D volumetric systems by providing funding and support for pathfinder projects in Limerick (SMART Homes) to create demand for these innovative systems.

In order to align with the provisions of the NPF and RSES, the Council will continue to utilise all policy options available to it, to ensure the optimum delivery of residential units over the duration of the Plan, from both the public and private sectors in the delivery of a mix of tenures.

**Policy HO P1**
**Implementation of the Housing Strategy, including the Housing Need Demands Assessment**
It is a policy of the Council to facilitate the implementation and delivery of the Housing Strategy and Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA), to meet the increasing projected population, changing household size and housing needs, including social and affordable housing requirements of Limerick over the lifetime of the Plan.

### 4.2.3 Housing Mix

To cater for the projected population growth and the establishment of sustainable residential communities, a mix of dwelling types and sizes will be required to meet the housing needs of all members of society. The HNDA, which informed the Housing Strategy, identifies the need for a mix of house types to reflect the diverse housing needs of the existing and future population. All new residential schemes shall be designed having regard to the National Disability Authority's standards. The principles of universal design, adaptable housing designs and Lifetime Homes in new housing development will also be promoted.

**Objective HO O1**
**Social Inclusion**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that new developments are socially inclusive and provide for a wide variety of housing types, sizes and tenure, in suitable locations, throughout Limerick, to cater for the demands established in the Housing Strategy and the Housing Need Demand Assessment.

### 4.2.4 Residential Density

A key objective of the NPF and RSES is to increase the density of development in all built up areas, in order to achieve the indicated population targets in a compact and sustainable manner. Increased densities will facilitate optimising the use of serviced lands and maximising the viability of investment in social and physical infrastructure, in particular public transport. Integration of land use and transport planning is crucial to deliver the 10-minute city/town concept and this will be supported with higher densities at appropriate locations. Residential density requirements have been set out in Chapter 2: Core Strategy, in line with national planning policy and relevant guidelines.

**Objective HO O2**
**Density of Residential Developments**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Promote, where appropriate, increased residential density in the exercise of its development management function in accordance with Table 2.5 Density Assumptions per Settlement Hierarchy in Chapter 2: Core Strategy and the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024).
b) Encourage increased densities that contribute to the enhancement of a town or village by reinforcing street patterns or assisting in re-development of backlands and centrally located brownfield sites.

### 4.2.5 Protecting Existing Residential Amenity

Residential amenity is influenced by a range of factors, such as private outdoor amenity space, privacy and natural light. The relationship of buildings to each other and their individual design can have a significant impact on these factors and on residents' comfort. In older residential areas, infill development will be encouraged, while still protecting the existing residential amenity of these areas.

**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.

### 4.2.6 Re-use of Buildings

The existing housing stock of Limerick provides a valuable resource in terms of meeting the needs of a growing population and its retention and management is of considerable importance. Retaining and adapting, including measures to promote downsizing as appropriate, and encouraging energy retrofitting of the existing housing stock, is important to stem population loss in these areas as this promotes and encourages additional dwelling units within existing communities, particularly those suited to the emerging demographics of an area. The Council is currently working on a programme for the retrofitting of social housing units across Limerick. In addition, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications are in the process of developing a new Local Authority Energy Efficiency Retrofit Loan proposal for homeowners as supported in Objective HPO 21.8 of the *Housing for All - A New Housing Plan for Ireland*. The forthcoming initiative will enable Local Authorities to provide low cost retrofit loans to individual homeowners. Housing design that contributes to climate resilience and climate mitigation, including innovative low-carbon construction methods and reduction of embodied energy will be promoted.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage are currently working with the Heritage Council to unlock the potential in the country's villages, towns and cities to utilise heritage building stock (pre-1940) to help tackle the housing crisis and to develop guidance in the reuse and/or refurbishment of protected structures as residential accommodation. The Council will support forthcoming guidance in line with Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

**Objective HO O4**
**Re-use of Existing Buildings**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage redevelopment and reuse, including energy retrofitting, of existing housing stock and conversion of other suitable buildings to sustainable housing accommodation.

### 4.2.7 Apartments

Just under 10% of households in Limerick live in apartments, according to the 2016 Census which is lower than the national average (12%). Apartments are a key and growing part of the way in which we live in various parts of our country and particularly in our cities and towns. A move towards a much greater level of apartment living is essential in ensuring our major urban areas develop sustainably, rather than sprawling inexorably outwards.

**Objective HO O5**
**Apartments**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage an increase in the scale and extent of apartment development, particularly in proximity to core urban centres and other factors including existing public transport nodes, or locations where high frequency public transport can be provided, close to locations of employment and a range of urban amenities including parks/ waterfronts, shopping and other services.

### 4.2.8 Shared Accommodation/Co-living Developments

Shared Accommodation (also referred to as *co living*) is recognised as a distinct housing format within the broader residential sector. Given its specific characteristics, it is expected to play only a limited, niche role in meeting accommodation needs within Ireland's cities. This model typically comprises professionally managed rental schemes, where individual rooms are rented within a commercial development that provides access to a range of shared or communal facilities and amenities.

SPPR 7 of the Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2025 allows consideration of shared accommodation where it is required to meet specific demand identified by the local authority further to a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) process. Having regard to Pillar 1, Activating Supply, of *Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025–2030*, and specifically Priority Action 3.2 which aims to expand the use of 3D volumetric construction by facilitating pathfinder projects in Limerick (SMART Homes) proposals for shared accommodation/co living will be considered on a case by case basis, informed by the demand identified through the HNDA.

**Objective HO O6**
**Shared Accommodation/Co-Living Developments**
It is an objective of the Council to consider proposals for targeted shared accommodation/co-living on a case-by case basis, informed by the demand identified through the HNDA. Such development will be considered on State-owned lands only as a targeted programme to improve access to housing for people currently locked out of the rental market in Limerick due to limited supply.

### 4.2.9 Student Accommodation

Students are an increasingly important part of the housing demand in Limerick, particularly in Limerick City, Suburbs and Annacotty. According to Census 2016, 11,703 residents of Limerick City reported their principle economic status as students (15.4% of all those aged 15 and over) as did 8,454 residents of Limerick County (5.4%), which includes some secondary-level students. The main third level institutions in Limerick include University of Limerick, Technological University of the Shannon and Mary Immaculate College, all of which are seeking to increase student numbers, within the lifetime of the Plan, which accordingly will result in increased demand for high quality student accommodation.

**Objective HO 07**
**Student Accommodation**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the provision of high quality, professionally managed purpose-built student accommodation either on campus, or in appropriate and accessible locations on public transport or cycle networks. All forms of student accommodation shall respect and protect the existing residential amenities of the area in which it is proposed. Student accommodation shall be of appropriate design, in accordance with the Department of Education and Science *Guidelines on Residential Development for Third Level Students* (1999), and (2005) and any subsequent updates. Applications for change of use from student housing to any other form of use shall be strongly resisted, without adequate demonstration that there is no longer a need for such use in the area and an over-provision of student housing exists.

b) Ensure that all applications for new off campus purpose built student accommodation, the change of use to student accommodation in existing residential areas, or extensions to existing dwellings to facilitate student accommodation, must include details outlining the presence and distribution of any permanent residential occupiers; the extent of students renting in the private housing market; and the presence of any other housing catering primarily for students and short term lets in the area/estate. The application should address any potential impacts of the proposal on residential amenity and any permanent residents in the area.

c) Require all applications for off-campus purpose-built student accommodation to be accompanied by a Student Management Plan outlining how the scheme will be professionally managed. The Plan shall demonstrate how the development will be managed so as to avoid potential negative impacts from occupants on surrounding properties and neighbourhoods and ensure the maintenance of safe, secure and clean environments for the community, occupants and nearby residents.

d) Ensure permissions for student accommodation will be subject to a condition requiring planning permission for a change of use to any other type of use, including short-term holiday letting. Future applications for this type of change of use will be resisted. Where it is demonstrated that such student accommodation is no longer required, a planning application will require details of a proper management plan for the non-student use of the units to prevent adverse impacts on traditional residential estates.

### 4.2.10 Housing for Older People

Limerick, like the rest of the country has an ageing population. The Council is committed to accommodating the needs of older people, by encouraging the provision, of suitable accommodation to allow older people remain in their established communities.

**Objective HO 08**
**Support Housing Options for Older People**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the provision of specific purpose-built accommodation, including assisted living units and lifetime housing and adaptation of existing properties, which will include opportunities for 'downsizing' or 'right sizing' within their community.
b) Support the concept of independent living for older people within their community and ensure, where possible that such accommodation is integrated with mainstream housing.

### 4.2.11 Nursing Home/Care Home Accommodation

Proposals for nursing homes/care home accommodation shall be located in existing residential areas well served by appropriate levels of infrastructure and amenities such as footpath networks, local shops and public transport. This will ensure appropriate integration with the local community and afford the residents an appropriate level of independence and access to services.

**Objective HO 09**
**Location Criteria for Nursing Homes/ Care Home Accommodation**

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the maximum distance from nursing homes/care homes shall be no more than 300m safe walking distance to community facilities, convenience retail facilities and amenities.

### 4.2.12 Housing for Dependent Relatives

The Council will encourage the provision of suitable housing for people with a sensory disability, mental health disability, physical disability and intellectual disability, in appropriate locations served by public transport, local community services and facilities. All development shall comply with Part M of the Building Regulations or any replacement hereafter.

**Objective HO 010**
**Subdivision of Dwelling to Accommodate Dependent Relative**

It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of accommodation for older people and dependant relatives within the existing family home, subject to compliance with the following criteria:

- Accommodation by way of extension shall be attached to the main dwelling;
- There shall be an internal connecting door with the main residence;
- The extension shall be subservient to the main dwelling;
- In a rural location any external door shall not be located on the front elevation;
- On vacancy of the unit, the accommodation shall be integrated with the main dwelling. No such unit shall be used as rental accommodation. There will be a presumption against proposals for detached independent units within the curtilage of a dwelling, regardless of urban or rural location. Proposals must accord with planning considerations such as residential amenity, environmental and public health standards and traffic safety.

### 4.2.13 The Living Limerick City Centre Initiative

The Living Limerick City Centre initiative is promoting the concept of community housing initiatives that supports the development of community led housing proposals for specific cohorts/groups in a cost-efficient manner. The use of cost rental and cost purchase models of delivery will be investigated over the course of the Plan and the expansion of this initiative to rural towns and villages will be supported.

**Objective HO O11**
**The Living Limerick City Centre Initiative**
It is an objective of the Council to support the Living Limerick City Centre Initiative for the delivery of community housing across the City and the extension of similar initiatives to rural towns and villages.

### 4.2.14 Social Housing

Social housing is defined as housing provided by a Local Authority or a housing association, to individuals who are unable to provide accommodation from their own resources. Property rented or leased from the private sector by Local Authorities or voluntary housing bodies is now also included in the social housing sector. *Housing for All, A New Housing Plan for Ireland* set ambitious targets for the delivery of social and affordable housing and put in place the mechanisms to support an increase in the supply of housing.

The Affordable Housing Act has introduced several important changes for housing. It establishes a legislative basis for new forms of affordable housing for households who cannot afford private market housing, but are also above eligibility thresholds for social housing. The Act amends 'Part V' housing requirements to include a requirement for up to 20% social and affordable housing in developments in excess of four units (intended by Government to comprise 10% social and 10% cost rental and/or affordable purchase where justified).

**Objective HO O12**
**Provision of Social and Affordable Housing**
It is an objective of the Council to require lands zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses and any land which is not zoned for residential use, or for a mixture of residential and other uses, in respect of which permission for the development of 4 or more houses is granted, to comply with the Affordable Housing Act 2021 and Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and any subsequent amendments thereof. The Council reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of 'Part V' Cost Rental and/or affordable purchase delivery on individual sites on a case-by-case basis.

Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) is one of the means through which Limerick City and County Council can seek to address demand for social housing in Limerick. The Council works in partnership with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Approved Housing Bodies to deliver and manage social housing. In addition to Part V, the delivery of social housing is achieved through Direct Build, Acquisitions, Void Management, Long Term Leasing, Enhanced Leasing, Repair to Lease, Private Rental (RAS and HAP) and the Buy and Renew Scheme. The Council will promote the provision of public (including social and affordable) housing by prioritising sites for servicing that have a potential for public (including social and affordable) housing.

### 4.2.15 Housing Delivery Action Plan

Limerick City and County Council's Housing Development Directorate are currently developing a Housing Delivery Action Plan for Limerick covering the next five years. The Plan will set out details on how and when the Council will deliver housing targets, including the delivery of affordable homes.

**Objective HO O13**
**Limerick Housing Delivery Action Plan**
It is an objective of the Council to support the implementation of the forthcoming Limerick Housing Delivery Action Plan.

### 4.2.16 Homeless Accommodation

The Council will continue to work in conjunction with voluntary housing bodies and other agencies to provide emergency accommodation for the homeless and those who find themselves in need of crisis facilities. The Council will continue to support means of preventing homelessness and providing pathways out of homelessness in line with the Housing First National Implementation Plan and any subsequent updates, working in cooperation with public and voluntary bodies and central government. The Council acknowledge that supporting younger people at risk of becoming homeless can help avoid a cycle of longer-term homelessness and will support the implementation of the forthcoming Youth Homelessness Strategy.

**Policy HO P2**
**Homeless Accommodation**
It is a policy of the Council to implement measures to address the homeless crisis in Limerick.

**Objective HO O14**
**Homeless Accommodation**
It is an objective of the Council to support the provision of homeless accommodation and/or support services throughout Limerick. In this regard, proposals for such facilities should not result in an overconcentration in one area and should not unduly impact upon existing amenities.

**Objective HO O15**
**Youth Homelessness Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to support and implement the forthcoming Youth Homelessness Strategy, currently under preparation by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

### 4.2.17 Traveller Accommodation

Limerick City and County Council has an adopted *Traveller Accommodation Programme,* which outlines the accommodation needs, policy and implementation measures to address the accommodation needs of the Traveller Community. The accommodation programme for the period 2019-2024 has been prepared in accordance with the provisions set out in the Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998. The Council's *Traveller Accommodation Programme* sets out the range of social housing supports for Travellers, including standard Local Authority Housing, Approved Housing Body Housing, Group Housing and Halting Site Bays.

**Objective HO O16**
**Traveller Accommodation**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Support improvements in the quality and quantity of Traveller specific accommodation, in conjunction with the relevant agencies;
b) Implement the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019 – 2024 and any subsequent updates.

### 4.2.18 Accommodation for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

The Council will continue to liaise and work with the relevant agencies and stakeholders in securing appropriate accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers in appropriate locations throughout Limerick.

**Objective HO O17**
**Accommodation for Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Implement government policy in relation to the provision of accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers.
b) Work with Central Government, relevant State Agencies, AHBs and other bodies to support the provision of appropriate housing for asylum seekers and refugees in Limerick in accordance with identified requirements, and to support the phasing out and replacement of the Direct Provision system in accordance with national policy and requirements.

## 4.3 Serviced Sites in Towns and Villages

To help strengthen and consolidate the settlement structure and reverse the decline in Limerick's towns and villages, residential serviced sites will be promoted in the settlements. This objective is reinforced in the Government's *Rural Development Policy 2021 – 2025 – Our Rural Future,* which sets out a clear ambition to support the regeneration, re-population and development of rural towns and villages, to contribute to local and national economic recovery. It aims to enable people to live and work in a high-quality environment. Residential serviced sites offer a real alternative to the single one-off rural house, enabling those who seek the opportunity to build their own homes to one's own design, but located in a town or village.

The Council will adopt a flexible approach to proposals for development in all settlements lacking adequate water and sewerage facilities, where such proposals are consistent with the Settlement Hierarchy outlined in Table 2.4, Chapter 2: Core Strategy and the obligations of the Council under environmental and water services legislation.

Serviced sites refer to a number of individual residential plots typically in the order of 0.1ha. with access to services such as utility connections, footpaths, lighting and within walking distance of the town or village core. The density shall generally be 10 housing units per hectare. Whilst individual house design on serviced sites is encouraged, the overall design of the scheme must be consistent in terms of boundary treatments and landscaping.

Sites must comply with the requirements of *Code of Practice: Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems* (EPA 2021). Where necessary, cumulative effects must be considered in accordance with *Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater* (EPA 2011). Minimum site size will be determined by house size, number of bedrooms, type of treatment proposed and soil conditions, but will be typically in the order of 0.1ha for a four bedroomed house.

It is important to note that not all lands will demonstrate suitable drainage characteristics to allow this type of development. It will be a requirement that these houses connect to the public sewage system once the relevant wastewater treatment plant is upgraded and has sufficient capacity. Provision for this must be made at the time of construction. Once connected to the sewerage system, on site wastewater systems should be decommissioned.

**Objective HO O18**
**Serviced Sites in Towns and Villages without adequate Water Services Infrastructure**
It is an objective of the Council to permit serviced sites in towns and villages across Limerick to offer an alternative to rural one off housing, where individuals can build their house on a Serviced Site, in the case where each house is served by an individual on-site wastewater treatment system, in settlements where there is insufficient wastewater treatment capacity, the existing municipal wastewater treatment plant is not scheduled for upgrade by Irish Water in its current investment plan and there is no risk of nuisance or pollution. (Refer to Chapter 11: Development Management Standards for further information).

The amount and location of these sites shall be controlled to ensure that they would not significantly impact on the fabric and character of the town or village and its sense of identity and place would be retained. The development would also need to ensure the definition of a strong urban edge resulting in a clear distinction between the urban area and open countryside. Where Local Area Plans/ zoning maps exist for towns and villages, these sites may only be located on suitable zoned lands with connection to services if available within the settlement, if no connection is available, exploration of the Serviced Site Policy may be considered.

## 4.4 Rural Housing

The NPF and RSES acknowledge that our countryside 'is and will continue to be, a living and lived-in landscape, focusing on the requirements of rural economies and rural communities, based on agriculture, forestry, tourism and rural enterprise, while at the same time avoiding ribbon and overspill development from urban areas and protecting environmental qualities'.

The rural development strategy for Limerick seeks to achieve a balance in terms of promoting sustainable rural development, which celebrates the vibrancy and vitality of our rural areas, and also seeks to protect the rich heritage, amenity and recreational value of the rural landscapes and countryside, in line with national and regional policy. Development proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the provisions of the *Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, 2005 (and any amendment thereof) and Circulars SP 05/08 and PL 2/2017.

The NPF and RSES make a distinction between areas under urban influence, i.e. those within the commuter catchment of cities and large towns and centres of employment, which includes Electoral Divisions where at least 15% of their workforce commute to a City and rural areas outside these catchments, where a more flexible approach to rural housing will apply.

Limerick can be divided into two broad categories, in terms of defining the Rural Settlement Strategy as follows:

- Rural Housing Category 1 - Areas under Strong Urban Influence;
- Rural Housing Category 2 – Rural Areas Elsewhere.

Consideration of planning applications for development in Rural Housing Category 1: Areas under Strong Urban Influence and Category 2: Rural Housing Elsewhere, will have regard to Objective TR O39 National Roads in Chapter 7: Sustainable Mobility and Transport.

**Objective HO O19**
**Rural Areas under Strong Urban Influence**

It is an objective of the Council to consider a single dwelling for the permanent occupation of an applicant in the area under Strong Urban Influence, subject to demonstrating compliance with ONE of the criteria below:

1. Persons with a demonstrable economic need to live in the particular local rural area;
   Persons who have never owned a house in the rural area and are employed in rural-based activity such as farming/bloodstock, horticulture or other rural-based activity, in the area in which they wish to build, or whose employment is intrinsically linked to the rural area in which they wish to build, or other persons who by the nature of their work have a functional need to reside permanently in the rural area close to their place of work (within 10km). (Minimum farm size shall be 12 hectares for farming or bloodstock).
   The applicant must demonstrate that they have been actively engaged in farming/bloodstock/horticulture or other rural activity, at the proposed location for a continuous period of not less than 5 years, prior to making the application. In the event of newly acquired land, to demonstrate that the proposed activity would be of a viable commercial scale, a detailed 5-year business plan will be required.
2. Persons with a demonstrable social need to live in a particular local rural area;
   Persons who have never owned a house in the rural area and who wish to build their first home on a site that is within 10km of where they have lived for a substantial period of their lives in the local rural area (Minimum 10 years). The local rural area is defined as the area outside all settlements identified in Levels 1 – 4 of the Settlement Hierarchy. Excluding Level 4 settlements, where there is no capacity in the treatment plant.
3. Persons with a demonstrable local exceptional need to live in a particular local rural area, examples include:
   a) Returning emigrants who have never owned a house in the rural area, in which they lived for a substantial period of their lives (Minimum 10 years), then moved away or abroad and who now wish to return to reside in the local rural area (within 10km of where they lived for a substantial period of their lives). The local rural area is defined as the area outside all settlements identified in Levels 1 – 4 of the Settlement Hierarchy. Excluding Level 4 settlements, where there is no capacity in the treatment plant.
   b) A person who has lived a substantial period of their lives in the local rural area, (at least 10 years), that previously owned a home and is no longer in possession of that home, due to the home having been disposed of following legal separation/ divorce/ repossession and can demonstrate a social or economic need for a new home in the rural area.

**Objective HO O20**
**Rural Areas Elsewhere**

It is an objective of the Council that to help stem the decline and strengthen Rural Areas Elsewhere, in general demand for permanent residential development should be accommodated, subject to meeting normal planning and environmental criteria.

In all cases the consideration of individual sites, for rural housing will be subject to normal siting and design considerations, which will include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:

- Any proposed vehicular access would not endanger public safety by giving rise to a traffic hazard,
- That any proposed on-site waste water disposal system is designed, located and maintained in a way which protects water quality,
- That the siting and design of new dwellings takes account of and integrates appropriately with its physical surroundings and other aspects of the natural and cultural heritage and,
- That the proposed site otherwise accords with the objectives of the Development Plan in general.

The Planning Authority shall have regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements in the implementation of the rural housing policy.

Climate action measures shall be submitted as part of any proposed application, to support a transition to a low carbon economy.

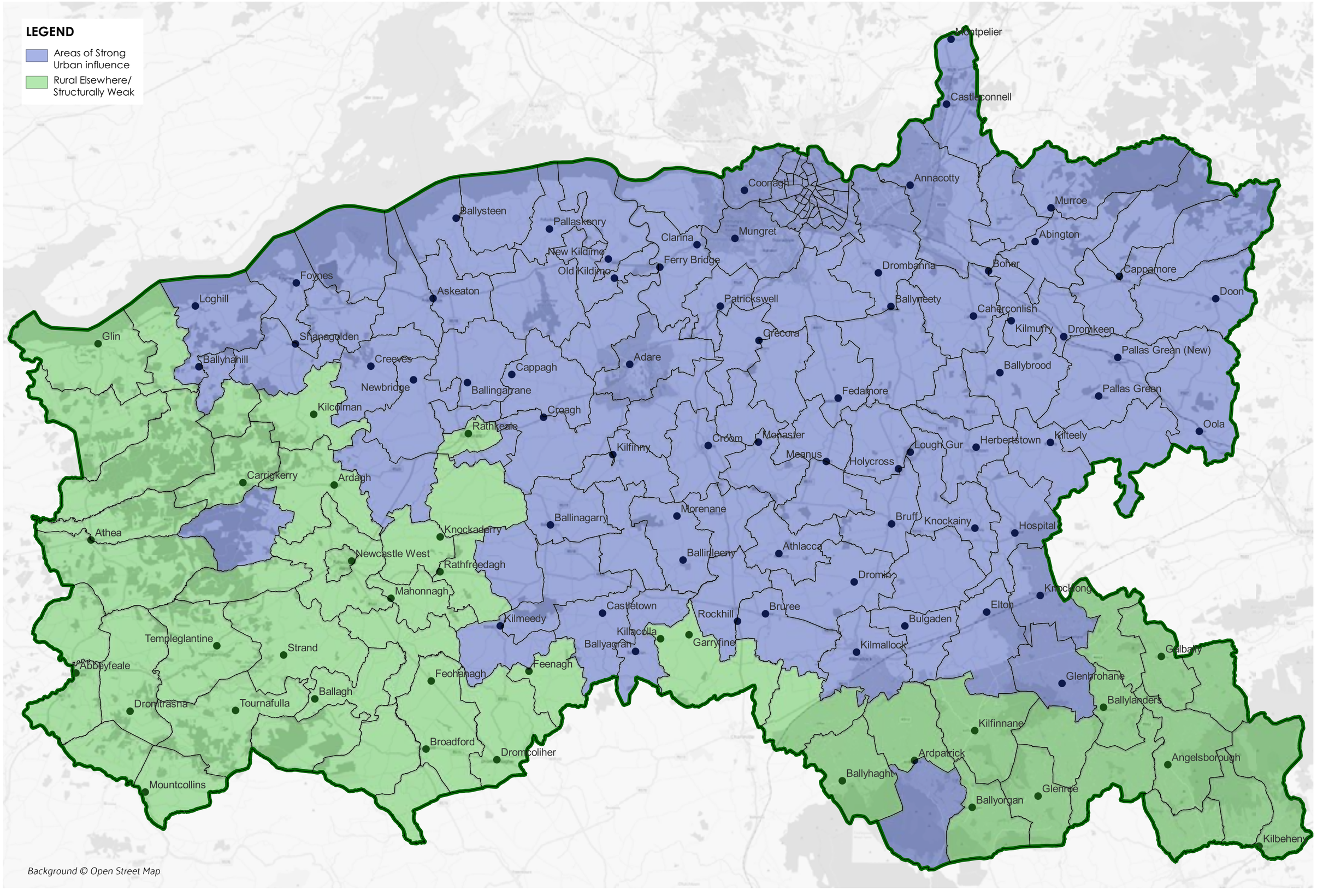
**Objective HO O21**
**Refurbishment/Replacement of Traditional Rural Dwellings**

It is an objective of the Council to seek the retention and sympathetic refurbishment, with adaptation if necessary, of traditional dwellings in the countryside in sympathy with the character of the existing building. This will be encouraged in preference to their replacement. Planning permission will generally only be granted for replacement of a dwelling where it is demonstrated that it is not reasonably capable of being made structurally sound, or otherwise improved and where the building is not of architectural merit. In this instance, consideration will be given to the replacement of an existing dwelling with a new dwelling at the same location, subject to appropriate design, scale of building and normal planning considerations. Local rural housing need shall not apply in this instance.

**Objective HO O22**
**Occupancy Condition**

It is an objective of the Council to require that any house which is granted planning permission in the rural areas designated 'Areas under strong urban influence', will be subject to a requirement of occupancy of seven years by the applicant.

Map 4.1: Rural Housing Strategy Map




*Background © Open Street Map*





# 5
# A Strong Economy

## 5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to support the growth of employment and enterprise, retail, tourism and the marine economy in Limerick, in a manner, which ensures that economic development does not impact adversely on the environment. The future growth, resilience and competitiveness of Limerick's economy is dependent on a range of factors. Such factors include export-led growth, a diverse sectoral mix, indigenous enterprise and foreign direct investment, innovation, infrastructure, skills/ talent and a high quality of life to attract and retain a future labour supply. This Strong Economy chapter sets out a framework for economic growth, which encompasses a range of key economic sectors across the City and County, in accordance with national, regional and local policies.

## 5.2 Policy Context

The strong national focus on economic recovery in recent years has filtered through to local government generally and the land-use planning process specifically. For example, the RSES now provides the regional level economic policy to support the implementation of the National Planning Framework, which itself is aligned with the Government's national enterprise policy document *Enterprise 2025- Renewed (2018)*. The Southern Region RSES economic vision is 'to enable sustainable, competitive, inclusive and resilient growth'.

The RSES sets out guiding principles to identify suitable locations for strategic employment development and recommends that these principles are applied by Local Authorities in the preparation of Development Plans. As the largest urban centre in the Mid-West, the NPF supports ambitious growth targets to enable Limerick City to grow by at least 50% to 2040. The Limerick Shannon MASP established that Limerick City and Shannon are interdependent, with their complementary functions contributing to a combined strength, that is a key economic driver for the region and Ireland. Limerick Regeneration, the amalgamation of Limerick City and County and the Limerick 2030 initiative have all contributed to enhancing Limerick's growth potential. Working together with, inter alia, Higher Education Institutions, Regional Enterprise Plan and Regional Skill Forum initiatives, Shannon International Airport and the Shannon-Foynes Port Company, there is capacity to build on recent successes and add to the ambitious vision for this Metropolitan Area.

## 5.3 Economic Principles

The economic vision set out in the RSES for the Southern Region seeks to develop a strong and diverse economic base to enable sustainable, competitive, inclusive and resilient growth. These five principles form the corner stones of the economic strategy for Limerick. The five principles include:

### Smart Specialisation

**Bringing together key stakeholders (local communities, national enterprise bodies, higher education institutions and private enterprises) to identify the competitive advantages of an area with the view of developing economic opportunities.**

### Clustering

**Clusters are a geographic or virtual concentration of interrelated companies, suppliers and associated institutions. Clusters put in place a favourable and connected regional business ecosystem in which new players emerge and support the development of new industrial value chains and emerging industries.**

### Placemaking for enterprise development

**The Plan places significant emphasis on placemaking, which involves ensuring that geographical locations are attractive places to live, learn and work. The knowledge economy has shifted trends. Effective place-making can create the necessary conditions for sustaining and creating jobs while also creating compact, attractive, vibrant and safe environments in which to live, work, visit and invest.**

### Knowledge Diffusion

**The policy of 'knowledge diffusion' is the spreading of knowledge - the process of knowledge transfer to different segments of society to create an environment that attracts inward investment and promotion of a knowledge economy.**

### Capacity Building

**Capacity building is defined by the RSES as building capacity to enable effective implementation and to respond to emerging challenges. Capacity building aims at developing a secure and stable economy that enables economic resilience by adapting to challenges and anticipating changes.**

## 5.4 Employment Sectors

Census 2016 shows that the largest employer in Limerick City and County is the Professional Services sector with 25% of the workforce employed in the sector, which is higher than the national average of 23.5%. This is followed by Commerce and Trade (21.4%) and Manufacturing (14.9%), which is similar to national trends. The contribution of manufacturing to employment in Limerick City and County is much higher than the national average of 11.4%, highlighting the historical importance of the sector in Limerick. The Transport and Communications sector experienced the largest growth (13.8%) in the City and County since 2011. This was followed by growth in Professional Services (9.9%) and Manufacturing (7%).

### 5.4.1 Active Enterprises

Data from the CSO's Business Demography show that in 2018, there were 9,437 active enterprises in Limerick City and County. This has increased by 4.9% over the 10-year period since 2008. The three largest economic sectors in Limerick are Construction, Wholesale and Retail Trade and Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities.

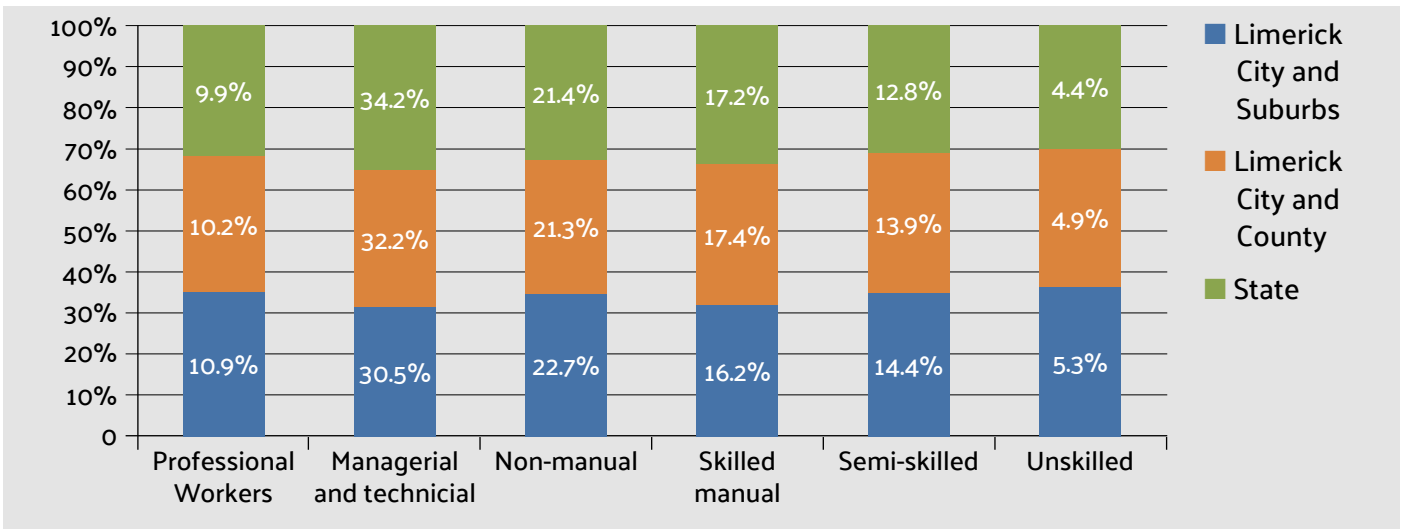
The *Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick* has the ambition to create a City Centre that can attract new inward business investment and encourage the formation of new local business by providing high quality, flexible space. The Plan focuses on a range of sectors which will contribute to the future economic growth of Limerick, including professional services, ICT, advanced manufacturing, life sciences and logistics among others.

### 5.4.2 Identification of Sufficient Zoned Lands

While population and employment are important indicators of the urban structure, where the jobs are located is also important for giving insight into future growth. The ratio of jobs to residents is indicative of the performance of an area in terms of attracting workers from a wider catchment area. The analysis undertaken as part of the NPF shows that the urban areas in the Southern Region have an average jobs to resident workers ratio of 1.06. Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, Abbeyfeale and Kilmallock all have higher jobs to resident workers rates, which highlights their importance as employment locations and their ability to attract workers from other areas.

The Plan seeks to protect and promote the strategic employment locations identified in the RSES. Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy identifies opportunity sites for future development. In line with the Core Strategy, the Plan considers how best to ensure that there are sufficient zoned lands available in appropriate locations, to support the range of future employment needs for Limerick.

Figure 5.1 Socio-Economic Group, Limerick and State 2016




*Source: CSO, Census 2016*

## 5.5 Strategy

The success of economic growth in Limerick is intertwined with maintaining and enhancing its attractiveness as a high-quality place to live, work and visit. It is this wider package, which includes everything from high quality public transport, availability of housing, education infrastructure, quality place-making and heritage, culture, recreational and community facilities, which will ultimately attract business. In spatial terms, the Limerick employment strategy aims to provide for the expansion of employment through the designation of a range of highly accessible employment locations. The Employment Strategy of this Plan seeks to align strategic employment locations with public transport corridors, increasing the efficiency of land-use, reducing sprawl and minimising carbon footprints and seeks to retain and enhance the important role of employment in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) and the County's Town Centres.

From a sectoral perspective the Plan aims to support and facilitate the economic development of Limerick across a broad range of sectors, while acknowledging in particular the importance of the knowledge economy. The focus on employment creation is based on consolidating the strong job generation capacity of professional services, ICT, advanced manufacturing, life sciences and logistics technology and knowledge-based industries. In addition, the Plan provides for a wide range of employment needs to ensure that people with a diverse range of skill levels can both find and help grow employment opportunities. Furthermore, the Council will seek to work in conjunction with state agencies and the government to support and facilitate education, upskilling and job creation programmes.

**Policy ECON P1**
**Strong Economy**
It is a policy of the Council to support the review and implementation of *Limerick 2030 – An Economic and Spatial Plan* to guide the economic, social and physical renaissance of Limerick City Centre and the wider County/Mid-West Region.

**Policy ECON P2**
**Economic Development and Enterprise**
It is a policy of the Council to work in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, adjoining Local Authorities, the Regional Assembly and all other relevant agencies to promote, facilitate and enable sustainable enterprise and economic development, in line with the policies and objectives as set out in national, regional and local strategies.

**Policy ECON P3**
**Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Economy**
It is a policy of the Council to promote the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area as a key location for economic development supporting the provision of increased employment through the expansion of the existing enterprise ecosystem in the region and the development of smart specialisation.

**Policy ECON P4**
**Urban Economy**
It is a policy of the Council to:
a) Promote, facilitate and enable economic development and employment generating activities in Limerick City Centre, at Strategic Employment Locations and other appropriately zoned locations in a sustainable manner.
b) Facilitate the future sustainable economic development of Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty to optimise the benefits of its strategic location in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, in accordance with the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

**Policy ECON P5**
**Retail**
It is a policy of the Council to support the sustainable long-term growth of the retail sector, in accordance with the Core and Retail Strategies of the Plan, including the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities* and the accompanying *Retail Design Manual* published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government in 2012 and the *Retail Strategy* for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick in determining planning applications for retail development.

**Policy ECON P6**
**Enterprise and Employment Development Opportunities**
It is a policy of the Council to promote and facilitate opportunities for sectoral development in Limerick, to increase productivity, create employment and to diversify the economy and ensure future economic resilience.

**Policy ECON P7**
**Tourism**
It is a policy of the Council to:
a) Promote and facilitate the growth of the tourism industry in Limerick and tourism employment opportunities, through the sustainable development of urban and rural visitor attractions, amenities, facilities, festivals and events.
b) Support the *Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019-2023*, the *Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick*, the *River Shannon Tourism Masterplan* and the *Limerick Wild Atlantic Way Gateway City Strategy*, which inform the development of tourism in Limerick.

**Policy ECON P8**
**Marine Economy**
It is a policy of the Council to promote, encourage and facilitate the growth and competitiveness of the Marine Economy in Limerick in a sustainable manner, which continues to protect the environment.

In implementing the strategic policies outlined above, this chapter is divided into four sections as follows:
- Section 1: Retail
- Section 2: Enterprise and Employment
- Section 3: Tourism
- Section 4: Marine Economy

Note: Unless specifically stated, the general policies apply to both urban and rural areas.

# Section 1: Retail

## 5.6 National and Regional Context

The Plan supports the role of Limerick's City, towns and villages as vibrant centres, which provide a range of services for the community. The retail sector is vital to the economic, social and cultural life of Limerick. According to the Regional and Spatial Economic Strategy, in addition to being a significant employer and economic contributor, the retail sector plays a key role in place-making and creating attractive, liveable environments. The retail sector is central to strong mixed-use commercial cores, throughout the network of settlements and can play a key role in regeneration, vitality and viability of the core area.

The importance of the retail sector is reflected in national and regional planning policy, which seeks to ensure that existing and new retail development is carried out in accordance with the overall principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The strategic framework for a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to retail growth in Limerick and the wider region are set out in:

- *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region;*
- *The Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010 – 2016;*
- *Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick;*
- *The 2012 Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (RPGs), with its companion document, Retail Design Manual.*

### 5.6.1 Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region required the preparation of a Joint Retail Strategy for the Metropolitan Area. The Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick forms the basis for retail planning as set out in Volume 6 of the Plan. It is an objective of the MASP to support Limerick City Centre in maintaining its dominant retail function in the Mid-West hierarchy. The RSES supports and promotes the continued expansion and enhancement of retail development within the City Centre.

A key aim of the strategy is to ensure that Limerick City fulfils its role at the top of the regional hierarchy as the preferred location for new retail development. The Strategy supports the retail hierarchy and outlines the location, quantity and type of retail required in support of the settlement hierarchy of the Plan. The Strategy identifies any requirements for additional retail floor space, based on population projections and income and having regard to the degree of vacancy in existing retail areas.

The retail hierarchy is set out in the Retail Strategy for Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick as set out in Volume 6. The retail hierarchy aligns with the settlement hierarchy of the Plan. The purpose of the retail hierarchy is to indicate the level and form of retailing activity appropriate to the various centres across Limerick, to protect each centre's vitality and viability, while allowing each centre to perform its role within the hierarchy. The hierarchy emphasises the primacy of the City Centre in accordance with the objectives of the MASP.

Table 5.1a: The Retail Hierarchy for Limerick

| Tier | Level | Location | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Tier 1 - City Centre** | - | Limerick City Centre | City Centre |
| **Tier 2 - Major Town Centres** | - | Newcastle West | Key Service Town |
| **Tier 3 - Town Centres** | Level 1 | Abbeyfeale | Service Town |
| | Level 2 | Adare | Service Town |
| | | Kilmallock | Service Town |
| | | Rathkeale | Service Town |
| **Tier 4- Large Villages** | Level 1 | Castleconnell | Large Villages |
| | | Caherconlish | Large Villages |
| | Level 2 | Askeaton | Large Villages |
| **Tier 5 – Local/Corner Shops** | - | Smaller villages/ crossroads – rural shops (post offices, creameries, public houses, filling stations, etc.) | Local/Corner Shops |

Table 5.1b: Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Retail Hierarchy

| Tier | Level | Location | Status |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Tier 1 - City Centre** | - | Limerick City Centre | City Centre |
| **Tier 2 - Major Town Centres** | Level 1 | Dooradoyle (Crescent shopping centre) | District Centre |
| | Level 2 | Caherdavin (Jetland shopping centre) | District Centre |
| | | Shannon (Skycourt shopping centre) | Metropolitan Town |
| | | Castletroy | District Centre |
| | | Parkway | District Centre |
| | | Roxboro | District Centre |
| | | Moyross | District Centre |

## 5.7 Retail in Limerick

### 5.7.1 Retail in the City Centre and Suburbs (in Limerick)

The retail sector is essential to the vitality of Limerick City Centre. The sector provides goods and services as well as employment and income for the local economy. Retail and services play a key role in place-making and creating attractive liveable environments, enabling strong mixed-use urban cores and facilitating regeneration. Unfortunately, the retail sector in Limerick City Centre has been in decline in recent decades, with the sector migrating to the purpose built out of town shopping centres and increasingly to an online platform. The retail and services sector remains however, a significant employer and economic contributor in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick).

An objective of the Limerick Shannon MASP is to promote the Metropolitan Area as a cohesive area, with the City Centre as the primary location at the heart of the area and region. The City Centre is to be the primary commercial area, supporting a range of retail, tourism, social and cultural activities. Limerick City Centre is to be repositioned at the top of the retail hierarchy, through improving the range and quality of shopping on offer and creating an enhanced customer experience of visiting the City Centre.

The core retail area comprises Thomas Street/Bedford Row, William Street/ Sarsfield Street, O'Connell Street/Patrick Street, Cruises Street, Roches Street, Henry Street and Catherine Street. This area is anchored by the Brown Thomas department store and general stores including Dunnes Stores and Penneys, as well as the Tesco supermarket at Arthur's Quay, which is the only purpose-built shopping centre in the City Centre.

It is an objective of the Council to support improvements in the range and quality of shopping on offer, in the context of a much-improved customer experience of visiting the City Centre as a whole. A contemporary shopping offer with leisure – food, drink and entertainment at the heart of the experience. This can be achieved by improving the shopping experience in the prime shopping area – in the vicinity of Brown Thomas, Penneys, Cruises Street and Arthur's Quay Shopping Centre. This is the central City location that major multiple retailers would wish to locate in and is the focal point of the shopping quarter of Limerick.

### 5.7.2 Revitalising City Centre Retail

In accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, the Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick will respond to the effects of suburban retail development by re-establishing the importance of Limerick City Centre at the top of the regional retail hierarchy. In this regard, Limerick City Centre is the preferred location for new retail development in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area.

The closure of businesses in the City Centre has resulted in a lack of maintenance of some vacant buildings, with urban decay evident on parts of some streets. It is vital to ensure that the City Centre is suitable to attract and retain retail and other businesses. A sense of place and high quality leisure market is required in the first instance, to allow the development of a more complementary mix of retail uses to follow, including boutique clothing, tech showrooms, local agri-food produce and creative arts and crafts shops.

Fostering mixed-use planning strategies, developing safe attractive and walkable areas with enhanced mobility and security will encourage people to visit the City Centre, build up a loyal customer base and set up businesses. These are cross cutting themes in the Plan.

To successfully build resilience and revitalise a sustainable City Centre, the key themes in the Plan aiming to improve Limerick City's offer and attractiveness include:

1. Ensuring a critical density of residential and workforce population in the City Centre;
2. Ease of mobility, particularly walkability and perceptions of safety;
3. Perception of the attractiveness of retail, commercial and leisure activities in the City Centre;
4. The strength of the City Centre as a destination for work and doing business;
5. The use and quality of public spaces in the City Centre, including the provision of public facilities such as public toilets, drinking water fountains and seating.

The continued progression of the projects in the Limerick 2030 Plan will act as a catalyst towards the revitalisation and regeneration of the City Centre. However, the prioritisation of objectives to increase footfall, dwell time and spend are required. A City Centre Revitalisation Manager has been appointed for the professional management of a citywide public sector led approach to revitalisation of the City Centre and retail sector.

**Objective ECON O1**
**City Centre**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure retail development complies with the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick as set out in Volume 6.
b) Protect, promote, support and enhance the role of Limerick City Centre as the primary retail centre in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Mid-West Region, in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.
c) Enhance the vitality of the City Centre through a mixture of uses, reuse of vacant units, increased residential population and revitalisation. Retail is an integral part of the City's economy complementing its inherent strengths including innovation, enterprise, tourism, culture and services and has an important array of amenities, vibrancy, liveability/quality of life and quality-built environment. Development shall be designed so as to enhance the public realm and creation of a sense of place.

The Retail Strategy has identified a number of key actions and recommendations to facilitate improvements to sustain the vitality and viability of the City Centre as follows:

1. Consider pedestrianisation and public realm improvements (new attractive hard landscaping) to encourage pedestrian activity within the core retail area.
2. Maintain the vitality and viability of Limerick City Centre by consolidating the core retail area to ensure any future retail development is directed towards this area in the first instance.
3. Encourage and facilitate the reuse of vacant buildings or under-utilised sites throughout the City Centre, with a focus on brownfield sites.
4. Consider improvements to the public realm within the City Centre, waterfront and consider improving pedestrian linkages to create a more pedestrian friendly environment.
5. Promote access to Limerick's historic core through improved signage/street maps to make visitors aware of the core's presence and location.
6. Incentivise owners to make improvements to their buildings/ shopfronts within the retail core through grant funding via the 'Business and Retail Incentive Scheme'.
7. Adopt a pilot programme for the extension of opening hours to allow for late night shopping within the retail core, this could be scheduled to take place alongside one of the City's major festival/events which will support the night-time economy.
8. Undertake an access audit of the

built environment to seek to improve accessibility within the City for people with disabilities.
9. Support the retail charter for operators and landlords to sign-up to high quality goals for retail in the City Centre.
10. Support synergy with non-retail uses that attract footfall to the City Centre.
11. Work to define character areas and invest in marketing campaigns to communicate a broad City Centre experience to attract visitors and consumers.
12. Develop multi-channel synergy between retail, service and cultural offer of the City Centre.

### 5.7.3 Suburbs - Supporting City Centre Retail

The retail centres throughout the suburbs of Limerick City serve the retail and service needs of the local population and in the case of the larger centres, the wider Mid-West Region. The success of the shopping centres in the suburbs is in contrast to the stagnation and decline of the retail sector in the City Centre. The migration of retail footfall from the City Centre to the suburbs is exacerbated by the increasing trend towards on-line retailing. The successful growth of each out of Town Centre has the potential to adversely impact on the viability and vitality of the City Centre. Therefore, planning applications for out of centre retail units in excess of 1,000m$^2$ shall be considered in the context of a Retail Impact Assessment, demonstrating compliance with the capacity for retail floor space, the area requirements and other criteria set out in the Retail Strategy. While the role of the retail centres in the suburbs is recognised, these areas should support and compliment the role of the City Centre at the top of the retail hierarchy.

The provision of retail and services in the suburbs is essential to ensure the development of sustainable communities and the vitality of the suburbs. Choice in retail and services such as pharmacies, medical facilities and food outlets has increased significantly in recent years. Convenience and comparison-shopping including retail warehousing is available throughout the suburbs. A number of District and Local Centres have developed in tandem with new residential areas.

New retail floor area in the suburbs should incorporate the redevelopment of vacant commercial units. The opportunity exists for the out of Town Centres to gradually diversify with a more balanced mix of residential uses and employment spaces alongside the retail and leisure facilities. Such diversification will respect the priority of the City Centre in the Retail Hierarchy, while allowing improved integration with the surrounding land uses.

**Objective ECON O2**
**Limerick Suburbs Retail**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure proposals which would undermine the vitality and viability of Limerick City Centre will not be permitted. The sequential approach to retail development set out in the *Retail Planning – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2012* will be enforced, in the interests of supporting the City Centre at the top of the retail hierarchy. Any retail development in the District or Local Centres or Retail Warehousing zone shall comply with the Retail Strategy.

### 5.7.4 District Centres

The Crescent Shopping Centre in Dooradoyle acts as a Tier 2, Level 1 centre serving as a retail destination at a regional level. There are also a number of other Tier 2, Level 2 District Centres throughout the suburbs, including the Jetland Shopping Centre, Castletroy Shopping Centre, Watch House Cross, the Parkway Shopping Centre and Roxboro Shopping Centre.

The District Centres should progressively develop as mixed-use urban centres to include residential, supporting services and commercial office components where appropriate. Any proposed retail development in a District Centre shall comply with the specific objectives set out in the Retail Strategy under Volume 6 of the Plan.

**Objective ECON O3**
**District Centres**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Protect and enhance the mix of services and facilities in existing District Centres, which provide for the day-to-day needs of local communities in accordance with the Retail Strategy.
b) Enable development of the District Centres in accordance with the specific objectives and assessment criteria of the Retail Strategy.
c) Require improvement to the quality of the public realm in any proposals for the Crescent Shopping Centre and the Castletroy Shopping Centre, including hard and soft landscaping.
d) Promote improved pedestrian accessibility, permeability and safety within any proposed redevelopment works.
e) Promote the redevelopment of the Roxboro Shopping Centre, enhance the overall appearance and public realm in line with the Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick.

**Objective ECON O4**
**Dooradoyle Urban Quarter:**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote the continued development of lands around the Dooradoyle District Centre and adjoining lands as a Strategic Employment Location through the delivery of additional office-based employment uses in a phased manner in conjunction with supporting infrastructure development.
b) Promote improvements to connectivity, signage and permeability within the wider area including pedestrian and cycle facilities linking to Portland Park and provide for the link road from Dooradoyle Road to Rosbrien Road.
c) Facilitate the early upgrading of the existing flood defence infrastructure, thus ensuring the long-term flood protection of the wider lands in Dooradoyle in a manner compatible with any future City-Wide Flood Relief Scheme.
d) Ensure any application on lands at risk of flooding is accompanied by a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment which shall demonstrate that any development does not result in additional significant flood risk in the area and does not impede the future delivery of a wider flood relief scheme for Limerick. This FRA shall also include a detailed Emergency Response Plan and a Breach Modelling Assessment using a methodology to be agreed in advance with LCCC.
e) Require an overall framework plan/ masterplan to be prepared for the lands in advance of, or as part of, any application for a portion of the currently undeveloped lands.

### 5.7.5 Local/Neighbourhood Centres

Local Centres or Neighbourhood Centres are defined in the Retail Guidelines as small groups of shops typically comprising a newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population.

There are a number of Local Centres throughout the suburbs of Limerick City, providing top-up (products that need replacing between main food shopping trips) and day-to-day shopping and service functions, including takeaway food. Local Centres play an important role in serving the needs of those without access to a car, particularly the elderly and constitute a sustainable provision of retailing, removing the need to travel and reducing levels of congestion.

The Local Authority will support and facilitate expansion of existing Local Centres where significant additional population growth is planned, or where a demonstrable gap in existing provision is identified in accordance with the Retail Strategy. The opportunity exists for centres to gradually diversify, with a more balanced mix of residential uses and employment spaces alongside the retail and leisure facilities. Such diversification will respect the priority of the City Centre in the Retail Hierarchy, while allowing improved integration with the surrounding land uses.

**Objective ECON O5**
**Local/Neighbourhood Centres**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Only consider the enlargement of existing Local/Neighbourhood Centre retail sites where it can be demonstrated that it serves a substantial residential catchment within walking distance of the centre and has a tangible urban renewal benefit for the community. Suitable floor space areas of new convenience food stores in these locations are considered to be up to 1,800m$^2$ of net retail space.

b) Promote the development of new neighbourhood centres at Mungret, Ballysimon and Old Cork Road to serve a growing population within their catchment.

c) Require all proposed retail developments in Local/ Neighbourhood Centres to demonstrate compliance with the floor space capacity requirements set out in the Retail Strategy. A retail impact assessment shall be carried out for all developments in excess of 1,000 m$^2$.

d) Promote improved pedestrian accessibility, permeability and safety within any proposed development works.

### 5.7.6 Click and Collect

The Local Authority acknowledges the changing nature of the retail sector and the increasing trend towards Click and Collect type shopping. The Local Authority supports the development of such facilities at appropriate locations.

**Objective ECON O6**
**Click and Collect**
It is an objective of the Council to support and accommodate the growth of 'Click and Collect' retail services and grocery home shopping as appropriate.

### 5.7.7 Retailing and Motor Fuel Stations

The size of the shop associated with any motor fuel station should take account of the fact that large shops can attract additional custom, large numbers of cars can cause disruption and the preferred location for retailing is in designated centres.

The Retail Planning Guidelines state that the size of such retail units should not exceed 100m$^2$. Therefore, where applications made for retail units associated with a motor fuel station are in excess of 100m$^2$ the sequential approach to retail development will apply.

**Objective ECON O7**
**Retailing and Motor Fuel Stations**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of motor fuel station shops of a maximum of 100m$^2$ net in designated centres, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria including traffic safety, as set out in the Development Management Standards of this Plan.

### 5.7.8 Retail Warehousing

A retail warehouse is a large single-level retail store specialising in the sale of bulky household goods such as carpets, tiles, furniture, electrical goods and bulky DIY items, predominantly catering for car-borne customers. A retail park generally comprises a number of such warehouses. These are a number of retail parks located in Limerick including the Ennis Road Retail Park, Parkway Retail Park and Childer's Road Retail Park.

The Retail Strategy indicates that there is limited capacity for additional retail warehousing in the City and suburbs.

**Objective ECON O8**
**Retail Warehousing**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure new retail warehousing floor space does not undermine the vitality and viability of Limerick City Centre. Retail warehousing shall comply with the requirements of the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2012* and the *Retail Strategy*.

### 5.7.9 Key Town: Newcastle West

The role of the key town of Newcastle West is to strengthen the settlement pattern and act as the main driver of economic development and provider of services within this area of Limerick. The key town will support the development of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and act as a base for high quality transport links to the core in accordance with the RSES. Newcastle West will therefore play a critical role in the development of Limerick and ensure a consolidated spread of growth beyond the cities to the sub-regional level.

Newcastle West has been identified by the RSES as a Key Town and forms part of the Atlantic Economic Corridor, with special potential for economic growth. The RSES identifies the importance of supporting Newcastle West as a strategically located urban centre of significant sub-regional context and highlights that strong sub-regional interdependencies exist between Newcastle West, Listowel, Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale. Such interdependencies provide an opportunity for collaboration and economic growth, including opportunities for partnership projects.

Initiatives of the Atlantic Economic Corridor will support Newcastle West in realising its full potential, enhancing enterprise assets to support job creation, improve competitiveness, attract investment and create future economic growth.

**Objective ECON O9**
**Newcastle West**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support and promote the role of Newcastle West as a strategic urban centre of significant influence to realise the full potential of the town, including its role as part of the Atlantic Economic Corridor Initiative.
b) Support the improvement of retail facilities in Newcastle West Town Centre, through the provision of modern shop units and a growth in floor space.
c) Support opportunities for brownfield redevelopment to support mixed-use sustainable urban development, improve on and enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre and increase its competitiveness with other retail destinations.
d) In areas adjacent/contiguous to the core retail area to support the diversity of non-retail uses at street level contiguous to the core retail area, where such uses attract customers that complement the vitality and viability and bring linked trips to the Town Centre.

**Objective ECON O10**
**Networks**

It is an objective of the Council to actively work as part of different networks, including economic networks and the Atlantic Economic Corridor Initiative, to share assets, collaborate and drive economic growth and competitiveness.

**Objective ECON O11**
**Inter Urban Links**

It is an objective of the Council to support the development of inter urban links as identified in the RSES, between Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale and Rathkeale and across the County boundary into Kerry and to develop partnerships and synergies to support the development of the wider area.

### 5.7.10 County Towns and Villages

Towns and villages are important economic drivers for their surrounding local areas and provide employment opportunities and crucial services for their residents including shops, post offices, Garda stations, petrol stations and small-scale employment opportunities. Their functions and services can vary depending on their size, refer to Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy for further information.

The RSES highlights that sustainable rural communities are dependent on viable and vibrant towns and villages. However, towns and villages in Limerick have faced challenges in relation to building vacancy, declining vibrancy and a loss of services including shops, pubs, post offices and Garda stations. Supporting enterprise and job creation and reversing population decline is crucial.

In recent years, the Council, through Innovate Limerick, has taken a proactive and innovative approach to the development of enterprise and employment opportunities. This has included the development of enterprise hubs in towns and villages throughout County Limerick, including Rathkeale, Bruree and Broadford. These enterprise centres support start-ups, small businesses and provide facilities for enterprises to expand as they grow their number of employees. They also support local communities and provide a multiplier effect as they generate spend in the local towns and villages.

The retail sector is a key element of the vitality of the towns and villages in County Limerick and provides convenience shopping, either in small supermarkets, comparison shopping or small-scale shops in the areas of hardware, pharmacies and clothes shops. It also an important factor in relation to attracting visitors to towns and villages in County Limerick. The Local Authority will support and facilitate the development of retail in towns and village centres.

The retail sector is a key rural sector for services, regeneration of town and village centres, for employment creation and enterprise growth. The emphasis is on the need to build up the retailing core of settlements.

**Objective ECON O12**
**County Towns and Villages**
It is an objective of the Council to strongly support the strengthening of the vitality and viability of town and village centres to enhance economic growth, enterprise and employment opportunities.

### 5.7.11 Rural Retail

The emphasis of national and regional planning policy is to strengthen the core of town and village settlements for residential and economic growth. The retail sector is key for the sustainable development of services and regeneration of such centres. Retail in rural areas will therefore generally be directed into existing settlements and the development of the countryside for this purpose shall be resisted. However, small-scale shops ancillary to a farm holding, selling produce from the farm may be considered, where it can be demonstrated that such use would not impact on the vitality of any settlement.

**Objective ECON O13**
**Rural Retail**
It is an objective of the Council to direct rural retail to existing town and village settlements. Rural shops that are not functionally or spatially connected to a settlement shall not be considered, except for exceptional circumstances where the development of certain types of retail units in rural areas could be acceptable. Small-scale retail units may be considered on a case-by-case basis and subject to compliance with all relevant Development Management Standards for:

- Retail units which are ancillary to activities arising from farm diversification.
- Retail units which are designed to serve tourist or recreational facilities and are ancillary to the main use.
- Retail units attached to an existing or approved craft workshop.

### 5.7.12 Casual Trading

Limerick City and County Council licenses casual traders to sell goods in public areas and designated trading areas. Designated areas include the street traders in the City Centre, Abbeyfeale Main Square and Newcastle West Main Square under the Casual Trading Act and the Casual Trading Bye-laws 1998. An Event Casual Trading Licence is required to sell goods at the vicinity of an event for the day or days an event is taking place and the location is at the discretion of the Gardaí and Local Authority.

The success of the existing casual trading area in Limerick City at the Milk Market and Cruises Street, demonstrates that there is a demand to broaden the location and mix of casual trading within the City. Casual trading is important throughout Limerick, contributing to the local economy, generating vibrancy and vitality and attracting tourists to the settlements. Such markets can enhance the retail offer and complement the existing retail and commercial uses in the settlements.

**Objective ECON O14**
**Casual Trading Areas**

It is an objective of the Council to designate sites as Casual Trading Areas in suitable locations where deemed appropriate.

### 5.7.13 Active Street Frontages

All sites in areas zoned City Centre, Town Centres, District Centres and Neighbourhood Centres may potentially be considered pivotal in creating a sense of vibrancy. The nature of the use of ground floor retail units will be required to reflect this in the design of their frontages, the use of the premises and where feasible, their hours of opening.

**Objective ECON O15**
**Active Street Frontages**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Control the provision of non-retail uses at ground floor level in the principal shopping streets of Limerick City Centre, Town Centres and District Centres and within the shopping parades of mixed-use Local/ Neighbourhood Centres.
b) Encourage the upgrade and refurbishment of existing retail units and the maintenance of original shopfronts, or the reinstatement of traditional shopfronts where poor replacements have been installed, discourage the use of external roller shutters, internally illuminated signs or inappropriate projecting signs.
c) Prepare Shopfront Design Guidelines, within the lifetime of the Development Plan and ensure implementation of these guidelines on completion.
d) Promote quality retail design which will be implemented through the development management process due to the dominant visual and use role it plays in a city, town or village streetscape in accordance with the *Guidelines for Planning Authorities: Retail Planning (DoECLG, 2012)* and the accompanying *Retail Design Manual.*
e) Promote the revitalisation and reuse of vacant or derelict properties and shop units. Where viable retail cannot be sustained then alternative uses for the property/unit will be considered.

### 5.7.14 Night Time Economy

The Council recognises the importance of the night time economy throughout Limerick, which is an important form of economic activity that occurs after 5pm and includes dining, nightlife, arts, music, theatre, entertainment, festivals, events, activities and tourist attractions that are open at night.

**Objective ECON O16**
**Night Time Economy**

It is an objective of the Council to support the development of the night time economy throughout Limerick and to prepare a night time strategy and ensure the implementation of this strategy on completion.

# Section 2: Enterprise and Employment

## 5.8 Enterprise and Employment

### 5.8.1 National and Regional Context

The MASP supports Limerick City in becoming a major economic force in the Irish and international economy, a leading centre for commercial investment – both foreign direct investment and indigenous business growth, capitalising on the strengths of the city's higher education institutions and the skills of the workforce. The City Centre will be at the heart of this economic force –attracting retail, leisure, residential, commercial, educational and cultural growth. This growth will benefit all citizens across the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and wider Mid-West Region.

Newcastle West has been identified by the RSES as part of the Atlantic Economic Corridor, with the potential for future economic growth and is presented as a key town in this section. Newcastle West will play a critical role in underpinning the RSES and ensuring a consolidated spread of growth beyond the cities to the sub-regional level and in the *Limerick 2030 Plan* to complement the future growth of the Limerick Metropolitan Area (in Limerick).

The role of the other key towns in County Limerick is to strengthen the settlement pattern and act as the main drivers of economic development and significant providers of services within their respective sub-regions. They support the development of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and act as a base for high quality transport links to the core area of the region.

### 5.8.2 Strategic Employment Locations Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty

In accordance with the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area has capacity for economic growth of a significant scale at Strategic Employment Locations as briefly outlined in this section. The Local Authority is committed to the delivery of a vibrant and compact community where people live close to where they work in Limerick City Centre, which must be prioritised for investment. The strategic employment areas identified, support the objectives for compact growth of the settlement of Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty. These employment areas have potential for expansion and intensification and are linked to a critical mass of skilled workers, served by key infrastructure (water, wastewater, electricity, broadband etc.), with the potential for public and sustainable forms of transport to the City Centre. With an increase of critical mass in the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, it is envisaged that population and jobs growth will occur in a sustainable manner focusing on clusters and smart specialisation.

Limerick City Centre itself is a key strategic employment location, with significant potential for expansion of existing employment in the retail, commercial services, culture and tourism sectors. The maintenance of the city's existing working port and associated industries will also be supported in the Plan. These lands represent an invaluable asset for the future maritime related economic development of the City Centre. There is also potential for significant development of underutilised

City Centre lands within the Docklands area for a major employment and residential quarter.

Office based employment is vital for the city's economic development. The Local Authority acknowledges that the availability of choice to cater for the various needs of different types of businesses is essential. In this respect, additional lands are required for office space over and above that provided at Gardens International and proposed in the Opera Square and Cleeves Riverside Quarter developments. It is therefore acknowledged that additional locations may become available and the Local Authority recognises the need to be flexible to accommodate employment opportunities and the aims of revitalising and regenerating Limerick City, for higher density living and higher value jobs during the lifetime of the Plan.

The hospitals at the University Hospital Limerick, the Maternity Hospital and St. John's cater for a regional population of up to half a million people and provide substantial direct and indirect employment for the Mid-West Region. Proposals for the replacement of the standalone Limerick University Maternity Hospital are also underway, in accordance with the Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan 2021-2030.

Elsewhere, Raheen Business Park, the National Technology Park and the proposed Northside Business Campus are identified as Strategic Employment Locations under the MASP. These strategic locations offer the capacity to cater for investment that require greenfield or brownfield sites, access to an international airport and third level graduates.

The Local Authority will continue to support investment in and build on the success of the High Tech/Manufacturing zoned lands, which have contributed significantly to the economic growth of Limerick. IDA Ireland's Raheen Business Park serves a number of large multinational companies including Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Analog Devices, Dell, Banta and Stryker Corp. The National Techonology Park (NTP) at Plassey, which first opened in 1984 as Ireland's first Science and Technology Park, is home to 80 organisations including Cook Medical, Vistakon and Gilt. As there is limited undeveloped land available at these locations, the Plan proposes additional zoned land, for high tech/manufacturing uses, adjoining the existing Raheen Industrial Estate.

The Local Authority envisages that the delivery of the Northside Business Campus will be developed on the basis of strong links between and synergies with higher education institutes and various employment agencies. This Business Campus has significant potential for the creation of employment opportunities for the residents of the Regeneration Areas of Moyross, King's Island and the wider community and has the potential to make a significant contribution to the economic development of the north side of Limerick City.

The Higher Education Institutes of University of Limerick (UL), Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), Mary Immaculate College (MIC) and the Limerick Clare Education and Training Board are significant employers in Limerick and have capacity for expansion and further employment creation (Refer to Chapter 10: Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure). TUS has a new campus at Coonagh with state of the art teaching, learning and research facilities and will enable expansion of the places on TUS's engineering courses. UL has purchased the former Dunnes Stores site adjacent to Sarsfield Bridge and has plans for the development of a City Campus, comprising education and student accommodation facilities. The development of a City Campus will contribute significantly to the revitalisation of the economic and residential core of the City Centre.

The Local Authority supports the on-going operations of the strategic employment zones identified in the MASP, the Plan and any sustainable economic development opportunities on appropriately zoned lands. In this regard, the capacity for employment growth is acknowledged and lands have been zoned to cater for existing and new industry and enterprise and employment related uses. Bus, pedestrian and cycle linkages will connect many of the potential employment areas to the City Centre as identified in the Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy. The Local Authority will work with local and national employment agencies, Departments and private investors to promote and facilitate continued investment in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty.

A high standard of design and layout will be required for new industrial and enterprise and employment type developments, including attractive and safe pedestrian and cycle friendly environments, whilst ensuring the functioning of business and industrial locations. All proposed developments will be subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria set out in the Development Management Standards of this Plan and Section 28 Guidance.

**Objective ECON O17**
**Strategic Employment Locations City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote, facilitate and enable a diverse range of employment opportunities by facilitating appropriate development, improvement and expansion of enterprise and industry on appropriately zoned lands, accessible by public and sustainable modes of transport, subject to compliance with all relevant Development Management Standards and Section 28 Guidance at Strategic Employment Locations and other appropriately zoned locations in a sustainable manner.

b) Facilitate and support Limerick City Centre, University Hospital Limerick, Raheen Business Park, the National Technology Park, Higher Education Institutes, Public Hospitals, Dock Road, Northside Business Campus and Opera Centre as Strategic Employment Locations, identified in accordance with the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan.

**Objective ECON O18**
**Specific Site Requirements**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure that a comprehensive framework plan shall be prepared and agreed with the Planning Authority in advance of development on the 'High Tech/Manufacturing' zoned lands to the west of Raheen Business Park. The framework should clearly set out the key infrastructure requirements for the site and identify responsibility and the timeframe for delivery of such infrastructure. The Framework Plan shall be subject to the following:
   - Cognisance of the residential amenities of the properties to the north and western side of the site and the adjacent agricultural land;
   - Access to the 'High Tech/ Manufacturing' zoned land to the west of the R510 will be limited to the existing roundabout to the east of the site. Limited access may be provided off the Patrickswell Road;
   - Applications for development in the low-lying area in the southern section of this zone shall have regard to the attenuation infrastructure and shall include a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment, including proposals to mitigate and control the level of run off and attenuation;

b) Ensure the provision of a minimum 20m landscaped buffer zone between proposed development and adjoining development/lands in Annacotty Business Park, Northside Business Park and the 'High Tech/ Manufacturing' zoned lands to the

west of Raheen Business Park.

c) Require the preparation of a Masterplan for the Enterprise and Employment zoning at the former racecourse lands at Greenpark. The Masterplan shall include a conceptual layout, infrastructure and phasing details.

d) Ensure all development proposals undertake an appropriate level of transport assessment, including an assessment of the cumulative impact of development, to ensure planned development can be accommodated complementary to safeguarding the strategic function of the national road network and associated junctions.

### 5.8.3 Strategic Employment Locations County Limerick

Sites for enterprise and employment are zoned in the Local Area Plans for the various towns but because of the strategic nature of Annacotty Business Park, the Askeaton Business Park (which is identified as one of the strategic sites in the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP)) and Foynes Port, suitable sites are zoned for enterprise use in these locations in the Plan.

**Objective ECON O19**
**Employment Locations County Limerick**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Safeguard Askeaton Business Park for the accommodation of large establishments of regional importance. The application of appropriate mitigation measures for this zone as detailed in Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary (SIFP), Volume 2, Appendices C and D, the Environmental Report and Natura Impact Report which accompanied the SIFP, will apply for proposed developments within this zone. An overall masterplan for the site outlining the proposed infrastructural provision, including the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), shall be provided. Access to the development location site at Askeaton should be facilitated from the non-national road network.

b) Facilitate the sustainable development of Annacotty Business Park, of a scale, phasing and character compatible with surrounding land uses and capacity of the road network. All buildings and associated services shall be contained within this area and a buffer zone of 20m in width shall abutt the undeveloped north-western portion of the site and shall be suitably landscaped, to screen development from dwellings on the Clyduff Road. An appropriate buffer zone must be considered for any future planning application on these lands in the interests of protecting the residential amenity of the area.

**Objective ECON O20**
**Location of Industry or Enterprise in Brownfield Sites**

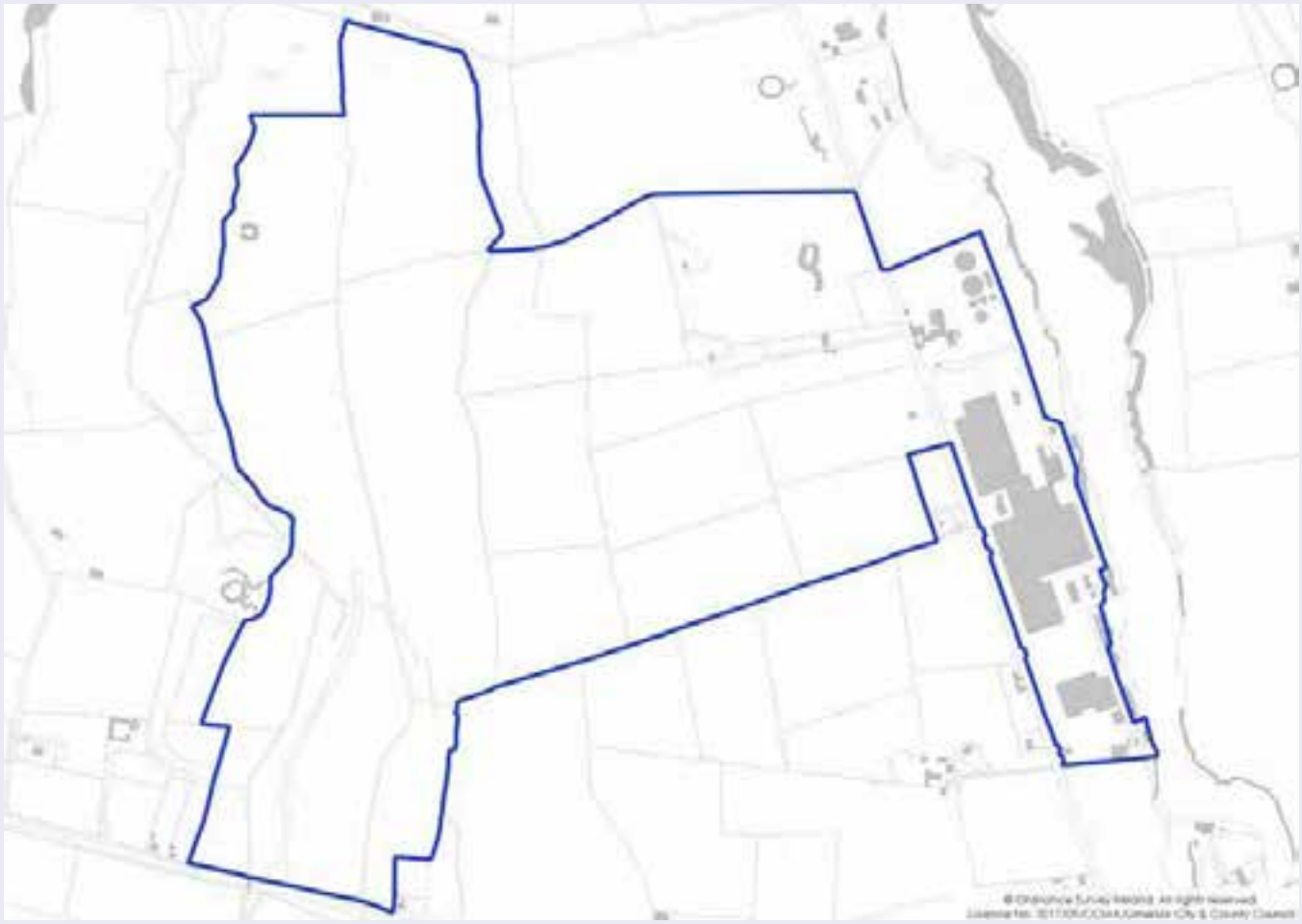
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate industry or enterprises in brownfield sites with previously established industrial or commercial use, or derelict sites in a commercial, industrial or mixed-use area, subject to the following considerations:

a) The use should be appropriate to the scale and context of the site, taking into account traffic and other impacts on local infrastructure and neighbouring land uses and amenities;

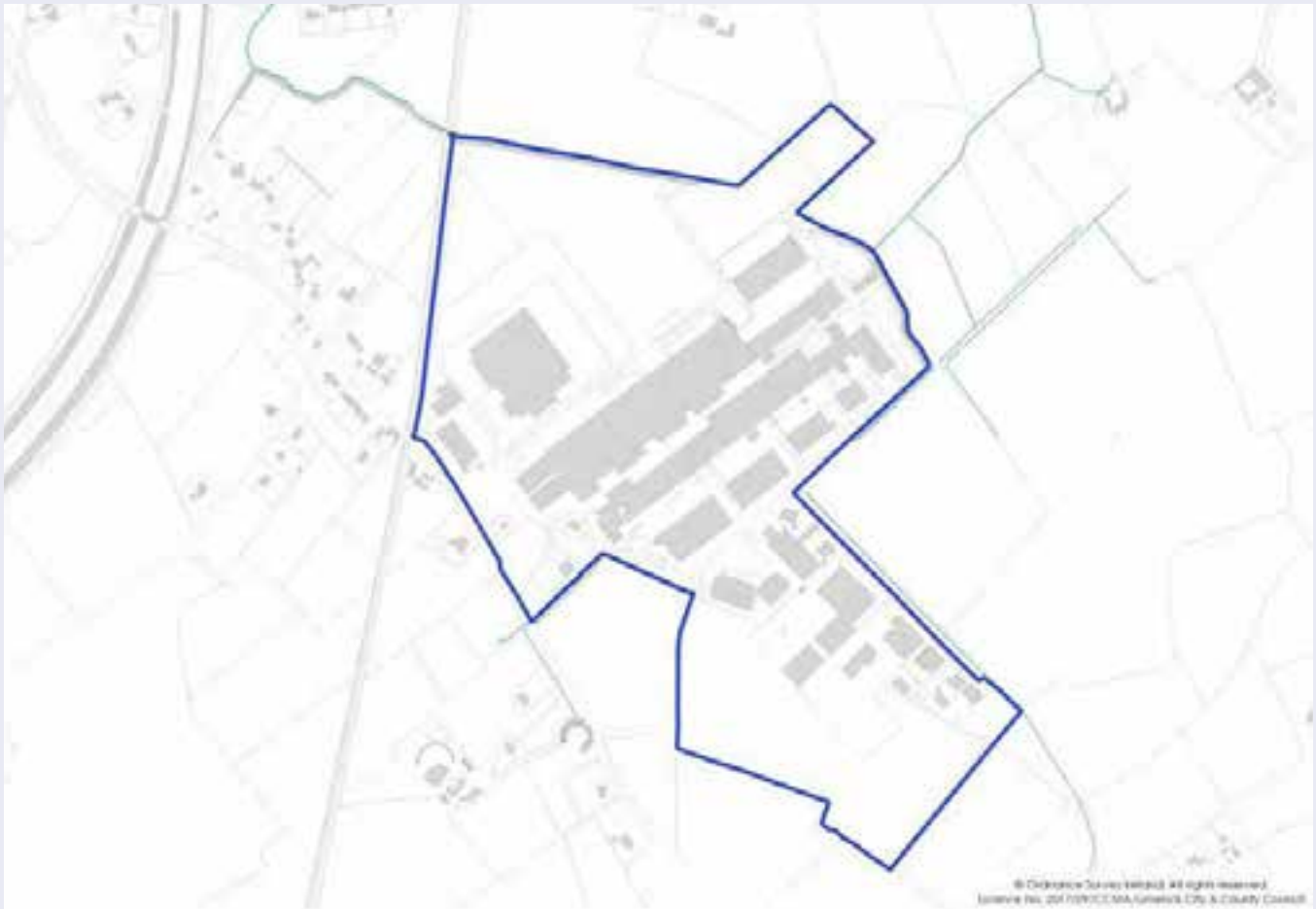
b) Structures of conservation merit should be re-used and not replaced;

c) The works are necessary for the proposed economic activity or activities.

Map 5.1 Askeaton Business Park



Map 5.2 Annacotty Business Park



### 5.8.4 Knowledge Economy

It is crucial that Limerick is positioned as a competitive knowledge economy which is recognised for its skills base and high-tech sector. The knowledge economy is powered by ideas and intellectual capital and is driven by high tech companies. The Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan highlights that the knowledge economy is central to Limerick's long-term growth and prosperity. Key factors that drive the knowledge economy include an educated and skilled population, technological infrastructure, foreign direct investment, an environment that encourages technology and entrepreneurship and collaborative public and private research organisations.

Research and Development (R&D) is a crucial component of sustainable employment. The third level institutions in Limerick play a critical role in supporting research and development through their research programmes. There are also a number of organisations throughout Limerick City and County that are involved in innovation and R&D.

Limerick is an UNESCO Learning City and has excellent potential to create a Learning Region which is promoted by the RSES. Encouraging collaboration between higher education institutes, the Regional Skills Fora and the Educational and Training Boards, presents the potential to develop skills and knowledge in areas most exposed to technological disruption. By supporting community and education providers, Limerick City and County can ensure that knowledge and skills are spread to all citizens to help address skills shortages and lifelong learning challenges.

**Objective ECON O21**
**Knowledge Economy**
It is an objective of the Council to promote the development of knowledge-based enterprise.

**Objective ECON O22**
**Learning Region**
It is an objective of the Council to support the further development of Limerick, as an inclusive Learning City and County and to work with relevant stakeholders as appropriate.

### 5.8.5 Education and Skills

The development of human capital is central to Limerick's economic and social development. A well-educated and skilled workforce is a valuable human resource, which will provide an attraction for inward investment and will promote Limerick as a leader in the knowledge economy. With most city regions now becoming more knowledge intensive, the challenge for Limerick is to ensure that it maintains its position as a front-runner location in the competitive knowledge-based economy. The continuing presence and growth of excellent Further and Higher Education Institutes and research and development nodes in Limerick, will be critical to ensuring success.

**Objective ECON O23**
**Education and Skills**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Sustain the existing high levels of educational attainment and skilled workforce, to encourage employment generation to maintain this resource within Limerick and to promote the availability of education opportunities to all residents in Limerick City and County.
b) Support the continued collaborative work undertaken by the *Mid-West Regional Enterprise Plan* (REP) and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum in employment generation and fostering of the knowledge-based economy to the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and Mid-West.

**Objective ECON O24**
**Further and Higher Education Institutions**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Work in conjunction with Further and Higher Education Institutions in the creation and fostering of enterprise through research, innovation and development activities and the commercialisation of such activities.
b) Support the development of sites where high-tech and high potential start-ups can thrive, in conjunction with Institutes of Technology and Universities, to create collaborative and innovative growth.

### 5.8.6 Clustering and Innovation

Cultural and creative industries, as a subset of the knowledge economy, are an increasingly important area of economic growth and employment creation. They have been defined as industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property - including areas such as advertising, software, publishing, architecture, music and the visual and performing arts, film, video and photography.

There is potential to develop further clusters of economic activity across various sectors in Limerick. The EY-DKM *Limerick Economic Profiling Report (2018)* highlights that Limerick does not have the same level of clustering of economic activity relative to other cities. The report states that there is potential for further business clustering in Limerick, including potential for Troy Film Studios to spur clusters in film/television and trade sectors in Limerick. Green energy technologies have also been identified as another area of clustering with Limerick Docklands being a test bed for tidal energy technologies.

The *Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan* states that there is an opportunity to create a City Centre employment cluster, comprising related business sectors for which a City Centre environment would be advantageous, this would include creative businesses. The Council will support the creation of a university/higher education facility or joint UL/TUS/MIC teaching facility in a prominent City Centre location. The economic impact of such a facility could be enhanced through the co-location of associated administrative functions and employment and by locating student accommodation in the City Centre.

**Objective ECON O25**
**Clustering and Innovation**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate the sustainable development and clustering of knowledge-based and high tech industries/businesses at appropriate locations in Limerick.

### 5.8.7 Tackling Unemployment

The Council recognises that areas of higher unemployment, specifically among the younger population, do not always benefit from a focus on Further and Higher Education, jobs in the IT sector or enterprise and would benefit more by the provision of the above types of training and skill development as well as traditional forms of employment via the public sector. The Council will support and facilitate a policy which will seek to employ skilled trades people to facilitate the employment of apprentices.

**Objective ECON O26**
**Tackling Unemployment**
It is an objective of the Council to support the work undertaken by the Education and Training Boards, in relation to courses provided under SOLAS and the establishment of Community Training Centres, Local Training Initiatives and Specialist Training Provision in Limerick.

### 5.8.8 Social Enterprise

A social enterprise is an enterprise where the main objective is to achieve a social impact. Social enterprises can have a positive social impact on the people working and living in their communities through fostering inclusive growth, shared prosperity, social inclusion, training and job creation.

**Objective ECON O27**
**Social Enterprise**
It is an objective of the Council to promote the development of social enterprise in Limerick.

### 5.8.9 Smart City

Limerick City and County Council has an objective to create a sustainable Smart Limerick City and communities, through the use of digital technologies and embracing new work practices to empower communities, create better services, accelerates sustainable social and economic growth and to improve quality of life for all. In order for this to be achieved, it requires collaboration across communities and agencies. It has the potential to drive major societal and economic benefits by managing population growth, mitigating against urbanisation and increasing competitiveness. The Council recognises that Limerick needs to ensure it is a frontrunner in the Smart Cities in Ireland and Europe. The Local Authority has been very proactive in recent years in the development of a Smart Economy in Limerick.

An example of a proposed initiative to develop a smart economy in Limerick is the proposed Atlantic Green Digital Basin, which aims to accelerate sustainable economic growth and the utilisation of new digital technologies. It will develop a new economic corridor - a unique, internationally scaled innovation hub powered by green energy. The Council recognises the potential societal benefits that can be attained through technological advancements and will continue to support the Smart Limerick initiative.

Limerick is also transforming itself into Ireland's first Digital City with the integration of a number of public services, the creation of smart homes, smart buildings, energy districts and smart neighbourhoods.

**Objective ECON O28**
**Smart City**
It is an objective of the Council to support the Smart Limerick Initiative, which will allow greater flexibility for Limerick to work with universities, citizens, entrepreneurs and companies, to co-innovate, test and deploy new urban solutions.

### 5.8.10 Office Development

The main focus for office uses in the City has traditionally been the City Centre Commercial Core Area, where the mix of retail office and general office activities support each other and are essential to the health and vibrancy of the City Centre. As part of the Limerick 2030 Plan, the Limerick Twenty Thirty company has a number of key projects which will facilitate office development in Limerick including the Opera Site and Cleeves Riverside Campus. It is necessary to have a range of locations for offices to provide choice and to cater for the varying needs of different types of businesses.

The Plan recognises the importance of retaining and facilitating additional office accommodation as a key land use, that contributes to the vibrancy and vitality of centres. The Council will support the development of office accommodation in the City Centre, District Centres and Town Centres subject to maintaining a balanced mix of uses in line with their multi-functional role. Applications for office development will be assessed in accordance with relevant Development Management Standards and on the size of the proposal in comparison to the size of the centre, the need to ensure a variety of uses in the centre to fully serve its catchment area and the capacity of the centre to absorb any such proposal. These locations should be well served by existing and/or proposed public transport facilities in line with the principles of sustainable development.

The Council will encourage the conversion of existing office stock, where appropriate, to be more receptive to the changing needs of employers and employees. In this regard, the establishment of high specification 'fourth generation' office accommodation will be especially encouraged. Furthermore, in recognition of changing workplace practices, the Council will support proposals for co-working office accommodation in accordance with the standards set out above and facilitate and promote the uptake of remote working and the development of hub facilities in the City and County.

**Objective ECON O29**
**Office Development**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate significant additional office development in employment and commercial centres. The appropriate locations for office development would generally be on appropriately zoned lands in employment zoned areas, Limerick City Centre, Town Centres and District Centres in accordance with the zoning matrix refer to Chapter 12: Land Use Zoning Strategy.

### 5.8.11 Light Industrial and Related Uses

There continues to be a need for a diverse range of employment opportunities in Limerick City and County. Light industrial and related uses are required to provide a diverse range of employment opportunities across Limerick. The general strategy is to retain existing light industrial areas, apart from those areas specifically identified for alternative uses or renewal.

Offices or office-based employment will not be permitted in industrial areas, unless they are ancillary to the primary industrial uses.

Limerick has a history in advanced manufacturing, particularly manufacturing in the ICT sector. The *Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan* highlights that building on the existing skills base and collaboration with research and government is important for advancing the sector and for Limerick to become a leader in ICT innovation, design and production. Innovate Limerick, in partnership with Limerick City and County Council and key industry partners, has developed a proposal for a National Advanced Manufacturing Centre, Limerick and the Mid-West, which aims to be a catalyst for the development of the Irish manufacturing sector. The RSES supports enterprise transitions to Industry 4.0 (the trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies) and equipping people with the necessary skills to adjust and adapt to technology changes and disruptions, while creating an enterprise ecosystem that promotes innovation and entrepreneurship in emerging opportunities. This will improve competitiveness and resilience, which are in turn underpinned by skills development, innovation capacity, trade and competition and infrastructure investment.

**Objective ECON O30**
**Light Industrial and Related Uses**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Maintain an adequate supply of light industrial space and employment uses in order to help ensure a diverse range of employment opportunities;
b) Ensure the sustainable development of manufacturing industries on lands zoned for such purposes subject to normal planning, development and environmental controls and the assessment of the potential impact on such development on adjacent land uses.

### 5.8.12 Data Centres

Data Centres have become increasingly important for the economic growth of national and regional economies. The Government Statement on *The Role of Data Centres in Ireland's Enterprise Strategy (2018)* highlights the importance of Data Centres in terms of job creation and significant potential for economic benefit, as they provide a range of services for other sectors. The Data Centre sector is proving to be extremely resilient and the current Covid-19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of Data Centres, as they provide the background infrastructure across a range of essential sectors, including manufacturing, healthcare, media and entertainment, financial services, education and retail, all of which are imperative for the future economic growth of Limerick. The *Data Centre Report Europe Q2 2020* states, that as a result of Covid-19, the role of the Data Centre industry has gained greater recognition in terms of keeping people connected and facilitating business continuity. The report highlights that the demand for Data Centres will continue to increase.

**Objective ECON O31**
**Data Centres**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Facilitate the development of Data Centres on lands appropriately zoned for such purposes, subject to normal planning, development and environmental controls and the assessment of the potential impact on such development on adjacent land uses.
b) Promote co-location of data centres with renewable energy sources at appropriate locations subject to proper planning and sustainable development considerations.

### 5.8.13 Cultural and Creative Industries

Cultural and creative industries, as a subset of the knowledge economy, are an increasingly important area of economic growth and employment creation. They have been defined as industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation, through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property - including areas such as advertising, software, publishing, architecture, music and the visual and performing arts, film, video and photography.

There is a growing movement internationally by cities to become recognised and organised as 'creative cities' and in this respect, the location of Limerick School of Art and Design, Troy Film Studios are significant assets.

**Objective ECON O32**
**Cultural and Creative Industries**
It is an objective of the Council to promote the development of cultural and creative enterprises.

### 5.8.14 Incubator/Starter Units and Rural Hubs

The availability of adequate incubator space for enterprises in the early stages of development should be part of the enterprise infrastructure in Limerick City and County. The Council, through the Local Enterprise Office, will liaise with the public sector enterprise support agencies, with voluntary community development groups and with business organisations in Limerick to facilitate the provision of suitable premises for such enterprises. In addition, major commercial planning applications located in employment zoned areas, may be required to provide for incubator/starter units within the development.

The Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector is critical to both Ireland's economy and society. Limerick City and County Council will support the SME sector in recovering from financial shocks and adapting successfully to the structural changes accelerated by the pandemic. All Limerick SMEs will be supported by a network of co-working/training/support/ click and collect centres right across the county in town locations, each acting as the spokes of a central hub in the City Centre, at the existing Engine building – a new one-stop SME Enterprise Centre in Limerick City.

The Council recognises the importance of towns and villages in terms of future enterprise creation and facilitating economic development. With the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of towns and villages for providing employment will undoubtedly increase, as people seek opportunities to relocate to rural areas, either through remote working in enterprise hubs or working from home. Therefore, enterprise hubs will become even more important for supporting employment growth in the future. The Atlantic Economic Corridor group have published the Hubs Network Strategy 2020-2023 which aims to support the growth of hubs in rural areas throughout the AEC Region including Limerick and the Council will support the development of this strategy.

**Objective ECON O33**
**Enterprise Incubator Units**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the development and growth of incubator/innovation facilities in the City and County, to support the growth and development of SMEs and the creation of a sustainable start-up ecosystem. This will be achieved in conjunction with the Local Enterprise Office and Innovate Limerick, to ensure the long-term resilience of SMEs in Limerick.

**Objective ECON O34**
**Rural Remote Working Hubs**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the development of remote working/rural working hubs at appropriate locations across the County.

### 5.8.15 Rural Enterprise and Employment Opportunities

In implementing the objectives below, the Planning Authority will have regard to the provisions of the Government's Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 - *Our Rural Future*. The vision of this policy is for a thriving rural Ireland, which is integral to our national economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and development. The Plan seeks to support employment and careers in rural areas and for Local Authorities to bring forward proposals for the development of a policy on the Night Time Economy, which will support the revitalisation of our rural towns, as well as our larger urban centres and cities, in the post Covid-19 recovery.

Development Management policy provides for the development of rural enterprise, related to the area's amenity potential and many enterprise/employment uses are either 'Open for Consideration' or 'Permitted in Principle' in the rural areas of the County. The Planning Authority will balance the requirement to protect the sensitive nature of the rural area with the requirement to enable enterprise development.

Having regard to the location and potential nature of developments facilitated by policies promoting rural enterprise and economic development, including rural tourism, proposals for development shall have regard to Policy TR P12 Safeguard the Capacity of National Roads and Objective TR O39 National Roads in Chapter 7: Sustainable Mobility and Transport.

**Objective ECON O35**
**Rural Development**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Facilitate the development of acceptable rural enterprises and to minimise pollution from agricultural and industrial sources by means of development management and water pollution legislation.
b) Encourage the redevelopment of vacant commercial units for enterprise and industry creation including Kantoher Business Park, Castlemahon and other identifiable rural commercial brownfield sites, subject to normal planning and environmental criteria.
c) Promote the development of our rural Towns and Villages as an important focus of restaurant, leisure and evening uses - subject to the safeguarding of surrounding residential amenity and environmental criteria.

### 5.8.16 Agriculture

Limerick traditionally has had a very strong agricultural base and agriculture still has an important role to play in its economy. Although this sector has faced fundamental influences that changed its structure and role, it will continue to play a key role as a building block for a strong and diversified rural economy. The Planning Authority will support and facilitate agricultural developments and improvements, subject to consideration of the proposal's likely impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area.

**Objective ECON O36**
**Agricultural Developments**
It is an objective of the Council to favourably consider proposals for agricultural development where:
a) They are appropriate in nature and

scale to the area in which they are located;
b) The proposal is necessary for the efficient use of the agricultural holding or enterprise;
c) The development is not visually intrusive in the local landscape and, where the proposal is for a new building(s) and there are no suitable redundant buildings, the proposal is sited adjacent to existing buildings;
d) The proposal demonstrates that it has taken into account traffic, environmental and amenity considerations and is in accordance with the policies, requirements and guidance contained in this Plan.

Appropriate small-scale on-farm agricultural diversification will play an important role in retaining rural communities. Such proposals will be favourably considered where the scale and nature of the activity is appropriate to the location and the proposal can be satisfactorily integrated into the rural landscape.

**Objective ECON O37**
**Farm Diversification**
It is an objective of the Council to favourably consider proposals for farm diversification in the open countryside where the proposal:
a) Would not negatively affect public health or agricultural operation on neighbouring farms;
b) Is of a size and scale which is sympathetic to and which does not negatively impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area; and
c) Demonstrates that it has taken into account traffic, environmental and amenity considerations and is in accordance with the policies, requirements and guidance contained in this Plan. All development in the countryside will be required to respect the appearance and character of the rural landscape.

### 5.8.17 Forestry

Forestry is an important renewable resource with a major role to play in sustainable rural development. In addition to the direct benefits, forestry also has an important impact on rural economies through the development of related industries and rural tourism. The main forest amenity areas in Limerick are provided at Currachase, Galteewood, Clare Glens and Ardpatrick.

**Objective ECON O38**
**Support Sustainable Forestry**
It is an objective of the Council to support the forestry sector and the development of associated industry on suitable land as identified in the Landscape Characterisation of the County as follows:
a) In a manner that protects the environment, while ensuring that the diversity and character of the countryside is maintained;
b) Ensuring that afforestation is not located in a manner that will adversely impact on the amenities of adjacent landowners or adversely affect the maintenance of the public road;
c) Encouraging the consideration of the visual impact of forestry so that planting conforms to the overall landscape pattern particularly on elevated sites avoiding overall straight lines or regular shapes; and
d) Encouraging the development of forest parks, viewing areas, parking areas and other tourism related amenities within afforested areas.

### 5.8.18 Mineral Extraction

The Council recognises and distinguishes between aggregate and mineral extraction and mining. The Council also recognises the importance of Scheduled Minerals as defined in the Minerals Development Act 1940-1999. Minerals are important to the economy and in particular to renewable energy and battery technology. Both these areas of technology are hugely important in terms of achieving local and national climate mitigation targets. The Minerals Map shows the location of mineral deposits in Limerick. Further details of minerals and aggregates can be found on the Geological Survey of Ireland website, https://www.gsi.ie

It is recognised that the exploration and extraction of minerals, aggregates (stone, sand and gravel) and the concrete products industry contribute to economic development, are essential building materials and are required for industrial processes. However, they can give rise to land use and environmental issues, which are required to be mitigated and controlled through the planning process.

**Objective ECON O39**
**Mineral Extraction and Environmental Impacts**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Recognise the potential of the extractive, mineral and mining industries to contribute to Limerick's economy and endeavor to protect access to these resources, where known.
b) Minimise environmental and other impacts of mineral extraction through rigorous application of development management and enforcement requirements for quarry and other developments; and
c) In particular, to have regard to visual impacts, methods of extraction, noise levels, dust prevention, protection of rivers, lakes and other water sources, impacts on residential and other amenities, impacts on the road network (particularly with regard to making good any damage to roads), road safety, phasing, re-instatement and landscaping of worked sites.
d) Ensure that development for aggregates/mineral extraction does not significantly impact on County Geological Sites / Sites of geological interest.

### 5.8.19 Equine Industry

The Council recognises the importance of the equine industry in Limerick and the positive contribution that the industry makes towards agricultural diversification and rural employment.

**Objective ECON O40**
**Equine Industry**

It is an objective of the Council to promote and support the development of the equine industry in Limerick.

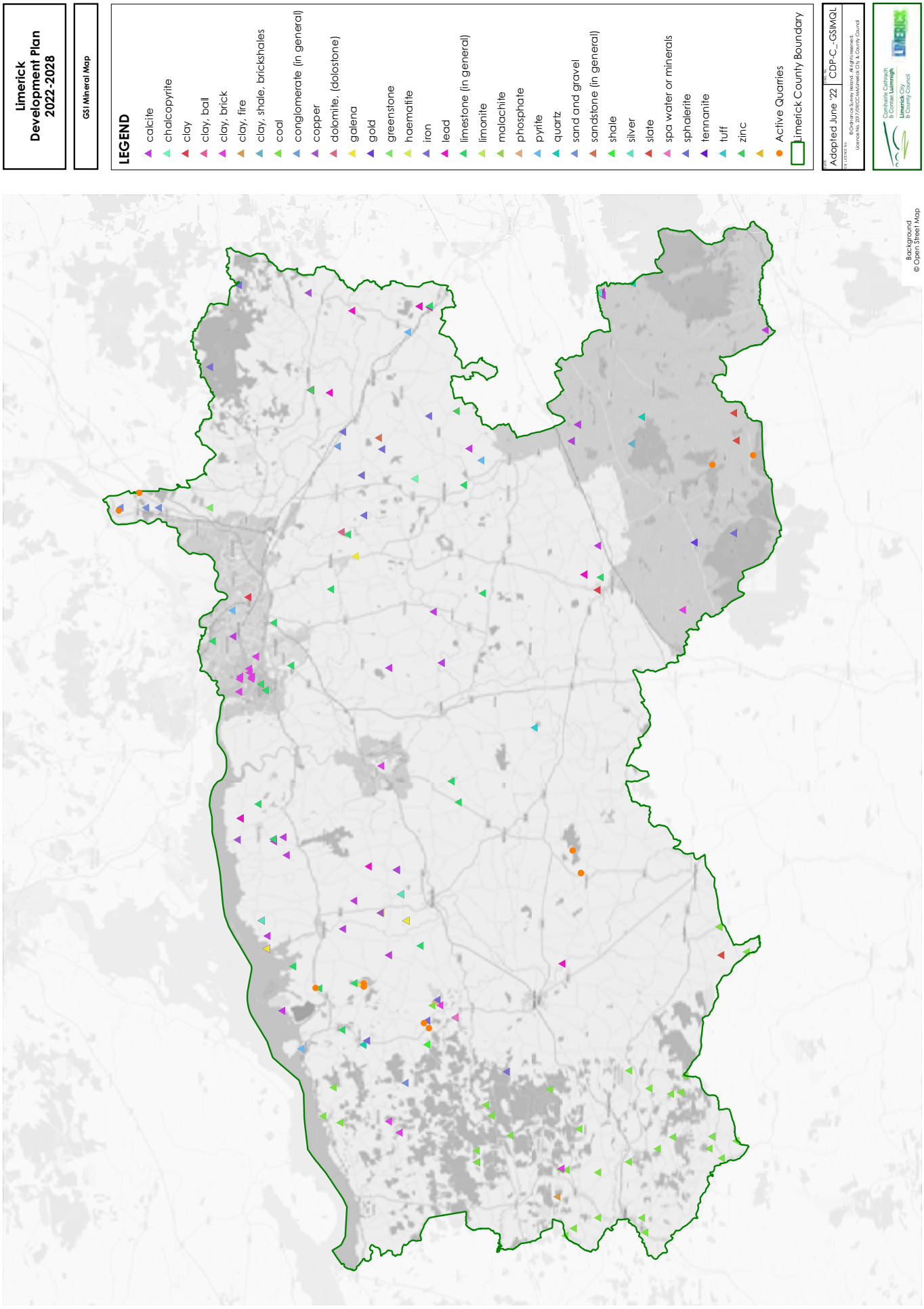
### 5.8.20 Home Working/E-Working

The Council acknowledges the increasing role and importance of home working/e-working in our economy and its associated benefits, including reduced demand for commuting-related travel and associated carbon emissions, increased work flexibility and improvements in work-life balance. Proposals for use of the home, be it own door units or apartment schemes, as a workplace will be controlled through the development management system in order to ensure that development can be integrated without detriment to the amenities of residential areas.

**Objective ECON O41**
**Home Working/E-Working**

It is an objective of the Council to facilitate home-based economic activities where, by virtue of their nature and scale, they can be accommodated without detriment to the amenities of residential areas.

## Map 5.3: GSI Mineral Map



### 5.8.21 Limerick's Food Sector

The Agri-Food sector is one of Limerick's most important indigenous industries, playing a vital role in the local economy. Limerick also supports the rich heritage of market towns with the potential to revive farmer markets to support local SMEs and food tourism. The Council supports the Department of Rural and Community Development's *Action Plan for Rural Development (APRD),* which focuses on the continued development of the agri-food sector through implementation of *Food Wise 2025*.

The *Food Vision 2030 Strategy* is a new ten-year Strategy for the Irish agri-food sector (taken to include primary agriculture, food and drink processing and manufacturing, fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing, forestry and forestry processing and the equine sector). Its vision is that Ireland will become a world leader in Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) over the next decade. This will deliver significant benefits for the Irish agri-food sector itself, for Irish society and the environment. In demonstrating that the Irish agri-food sector meets the highest standards of sustainability (economic, environmental and social), this will provide the basis for the future competitive advantage of the sector. By adopting an integrated food systems approach Ireland will seek to become a global leader of innovation for sustainable food and agricultural systems. This will include producing safe, nutritious and high-value food, while protecting and enhancing our natural and cultural resources and contributing to vibrant rural and coastal communities and the national economy.

The Failte Ireland *Food Tourism Development Strategy 2018-2023* aims to increase the availability of great Irish food and drink experiences across the country, to increase the number of tourism businesses engaged with development initiatives and overseas, to increase and enhance the awareness and perception of Ireland's food and drink offering. In order to develop and improve the food and drinks experiences in pubs, the product must be authentic and the service must be of high quality.

The *Food Strategy for Limerick 2016–2018* is a plan to develop and enhance Limerick's reputation for outstanding food and drink by supporting Limerick's food and drink producers. The Food Strategy aims to encourage, support and develop Limerick's rural and urban food scene through information, education and marketing.

**Objective ECON O42**
**Limerick Food Strategy**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the *Food Vision 2030 Strategy* and the *Food Strategy for Limerick 2016–2018* and any subsequent updates.
b) Develop and enhance Limerick's reputation for outstanding food and drink, by supporting producers and to ensure the development of Limerick as a leader of innovation for sustainable food and agricultural systems. Support the production of safe, nutritious and high-value food, while protecting and enhancing our natural and cultural resources and contributing to vibrant communities and the economy.

**Objective ECON O43**
**Food Destination Limerick**

It is an objective of the Council to promote Limerick as a food destination and to implement the *Fáilte Ireland Food Tourism Development Strategy 2018-2023* and the *Limerick City and County Council Food Strategy 2016-2018*, regarding the development of food tourism in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.

### 5.8.22 Circular Economy

The transition to a more circular economy, where the generation of waste is minimised by the principles of designing out waste and pollution and keeping products and materials in use for as long as possible, is essential in developing a competitive, sustainable, low carbon, resource efficient economy. The Council recognises the multiple economic and environmental benefits and opportunities that arise from a more circular economy, particularly in the creation of job opportunities in recycling and high-quality repairs and new innovative enterprises. More information on the economic opportunities around the Circular Economy can be found in Chapter 8: Infrastructure.

**Objective ECON O44**
**Circular Economy**

It is an objective of the Council to support the economic benefits and opportunities that exist in the transition to a more circular economy.

# Section 3: Tourism

## 5.9 Tourism and the Economy

Tourism is a proven economic driver, playing a significant role in the overall development of Limerick. The sector is uniquely positioned to contribute strongly to job creation and reversing unemployment in communities throughout Limerick.

As a significant economic activity, Limerick City and County Council in partnership with local and national stakeholders, seeks to increase tourist numbers and support sustainable job creation, through targeted tourism initiatives including the development of new tourism products and leveraging natural and built heritage assets to support tourism across Limerick. Limerick is strategically positioned in the Mid-West Region with excellent connectivity nationally by rail and road corridors and internationally by its proximity to Shannon International Airport, which has capacity to cater for 4.5 million passengers per annum. The RSES acknowledges Shannon International Airport as a national and infrastructural driver of tourism growth and as an international gateway to the tourism assets of the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, Mid-West and wider region. Failte Ireland's *Wild Atlantic Way Gateway Plan* for Limerick is currently in development and provides a focused roadmap to deliver this collective ambition to transform Limerick into a compelling visitor destination and base for exploring the Wild Atlantic Way. In this regard, the MASP aims to ensure collaboration between Local Authorities and tourism agencies.

The *Limerick Tourism Development Strategy 2019-2023*, the *Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick* and the *River Shannon Tourism Masterplan*, are key strategic plans which will form the basis for the development of tourism in Limerick.



### 5.9.1 Urban Tourism: City Centre and Suburbs (in Limerick)

During the lifespan of the Plan, Limerick will increase the range of day and evening experience options for visitors by working collaboratively to deliver an improved visitor environment. Ongoing public realm improvement works in the City Centre and a new Wayfinding Orientation and Signage Plan will enhance the visitor experience, by introducing and orientating visitors through the City, delivering new and coherent visitor experiences.

The tourism sector in the City Centre has experienced growth in recent years with hotel occupancy rates improving. The café and restaurant sector has also expanded and provide an important source of employment in the City, while the City's Waterfront has seen a notable increase in river activities and engagement. New developments such as the International Rugby Experience, currently under construction, will enhance Limerick's sporting culture and identity. Improvements to existing venues will also be supported to achieve international visitor experience status.

Improved connectivity will see the City positioned as a gateway and base for visitors to the stunning natural and built heritage sites of the county and the Wild Atlantic Way (WAW), offering visitors stress free accessibility and choice of experience.

Critical success factors for the development of Limerick as a Wild Atlantic Way Gateway City include:

- Continuous development of new visitor experiences across the day and evening economy;
- The development of the City as a coherent visitor destination through a Wayfinding, Orientation and Signage Plan in 2021;
- The development of new globally significant attractions and activities that provide reasons to visit Limerick;
- Capitalising on the cultural and urban edge of Limerick to build a global tourism positioning;
- Sustained economic success achieved through domestic and international visitor numbers growth, increased dwell time, bed nights and new levels of employment supported through an extended tourism season;
- Maximising the tourism potential of the Medieval Quarter/Nicholas Street, Georgian Neighbourhood and Market Quarter;
- Supporting existing tourist attractions including King John's Castle, Hunt Museum, St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick Museum and the People's Museum of Limerick.

### 5.9.2 Rural Tourism

Limerick is fortunate to have a broad geographic spread of visitor experiences across the county from the Munster Vales and Ballyhoura Country in the East, through to Lough Gur and Curragh Chase and on to the Limerick Greenway and Shannon Estuary Way in the west. Our rich tapestry of historical and heritage sites both built and natural, have the potential to animate the stories of this place and its people in an engaging way for our visitors.

Limerick City and County Council works collaboratively with West Limerick Tourism, Muster Vales and Ballyhoura Failte to support the sustainable geographic spread of tourism development across rural Limerick and actively seeks collaboration opportunities for cross promotion and development with neighbouring Local Authorities and national agencies.

The Limerick Greenway's ongoing development and ambition to connect the City with West Limerick, through sustainable travel options will play a key role in the development of tourism amenities and attractions in the area as part of the West Limerick Tourism Strategy. Similarly, Limerick City and County Council will continue to support the objectives of the *Munster Vales Strategic Tourism Development Strategy 2020 – 2025*.

Adare Manor and Limerick will play host to the Ryder Cup in 2027. Limerick City and County Council will work collaboratively to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure and transport provisions are in place, capitalising on the event to ensure economic and social benefits for the region.

Limerick City and County Council continues to work in partnership with Failte Ireland and local stakeholders to maximise the potential of tourism attractions on the Shannon Estuary Way including Glin, Askeaton and the Foynes Flying Boat and Maritime Museum. The Implementation of the Wild Atlantic Way Gateway City Plan and development of improved transport links in the area, will optimise the region's potential to increase visitor numbers drawing on the success of the Wild Atlantic Way.



**Objective ECON O45**
**Tourism**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support strong growth in the tourism sector in Limerick ensuring the economic and societal benefits of tourism are effectively distributed throughout the County, through connections between complementary sites and attractions, by encouraging visitors to move around the County and to enable them to do so with ease.
b) Support the development of Limerick's capacity for largescale group tourism, through improved transport amenities for bus tours, group tours and cruise ship visitors.
c) Recognise the heritage value of Limerick's towns and villages such as Adare, Kilmallock and Askeaton and seek opportunities to enhance their tourism potential.
d) Support and harness the tourism potential of existing rural and heritage site amenities/attractions, including The Clare Glens, Lough Gur, Knockfierna, Munster Vales, Ballyhoura Country, Foynes Flying Boat and Maritime Museum, The Shannon Estuary Way, Curragh Chase, Fullers Folly and Adare Heritage Centre, in a way that promotes sustainable tourism.
e) Actively develop Limerick as an Events location with the appropriate infrastructure to attract international conferences, sporting, cultural and commercial events, including the development of an International Conference Centre and improved public realm, which supports outdoor performance and events of scale (Refer to Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy Section 3.4.5.1).
f) To adopt a strategic collaborative approach to the delivery of the Ryder Cup in Adare/Limerick in 2027 to leverage the legacy potential of this major event and ensure maximum return on investment for Limerick and the region.
g) To work with Waterways Ireland and Fáilte Ireland to develop the water activity sector in Limerick by exploring the potential for increased accessibility to Limerick's waterways for water-based tourism activity (refer also to Chapter 10: Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure and Chapter 11: Development Management Standards).
h) Support and promote the development of the Shannon River Interpretative Centre in Limerick City.

**Objective ECON O46**
**Festivals**
It is an objective of the Council to support and develop existing festivals and encourage the establishment of new festivals and events on a yearly basis in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.

**Objective ECON O47**
**Shannon Tourism Masterplan**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote, encourage and facilitate the implementation of the Shannon Tourism Masterplan and its objectives in co-operation with Waterways Ireland, Fáilte Ireland and adjoining Local Authorities. This includes proposals for the increased access to and visibility of the Shannon's scenic attributes and its use for land-based activities, such as cycling and walking.
b) Promote, encourage and facilitate the implementation of the Lower Shannon Priority Projects as identified in the Shannon Tourism Masterplan, where they relate to Limerick.

### 5.9.3 Limerick Greenway

The Limerick Greenway is a 40km off-road walking and cycling route that follows part of the former Limerick to Tralee rail line. It links the market towns of Rathkeale, Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale. Following a major investment in 2020/21, it is now a significant recreational and tourism amenity. The greenway extends to the Kerry/Limerick border where the proposed link to Listowel is scheduled to open in 2022. It is anticipated that the North Kerry Greenway will extend to Tralee/Fenit in the lifetime of the Plan. It is the ambition of Limerick City and County Council to extend the Limerick Greenway to Adare and Patrickswell and develop a wider greenway network. (Refer also to Section 6.3.7 Blue and Green Infrastructure Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure).

**Objective ECON 048**
**Limerick Greenways**

It is an objective of the Council to support:

a) The provision of car parking, bike hire and ancillary facilities at suitable locations along the Limerick Greenway.
b) Extend the Limerick Greenway from Rathkeale to Adare/Patrickwell.
c) Extend the greenway from the University of Limerick to Annacotty.
d) Develop a greenway from the University of Limerick to Montpelier.
e) Support the development of the Limerick to Scariff/Tuamgraney Greenway in partnership with Waterways Ireland and Clare County Council.
f) Examine the potential for a greenway from Patrickswell, Bruree to the Limerick/Cork Border (Charleville).
g) Support the development of a greenway link from Limerick City to connect with the Suir Blueway in Cahir, County Tipperary, in so far as it falls within County Limerick, subject to ecological assessment and design.

** Tourism projects will be required to adhere to adequate environmental and ecological assessment to ensure that they do not cause adverse environmental and ecological effects.



### 5.9.4 Tourism Facilities and Accommodation

There is an often delicate balance to be struck between cultural and natural attractions and associated facilities and amenities designed to cater for various tourist requirements. Tourism facilities should be planned in a sensitive and proactive manner. The framework for planning tourist facilities shall consider the following:

1. Public facilities and amenities of a type and scale incidental to natural, cultural or recreational attractions.
2. Larger scale tourism developments such as hotels, restaurants and holiday homes, which can be located singly or in clusters, these can be located away from the tourist attractions and should generally be located in settlements where services exist and the use of which thereby can support these settlements and reduce pressure on the tourist attractions.
3. Niche tourism and rural based activities which might include pony trekking, paint balling, quad racing. The suitability of their location depends on the requirements of the use, its impact (such as noise and associated traffic) and any special characteristics that the environment has to offer the proposed use.
4. Uses that bring new life to the built and natural heritage, such as the use and restoration of old buildings as guesthouses, museums or as restaurants, expansion of the programme of construction of cycling and walking routes, or by encouraging owners to reinstate historic gardens.

**Objective ECON 049**
**Tourism Facilities and Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that tourism facilities, are not located or designed where they would be significantly detrimental to environmentally sensitive areas, such as designated ecological areas, areas of archaeological potential or historic landscapes either existing or which may arise in the future, as a result of any surveys.

**Objective ECON 050**
**Facilities and Amenities incidental to Tourist and Recreational Attractions and Scenic Views**

It is an objective of the Council to consider public facilities and amenities of a type and scale that are incidental to tourist attractions and associated services where they would:

a) Allow these attractions to be enjoyed and accessed by the public;
b) Cater for basic needs of the public, incidental to the enjoyment of these attractions;
c) Help to protect sensitive features through information and by appropriate management;
d) Be adequately serviced and managed;
e) Be inclusive to all members of the community. Applications must be accompanied by a management plan and justified by reference to a coherent, evidence-based tourism and recreational strategy applicable to the area. Such development should not impair the capacity of the road network.

**Objective ECON 051**
**Clustering of Tourist Facilities**

It is an objective of the Council to cluster niche tourist/ visitor services and infrastructure, including locations where the service or tourist attraction currently exists.

**Objective ECON O52**
**Location of Tourism Accommodation**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Ensure that holiday accommodation including campsite (i.e., static and touring caravans, campervans, glamping pods and tents) developments should be concentrated within or adjoining existing towns, villages and settlements, where they can best support the provision of services and minimise the impact on the open landscape. Such developments should respect the existing fabric of the settlement, both in scale and design. In limited cases, such accommodation may be appropriate in rural locations, where it compliments an existing tourism asset/ service and where there is a justifiable need, such as its proximity to established tourism trails/ routes/ food and craft businesses. In rural locations, structures should be integrated into the existing landscape or proposals should demonstrate that an appropriate landscape will be designed around the structure.
b) Proposals to reinstate, conserve and/ or renovate existing, vacant, derelict or disused buildings for holiday accommodation in both urban and rural areas, will be considered subject to normal planning and environmental criteria.

All such development will be considered, having regard to the environmental conditions and sensitivities, scenic amenity, availability of services and the cumulative impact of such developments on the environment.

**Objective ECON O53**
**Digital Innovations to support the Tourism Industry**
It is an objective of the Council to support digital innovations to facilitate the tourism industry throughout Limerick.

# Section 4: Marine Economy

## 5.10 Marine Spatial Planning

The 2020 *Programme for Government, Our Shared Future*, committed to reaching Ireland's target of 10% under the *Marine Strategy Framework Directive* (MSFD) as soon as is practical and aim for 30% of Marine Protection Areas (MPAs) by 2030. This is in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) is a new way of looking at how we use the marine area and planning how best to use it into the future. MSP will try to balance the different demands for using the sea, including the need to protect the marine environment. It is about planning when and where human activities take place at sea and ensuring these activities are as efficient and sustainable as possible.

### 5.10.1 National Marine Planning Framework

Ireland's Marine Spatial Plan, the *National Marine Planning Framework* (NMPF) was published in June 2021. The NMPF brings together all marine-based human activities for the first time, outlining the Government's vision, objectives and marine planning policies for each marine activity.

Ireland's *National Marine Planning Framework* will be a key decision-making tool for regulatory authorities and policy makers into the future in a number of ways, including decisions on individual consent applications, which will have to have regard to the provisions of the plan in the same way that terrestrial plans form part of the decision making tool-kit in the on-land planning process.

### 5.10.2 Maritime Area Planning Act 2021

The *Maritime Area Planning Act* (MAP) is the State's leading response to the much-needed reform of marine governance. This legislation intends to put in place a comprehensive and coherent planning system for the entire Maritime Area. The constituent elements of this system are:

- A forward planning regime for the maritime area;
- A new streamlined development management system for the maritime area incorporating consenting for the occupation of the maritime area (Maritime Area Consents and licencing) and a new planning consenting regime (to be implemented by coastal Local Authorities and An Bord Pleanála);
- The establishment of a new agency, the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) to manage the occupation of the maritime area and to enforce the provisions of the new regime.

The Act provides the legal underpinning to an entirely new marine planning system, which will balance harnessing our huge offshore wind potential with protecting our rich and unique marine environment. The Act is a key enabler of Ireland's decarbonisation goals. The Act will provide for a completely new regime for the entire maritime area underpinned by the NMPF. Foreshore Consents will be replaced by a more focused and streamlined Maritime Area Consent regime. The planning permission system will be extended into the entire maritime area with development subject to a single comprehensive environmental assessment. Compliance and enforcement activities are supported through robust provisions.

**Objective ECON O54**
**National and Regional Marine Planning**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support and facilitate the implementation of the *National Marine Planning Framework* (NMPF) and the *Maritime Area Planning Act* 2021.
b) Continue to work with the relevant Government Departments and other relevant stakeholders in the promotion of integrated marine management and following the adoption of the NMPF to identify those areas that may have particular management requirements and, where appropriate set out any requirement that may exist for Maritime Spatial Plans (MSPs) and Designated Maritime Area Plans (DMAPs).
c) Support the potential of the marine environment by nurturing opportunities for innovation in the maritime economy while ensuring that its ecosystems are managed sustainably.

## 5.11 Shannon Estuary - Limerick Docklands and Foynes

The marine economy is vital for Limerick's future economic development, with considerable potential for expansion through strengthening established resources and diversification into new areas. The marine economy is identified as an emerging sector in the RSES (Objective RPO76). The Shannon Estuary, its ports and future development are a significant economic driver and transport corridor in the region. With the presence of Shannon Foynes Port and Limerick's location on the Shannon Estuary, Limerick is ideally placed to enhance economic growth through the sustainable use of its marine resource.

The potential of the Shannon Estuary is given recognition in the *Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary* (SIFP), which is a land and marine based framework plan to guide the future development and management of the Shannon Estuary. It aims to transforms the Shannon Estuary into an international economic hub. The SIFP identified an additional 1,200 ha. for marine related development across 9 no. strategic development locations and proposes building on existing industry connectivity and synergy, as well as the existing infrastructure, to create a more sustainable and attractive network for further investment (refer to SIFP in Volume 6).

The following strategic development locations are located in Limerick:

1. Lands at the Port of Foynes (See Foynes Zoning Map in Volume 2)
2. Foynes Island (See Map 5.4)
3. Askeaton (See Map 5.1)
4. Aughinish Island (See Map 5.5)
5. Limerick Docklands and lands adjacent (see Map 3 of Volume 2 Limerick City and Suburbs(in Limerick) including Mungret and Annacotty- Zoning Map.

Map 5.4 Map of Foynes Island



Map 5.5 Map of Aughinish



Shannon Foynes Port Company (SFPC), which is an important economic stimulus and growth point in Limerick, is responsible for Limerick's Port activities both at Limerick Docklands and Foynes. It is a port of national and international significance. SFPC has set out its 30-year masterplan *Vision 2041* which aims to double port throughput to 20m tonnes per annum over the plan period. In order to facilitate this growth, capacity enhancements are required within and external to the port, including:

- Ongoing expansion of jetty infrastructure (€47m);
- Reinstatement of Limerick to Foynes Rail line (€45m);
- Upgrade of Limerick to Foynes road network (€450m);

New deep-water berth at Foynes Island (€175m).

Limerick City and County Council recognises the importance of the *Docklands Framework Strategy*. The Limerick Docklands Plan aims to grow existing commercial activity at Shannon Foynes Port Company at Ted Russell Docks.

The Local Authority recognises that it is crucial for the full potential of the Shannon Estuary, one of Limerick's natural assets to be realised. It is important to encourage existing and new industries around the Estuary to spread the economic impact of these throughout Limerick, generating local employment and providing a more diverse employment base. Careful consideration is required to ensure that harnessing economic growth and development opportunities within the Estuary does not place undue restriction, pressure or impact on some of the area's most precious resources.

Fishing and mariculture have an important role to play in the future development of the Estuary, as these activities can help play a role in promoting the economic prosperity in the Estuary area. This can be in terms of direct employment in enterprises and indirect employment in processing and retail outlets. A considerable range of different fishing activities take place within the Shannon Estuary, providing an important commercial enterprise, employment source and recreational amenity for the local communities within the Estuary.

**Objective ECON O55**
**Marine Economy**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Encourage, facilitate and promote the Shannon Estuary's economic growth potential and promote marine related industrial development, while ensuring that the environment and natural resources of the area are protected, managed and enhanced.
b) Facilitate and encourage the environmentally sustainable development of maritime industries at appropriate locations within the Shannon Estuary.

**Objective ECON O56**
**Strategic Integrated Framework Plan**
It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary.

**Objective ECON O57**
**Safeguard Strategic Development locations along the Estuary**
It is an objective of the Council to safeguard the Strategic Development Locations at Foynes Port, Foynes Island and Aughinish Island for the sustainable growth and development of marine related industry and industrial development at Askeaton. All proposed developments shall be in accordance with regional and national priorities and the SEA Directive, Birds and Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive, Shellfish Waters Directive, Floods Directive and EIA Directive. Buffer zones shall be incorporated into proposals for developments where necessary to preserve potentially valuable habitats, for example, areas of estuary, shallow bays and inlets, mudflats, lagoon, salt marsh and woodland habitat, which occur at or surrounding these Strategic Development Locations. The extent of such buffer distances shall be established

in consultation with relevant statutory bodies. Detailed botanical, faunal and ornithological surveys should be undertaken in relation to proposed developments at these Strategic Development Locations, to fully consider the potential effects of the development and inform how to best avoid significant ecological effects.

**Objective ECON O58**
**Shannon Foynes Port**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the expansion of the Port at Foynes and promote the economic and industrial development of the Shannon Estuary as a strategic transport, energy and logistics Hub, serving Limerick and the wider region by utilising naturally occurring deep water characteristics and by identifying and safeguarding existing and future strategic transportation links, subject to fulfilling the requirements of the Habitats Directive and the conservation objectives of the Lower River Shannon SAC site.
b) Promote and support Shannon Foynes Port Company's Masterplan *Vision 2041.*

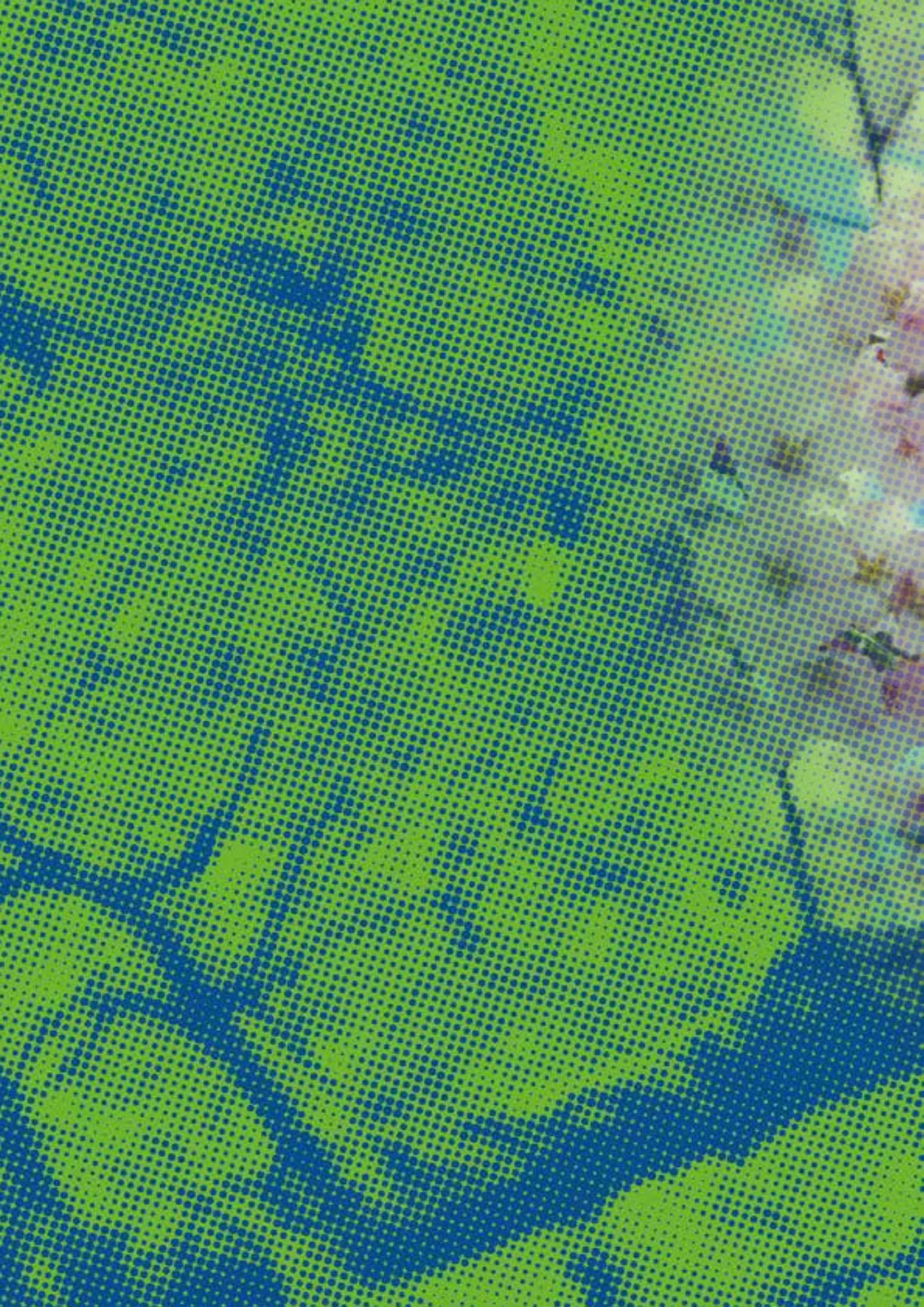
## 5.12 Offshore Renewable Energy

The Council supports the *Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP)* published in 2014 by the Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources, in the progressive development of Ireland's offshore renewable energy potential and will cooperate with state and semi-state agencies in relation to the implementation of projects in the Shannon Estuary. Refer also to Chapter 9: Climate Action, Flood Risk and Transition to Low Carbon Economy.

**Objective ECON O59**
**Offshore Renewable Energy**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support in conjunction with other relevant agencies, wind energy initiatives, both on-shore and offshore and wave energy, when these are undertaken in an environmentally acceptable manner.
b) Promote Limerick to become the primary hub for the development of Ireland's west coast renewable energy, with potential in research, innovation, logistics, development, maintenance and administration.





# 6

# Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure

## 6.1 Introduction

There is huge variety in the natural, built and cultural heritage of Limerick. The purpose of the Plan is to guide decision-making on what we choose to hand onto the next generation, through protection, management, sensitive enhancement or appropriate repurposing. It is recognised that the conservation and enhancement of and access to Limerick's heritage has the potential to contribute to individual well-being, shared community identities, social cohesion and the liveability of our towns and villages as well as our visitor economy.

This chapter presents various objectives for Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure having regard to the overall policies of the Council as follows:

**Policy EH P1**
**Protection of Natural Heritage and Biodiversity**
It is a policy of the Council to:
a) Protect and conserve Limerick's natural heritage and biodiversity, in particular, areas designated as part of the European Sites Natura 2000 network, such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservations (SACs), in accordance with relevant EU Directives and national legislation and guidelines.
b) Maintain the conservation value of all Natural Heritage Areas and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) for the benefit of existing and future generations.

**Policy EH P2**
**Sustainable Management and Conservation**
It is a policy of the Council to ensure the sustainable management and conservation of areas of natural environmental and geological value within Limerick and to protect, enhance, create and connect, where ecologically suitable, natural heritage, green spaces and high-quality amenity areas for the benefit of biodiversity.

**Policy EH P3**
**Climate Action and the Natural Environment**
It is a policy of the Council to take into account the contents of the *National Biodiversity Action Plan* and the *Biodiversity Climate Adaptation Plan* and any forthcoming guidance or legislation on climate action, whether adaptation or mitigation that will emerge during the course of the Plan.

**Policy EH P4**
**Compliance with Limerick's Heritage Plan**
It is a policy of the Council to place ecological and environmental issues at the centre of planning policies and decisions and in doing so, will adhere to the objectives set out in *Limerick's Heritage Plan 2017-2030*.

**Policy EH P5**
**Protection of the Built Environment**
It is a policy of the Council to promote high standards for conserving and restoring the built environment and promote its value in improving living standards and its benefits to the economy.

**Policy EH P6**
**Water and Air Quality**
It is a policy of the Council to ensure that water and air quality shall be of the highest standard, to ensure the long term economic, social and environmental well-being of Limerick's resources. The *World Health Organisation Air Quality Guidelines* will be the basis for the air quality guidance in Limerick.

**Policy EH P7**
**Environmental Noise**
It is a policy of the Council to proactively manage environmental noise, where it may have a significant adverse impact on the health and quality of life of communities in Limerick and to support the aims of the Environmental Noise Regulations, through the development and implementation of Noise Action Plans.

In order to ensure compliance with the above policies, there are a number of objectives set out in this chapter under the following sections:

1. Natural Heritage and Environment – Biodiversity, protected sites/species, blue and green infrastructure, nature-based solutions, invasive species, river basin management plan, wetlands and water/air quality and noise.
2. Landscape and Visual Amenity.
3. Archaeology and Built Heritage.

## 6.2 National and Regional Policy Context

At national level Ireland has recognised the importance of its natural and built heritage through becoming a signatory to international conventions. These include the *Florence Convention for the Protection of the European Landscape*, the *Valetta Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* and the *Granada Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage*. These international commitments are backed by appropriate legislation, which has implications at local level and the Planning Authority has cognisance of this while implementing planning functions. European Union Directives also have implications in regard to how the Planning Authority and those developing and using land in Limerick, conduct their business. As legislation is enacted, or Directives are translated into domestic law, the Planning Authority will respond to the evolving situation.

The policies and objectives set out in this chapter were also prepared to ensure alignment with national and regional planning policy in the context of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region.

The National Policy Objectives (NPOs), which are of particular relevance to this chapter are:

- NPO 17: Enhance, integrate and protect the special physical, social, economic and cultural value of built heritage assets through appropriate and sensitive use now and for future generations.
- NPO 60: Conserve and enhance the rich qualities of natural and cultural heritage of Ireland in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The RSES also recognises that cultural heritage is the fabric of our lives and societies, that it surrounds us in the buildings of our towns and cities, our landscapes, natural sites, monuments and archaeological sites and that it brings communities together and builds shared understandings of the places we live in. It contains a number of relevant objectives relating to strengthening and protecting our region's diversity, language and culture, our recreational assets and our natural and built heritage.

## 6.3 Natural Heritage and the Environment

### 6.3.1 Biodiversity

The *EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030* is a comprehensive, ambitious, long-term plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems. It aims to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030, with benefits for people, the climate and the planet.

The natural heritage of Limerick includes our flora, fauna, geology and the landscape that surrounds us. Biodiversity also forms part of the overall blue and green infrastructure of Limerick.

Within Limerick, there exists a wide range of habitats, some are natural but there are many others which have evolved and been maintained, as a result of management over long periods of time. An example of some of Limerick's rich and diverse natural ecosystems includes the Shannon Estuary, the riverine habitats of Limerick's rivers and their tributaries, including the Shannon, the Abbey, the Deel, the Feale, the Maigue and the Mulkear, the upland areas such as the Ballyhouras, Galtees, the hills of West Limerick, Sliabh Reagh and Sliabh Felim. The agricultural lowlands including the Golden Vale also contribute to the extensive biodiversity of Limerick, as do natural woodlands such as that found in Curragh Chase and the extensive natural hedgerows throughout Limerick.

The condition of these natural habitats and species, affects how they can provide ecosystem services, including providing us with resilience to climate change. It affects the quality of life of the residents and visitors to Limerick and is important in supporting local businesses such as tourism and recreation, highlighting the importance of protecting and enhancing our natural habitats and species. Therefore, there is a need for policies which will conserve what is best in Limerick's landscape, while at the same time successfully integrating suitable development.

### 6.3.2 Protected Sites and Species

The Habitats Directive is one of the important pieces of legislation that exists for the protection of habitats and by extension species in the EU. The Habitats Directive includes Article 6 which is designed to ensure that European designated sites such as Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas are adequately protected from the adverse effects of development.

The Natural Heritage Areas, proposed Natural Heritage Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas in Limerick are identified in Maps in Volume 3. One of the habitat types that is under the greatest threat in Limerick is wetland habitat of various types. This includes bog and peat habitats, ponds and springs. These face a range of threats, from drainage, afforestation, agricultural improvement and also the development of wind farms.

In terms of protected species, one species in Limerick that is in danger of isolation is the Lesser Horseshoe Bat. Two regions populated by the lesser horseshoe bat, one in Clare and one in west Cork/ Kerry, are divided by a gap of marginally favourable habitat in Limerick and North Kerry. Although the land is currently marginally favourable for the species, its continued occurrence in this area could have important conservation implications for preventing further fragmentation of the larger populations in Cork, Kerry and Clare. In one sense it could be considered that Limerick could serve as a bridge between the populations of the different counties and to achieve this it would be necessary to ensure that there are sufficient corridors, along which the bat species can move. This concern could be broadened to many species, as developments can act as a barrier to wildlife movement, unless thought has been given at the design stage ensuring that they can allow species to pass through.

**Objective EH O1**
**Designated Sites and Habitats Directive**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that projects/plans likely to have significant effects on European Sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) are subject to an appropriate assessment and will not be permitted under the Plan unless they comply with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive. The Council, will through the planning enforcement process where applicable, seek to restore the ecological functions of designated sites, where they have been damaged through inappropriate development.

**Objective EH O2**
**Lesser Horseshoe Bat**
It is an objective of the Council to require all developments in areas where there may be Lesser Horseshoe Bats, to submit an ecological assessment of the effects of the development on the species. The assessment shall include mitigation measures to ensure that feeding, roosting or hibernation sites for the species are maintained. The assessment shall also include measures to ensure that landscape features are retained and that the development itself will not cause a barrier or deterrent effect on the species.

### 6.3.3 Conservation outside Protected Sites

In addition to the formal designations for nature conservation, much of Limerick's natural heritage resources lie outside such designated sites. Many areas that do not have formal protection under legislation still possess a level of natural heritage importance, which needs to be recognised and protected, where possible. These areas include woodlands, wetlands, semi-natural grasslands, hedgerows, trees, rivers, streams, private gardens and other urban green spaces. Other areas of important biodiversity in Limerick can include graveyards, cemeteries and the green spaces associated with institutional lands. The Council recognises the importance of these areas as buffer zones and 'linkages', between formally designated ecological sites. The Council will require all new developments, where possible to identify, protect and where appropriate enhance ecological features by making provision for local biodiversity and providing linkages to wider habitats.

**Objective EH O3**
**Ecological Impact Assessment**
It is an objective of the Council to require all developments where there are species of conservation concern, to submit an ecological assessment of the effects of the development on the site and nearby designated sites, suggesting appropriate mitigation measures and establishing, in particular, the presence or absence of the following species: Otter, badger, bats, lamprey and protected plant species such as the Triangular Club Rush, Opposite Leaved Pond Weed and Flora Protection Order Species generally.

**Objective EH O4**
**Creation of New Habitats**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Seek the creation of new habitats by encouraging wild green areas and new water features such as, pools and ponds in new developments.
b) Encourage management plans for green areas to use the minimum of pesticides and herbicides.

c) The creation of areas that are not subject to public access in order to promote wildlife use is strongly encouraged.

**Objective EH O5**
**New Infrastructure Projects**
It is an objective of the Council to require new infrastructure and linear developments in particular, to demonstrate at design stage sufficient measures to assist in the conservation of and dispersal of species and to demonstrate a high degree of permeability for wildlife, to allow the movement of species and to prevent the creation of barriers to wildlife and aquatic life in the wider countryside.

**Objective EH O6**
**Barn Owl Conservation**
It is an objective of the Council to require road developments to incorporate from the design stage, elements that will assist in the conservation of the Barn owl.

**Objective EH O7**
**All Ireland Pollinator Plan**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Continue to actively support the aims and objectives of the *All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 – 2025*, by encouraging measures to protect and increase the population of bees and other pollinating insects in Limerick.
b) Support the aims of the *National Bio-Diversity Action Plan* and succeeding plans, in emphasising the importance of ecological issues in planning.

**Objective EH O8**
**Roosting Habitats**
It is an objective of the Council to require the provision of alternative roosting or settlement facilities for species, such as bird or bat boxes, swift boxes, artificial holts (for otters), or other artificially created habitats in proposed developments, where considered appropriate.



### 6.3.4 Areas of Geological Interest

There are several areas of geological interest within Limerick, such as Barrigone, which is located in the northern part of County Limerick, close to the estuary and shows some of the same characteristics as the Burren. A karst base layer is present in much of this part of Limerick and drainage features such as turloughs are also present. Individual sites such as Linfield Quarry, close to Pallasgrean in the east of the County, are also important parts of Limerick's geological heritage. Linfield is noted for its basalt formations, which may well be unique in the region.

**Objective EH O9**
**Geological Sites**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Protect from inappropriate development, the County Geological Sites contained in the *Limerick Geological Heritage Survey 2021*.
b) Seek the conservation and protection of features of geological interest within Limerick, particularly those that would have been recognised in the past as Areas of Scientific Interest or by the Geological Survey of Ireland as being of particular value.
c) Undertake a survey of such sites during the lifetime of the Plan.

### 6.3.5 Trees, Tree Preservation Orders and Hedgerows

Trees, particularly native species, hedgerows and woodlands make an important contribution to the landscape of Limerick. They provide shelter and visual screening in addition to supporting a wide range of wildlife. Trees and in particular groups of trees can be locally important landscape features and when properly incorporated into development, can help to integrate them into the surrounding landscape.

The retention of existing tree cover is a priority for the Council, not just for the amenity and ecological value, but also because of the carbon storage capacity of older trees. While planting trees can serve as part of climate mitigation, it should be noted that it is in its mature stage that a tree plays its greatest role in carbon storage.

Where trees and groups of trees are of particular importance in a local area and may be at risk from surrounding activities, consideration will be given to the making of tree preservation orders.

It is important that in making decisions concerning the planting of new trees, that the effect of these decisions should be to contribute both to tree regeneration generally and also to ensure there is sufficient stock at differing stages of growth. Trees at different stages of growth also provide different kinds of habitats for those creatures which depend on them.

Landscaping plans often include elements for visual and ecological purposes. These needs may be fulfilled by different species, but any landscape plan submitted should outline the different purposes of its various elements e.g. such as a ground layer for pollinators and a tree or shrub layer for amenity or ecological purposes. The Council will promote Limerick's hedgerows by increasing coverage, where possible, using native species and to develop an appropriate code of practice for road hedgerow maintenance.

Refer to Chapter 11: Development Management Standards for further information on requirements relating to trees.

**Objective EH O10**
**Trees and Hedgerows**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Retain and protect amenity and biodiversity value of the County and City by preserving as far as possible trees, woodlands and hedgerows, having regard to the significant role that trees and hedgerows play in local ecology, climate change and air quality and their contribution to quality place making and the associated health and wellbeing benefits.
b) Require, in the event that mature trees or extensive mature hedgerow is proposed to be removed, that a comprehensive tree and hedgerow survey be carried out by a suitably qualified tree specialist to assess the condition, ecological and amenity value of the tree stock/ hedgerow proposed for removal and to include mitigation planting and a management scheme. The Council will seek in all cases to ensure when undertaking development, or when permitting development, that the loss of, or damage to, existing trees is minimised.
c) Require the planting of native trees, hedgerows and vegetation and the creation of new habitats in all new developments and public realm projects. The Council will avail of tree planting schemes administered by the Forest Service, in ecologically suitable locations, where this is considered desirable.
d) To identity and prepare TPO's where trees of exceptional amenity, cultural or environmental value are identified which warrant a high level of protection.
e) To implement the Limerick City and County Tree Policy when completed and review as appropriate.

### 6.3.6 Invasive species

Invasive alien species can represent a major threat to national, regional and local biodiversity. They can negatively impact on native species, can transform habitats and threaten whole ecosystems causing serious problems to the environment and the economy.

**Objective EH O11**
**Invasive Species**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Work with and facilitate the work of agencies addressing the issue of terrestrial and aquatic invasive alien species (IAS), by implementing biosecurity measures, selected control measures and surveys, where appropriate.
b) Address the presence of invasive alien species on derelict sites under the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act through the preparation of a management and eradication plan for these species.
c) Require the submission of a control and management program for the particular invasive species as part of the planning process, if developments are proposed on sites where invasive species are present.
d) Employ biosecurity measures to prevent the spread of invasive alien species and disease and to insist that all such measures are employed on all development sites.

### 6.3.7 Blue and Green Infrastructure

Blue and Green Infrastructure (BGI) can be broadly defined as a strategically planned network of high quality natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, which is designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services and protect biodiversity, in both rural and urban settings. It should be noted that while blue and green is mentioned in this chapter it is, similar to Climate Change, a cross cutting theme which will be mentioned throughout the Plan, addressing topics ranging from open space to sustainable urban drainage.

BGI serves a wide variety of important functions, including but not limited to provision of habitat, increased biodiversity, provision of ecological corridors, climate change adaptation and mitigation, water treatment, water retention, local amenity provision, air quality improvement, cultural and heritage preservation, provision of a mentally restorative environment and flood mitigation.

Within Limerick, BGI offers an opportunity to develop integrated strategies around economic development, urban place-making and rural policy. Linking strategic natural assets with cultural and heritage assets further enhances the opportunities for BGI strategies to drive recreation and tourism benefits. This should be done with care where it is considered appropriate, in order to avoid any ecological damage or disturbance.

The BGI approach for Limerick also guides and assists in developing a wide blue and green infrastructure network, to ensure the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and ecosystems, including the protection of European Sites. The Plan recognises the necessity of protecting such corridors and the necessity to encourage the management of features of the landscape, that support both the Natura 2000 network and other areas of ecological interest.

**Objective EH O12**
**Blue and Green Infrastructure**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote a network of blue and green infrastructure throughout Limerick.
b) Promote connecting corridors for the movement of species and encourage the retention and creation of features of biodiversity value, ecological corridors and networks that connect areas of high conservation value such as woodlands, hedgerows, earth banks, watercourses, wetlands and designated sites. In this regard, new infrastructural projects and linear developments in particular, will have to demonstrate at design stage, sufficient measures to assist in the conservation of and dispersal of species. Projects which would be detrimental to existing blue and green infrastructure features will not be permitted.
c) Ensure the integration and strengthening of green infrastructure into the preparation of Local Area Plans.
d) Where possible remove barriers to species movement, such as the removal of in-stream barriers to fish passage for example.
e) Seek to advance the use of an ecosystem services approach and ecosystem services valuation as a decision-making tool in plans and projects, subject to appropriate ecological assessment.

The Blue and Green Infrastructure (BGI) Strategy which is currently being prepared will inform the provision of blue and green infrastructure within the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty. This document when completed will inform and guide the planning and management of a network of multi-functional blue and green spaces and identify opportunities to employ nature-based solutions (NBS) and help deliver a range of environmental, economic and societal benefits.

The strategy will be cross-cutting and will provide strategic guidance,

recommendations and priority actions for GBI in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty based on the wide variety of areas, including the following:

- Protection of important GBI assets;
- Conservation of European designated sites and their catchments;
- Conservation of other ecologically important sites and networks;
- Increasing the provision and improving management of wildlife habitats and biodiversity areas;
- Interconnecting GBI, including, but not limited to, sustainable transport, active travel corridors and ecological corridors;
- Nature-based solutions to address a range of issues for example: heat stress, air quality, surface water drainage (SuDS), flood alleviation etc.;
- Parks and greenspace provision;
- Integrating an Ecosystem services approach, including providing for no net loss of biodiversity, into GBI delivery, decision making and the planning process;
- Climate action mitigation and adaptation;
- GBI and NBS in public realm design;
- Local food production areas for example urban farming, community gardens, allotments etc.

Based on the above, the strategy will also outline a prioritised set of GBI projects and investments for the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty such as: protection and enhancement of biodiversity-rich areas; safeguarding valuable GBI assets; the delivery of a metropolitan park system; key sustainable urban drainage schemes and green and blue linkages associated with all of the above.

**Objective EH O13**
**Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to prepare and implement a Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy for Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty.

### 6.3.8 Nature Based Solutions

Nature Based Solutions (NBS) have a role not only to meet certain infrastructure related needs (e.g. flooding management) and development needs, but also to maintain or benefit the quality of ecosystems, habitats and species. Examples of NBS solutions include landscaping, SuDs, creating permeable green areas and providing green roofs, restoring habitats such as wetlands, woodlands and hedgerows. Creating and restoring wetlands also functions to protect against flooding and creating blue and green spaces in urban areas, can also combat urban heating and enhance human health.

**Objective EH O14**
**Nature Based Solutions**
It is an objective of the Council to increase the use of Nature Based Solutions (NBS) throughout Limerick.

### 6.3.9 Water Quality

European directives such as the *Water Framework Directive* and the *Nitrates Directive* have implications for Limerick in dealing with issues associated with preserving water quality. The water framework directive deals with water quality in relation to all water bodies, including rivers, lakes, ground waters, coastal and estuarine waters and wetlands.

Ireland is required to produce a River Basin Management Plan under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The current *River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2018-21* differs from previous River Basin Management Plans, given that Ireland is now defined as a single River Basin District. The plan sets out the actions that Ireland will take to improve water quality and achieve 'good' ecological status in water bodies (rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters) by 2027. Ireland is currently in the latter stages of preparing the next River Basin Management Plan (RBMP). The Plan is required under the Water Framework Directive for the period 2022-2027. These plans, amongst other requirements, set out the environmental improvements to be delivered during a river basin planning

cycle. The plans contain water quality objectives and a programme of measures to achieve those objectives.

One of the most effective ways of ensuring the protection of ground water is to use ground water protection schemes as part of land use planning. The Groundwater Protection Scheme is an essential tool in enabling Planning Authorities to take into account both geological and hydro-geological factors, in locating potentially polluting developments, so that the chances of ground water contamination is reduced to a minimum.

There is a balance to be struck between ensuring that normal development needs are facilitated, while the water resource base upon which all land uses and habitats depend is protected. This balance is under strain in many places, posing a special challenge if the State is to meet the terms of the Water Framework Directive. Specifically with reference to Limerick, much of the north of the County's plain is of poor status. This coincides with a regional aquifer where the bedrock is limestone and there are generally shallow soils. Extensive areas of surface water in Limerick are either of moderate or poor 'ecological status', suffering in particular from eutrophication, principally, but not exclusively, from diffuse sources of nitrate enrichment.

### 6.3.10 Wetlands

Wetlands are an important part of the ecology of Limerick and play a part in the regulation of flood waters as well as providing a natural amenity, such as the following within Limerick City: Westfields, Park Canal, Lucas Lough Shannon Fields, Monabraher Longpavement and Ballinacurra Creek.

Where wetlands or environmentally designated sites are located within zoned lands they will be protected and remain unaltered. It may be necessary to incorporate a suitable buffer zone in order to safeguard these sites.

**Objective EH O15**
**Ground Water, Surface Water Protection and River Basin Management Plans**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Protect ground and surface water resources and to take into account the requirement of the Water Framework Directive when dealing with planning and land use issues.
b) Implement the provisions of the *River Basin Management Plan 2022 – 2028* and any succeeding plan. The filling of wetlands, surface water features and modifications and drainage of peatlands shall generally be prohibited.
c) Implement the measures put forward in the Limerick Groundwater Protection Plan, in assessing planning applications and their consequences for ground water.
d) The Blue Dot Catchments programme is a key action under the *River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2028*. The aim of the programme is to protect and restore high ecological status to a network of rivers and water bodies in Limerick. In Limerick, the following rivers and water bodies are Blue Dot Catchments, Bleach Lough, the Ogeen River and the Behanagh River. The Council will take a precautionary approach to development which might affect water quality in these areas in line with requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

**Objective EH O16**
**Septic Tanks and Proprietary Systems**

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that septic tanks/proprietary treatment systems, or other waste water treatment and storage systems which are required as part of a development, comply with the standards set out under EPA 2021 etc. and that they are constructed only where site conditions are appropriate. In respect of groundwater, it is a requirement that as part of the required site assessments the local groundwater conditions as identified in the groundwater protection scheme and the *River Basin Management Plan 2022-2028* are properly assessed in informing the Groundwater Protection Response.

**Objective EH O17**
**Water Quality**
It is an objective of the Council to support commitments to achieve and maintain 'At Least Good' status, except where more stringent obligations are required. There shall be no deterioration of status for all water bodies under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and its programme of measures, the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan. Key challenges include, inter alia, the need to address significant deficits in urban waste-water treatment and water supply, addressing flooding and increased flood risks from extreme weather events and increased intense rainfall because of climate change.

**Objective EH O18**
**Riparian Buffers**
It is an objective of the Council to maintain riverbank vegetation along watercourses and ensure protection of a 20m riparian buffer zone on greenfield sites and sites are maintained free from development. Proposals shall have cognisance of the contents of the Inland Fisheries Ireland document *Planning for Watercourses in Urban Environments.*

### 6.3.11 Ecosystem Services Approach

Ecosystem services are defined as the direct and indirect contributions of ecosystems to human wellbeing and have an impact on our survival and quality of life. This includes the ability of humans to obtain products from ecosystems, such as food, water and resources, benefits obtained from the natural processes such as climate regulation, pollination and water purification and the cultural services that benefit people, through recreation and appreciation of nature.

**Objective EH O19**
**Ecosystem Services Approach**
It is an objective of the Council to promote an Ecosystem Services Approach, subject to suitable assessment, in the preparation of lower-level plans, strategies and in the Development Management process.

### 6.3.12 Noise Emissions

Noise can impact on the quality of life enjoyed by individuals and communities. The National Planning Framework supports the proactive management of environmental noise under National Policy Objective 65 – 'Promote the pro-active management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life and support the aims of the Environmental Noise Regulations through national planning guidance and Noise Action Plans'.

The dominant source of noise in Limerick is traffic related. Policy and objectives related specifically to traffic and transport is dealt with in Section 7.12.1 Traffic Related Noise in Chapter 7: Sustainable Mobility and Transport. Additional noise emissions, including from construction, open extraction sites, events or commercial activities need to be managed. Quiet Areas, that offer a sense of tranquillity within communities, should be protected.

**Objective EH O20**
**Quiet Areas**
It is an objective of the Council to protect areas which are considered to be desirably quiet or which offer a sense of tranquillity through a process of identification and validation followed by formal designation of 'Quiet Areas' in accordance with the Environmental Noise Regulations 2018.

#### 6.3.12.1 Noise and Vibration from Construction and Open Sites

Noise from construction and demolition activities has the potential to cause significant nuisance for communities and individuals, living and working in the vicinity of a construction site. The effects of noise can include interference with speech communication, disturbance of work or leisure activities, disturbance of sleep, annoyance and possible effects on mental and physical health. Additionally, significant vibration levels arising from construction work activities/operations has the potential to effect buildings or structures. Noise and vibration from open sites (e.g. quarries, mines) can cause similar significant nuisance.

**Objective EH O21**
**Noise and Vibration during Construction and at Open Sites**
It is an objective of the Council to protect the quality of the environment against the effects of noise and vibration, by implementing site appropriate mitigation measures during the construction and demolition phases of development.

### 6.3.12.2 Commercial and Industrial Noise

Commercial and industrial noise has the potential to have adverse impacts on the health and well-being of occupants of noise sensitive properties. The likelihood of adverse effects occurring due to such noise, depends on many factors including the margin by which it exceeds the background noise and the character of the noise (e.g. tones, impulsive nature).

**Objective EH O22**
**Commercial and Industrial Noise**
It is an objective of the Council to prevent members of the public being significantly adversely affected by environmental noise from commercial and industrial noise activities.



### 6.3.12.3 Entertainment Noise

Noise from entertainment venues (e.g. recorded music, live bands) can be particularly annoying for local residents and businesses, if it is not adequately contained within the venue.

There is a lack of consensus on an assessment method for noise levels within habitable rooms of noise sensitive properties with regard to entertainment noise. The design aim however, should be to design entertainment noise to be inaudible (not recognisable as emanating from the source in question.

Planning applications for new entertainment venues shall demonstrate that music noise from the venue will be unlikely to cause an adverse effect for occupants of nearby residential properties.

Where music events (e.g. concerts) are proposed, an appropriate balance should be achieved between the organiser(s) objectives, the participants' enjoyment and the interests of the community at large, who may be affected by such functions. The applicant should actively engage with the planning authority at the earliest possible stage to ensure that the potential for noise disturbance is minimised.

**Objective EH O23**
**Entertainment Noise**
It is an objective of the Council to manage entertainment noise from venues and music events, so as not to have an adverse effect on the public.

### 6.3.13 Light Emission

In today's modern world, particularly with the pace of development the nuisance factors associated with light have increased. In part, these can be minimised through appropriate design and by ensuring that developments are not making use of unnecessary lighting.

**Objective EH O24**
**Light Pollution**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the design of external lighting schemes minimise the incidence of light spillage or pollution in the immediate surrounding environment. In this regard, developers shall submit lighting elements as part of any design, with an emphasis on ensuring that any lighting is carefully directed, not excessive for its purpose and avoids light spill outside the development and where necessary will be wildlife friendly in design.

### 6.3.14 Dark Sky Initiatives

Closely related to the issue of light emission is the idea of Dark Skies. To date there is one in the region, located in Kerry and such initiatives have much to offer not just as amenity but also as a specialist attraction in their own right. In essence it involves selection of areas that fall within certain thresholds of darkness. The International Dark-Sky Association works to protect the night skies for present and future generations. 'Dark Sky' parks and reserves are focused on areas 'possessing an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and a nocturnal environment that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural heritage and/or public enjoyment'.

**Objective EH O25**
**'Dark Sky' Parks and Reserves**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage measures to support Dark-Sky Reserve proposals and the establishment of 'Dark Sky' parks and reserves in Limerick, where appropriate.

### 6.3.15 Air Quality

#### 6.3.15.1 Improvement of Air Quality

Clean air is essential for our health and well-being. High levels of air pollution are known to effect cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. Long-term exposure to particulate matter is highlighted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as one of the primary environmental risk factors contributing to cause of death in Europe.

The air quality in Limerick is good and generally meets European Union and World Health limit values. However, localised problems occur with the burning of smoky fuels which can cause elevated levels of particulates. Another potentially significant source of air pollution is emissions from vehicles.

The National Planning Framework supports measures that will improve air quality and the measures included within the Plan are aligned with national policy.

**Objective EH O26**
**Air Pollution**
It is an objective of the Council to implement the provisions of national and EU Directives on air pollution and other relevant legislative requirements in conjunction with other agencies as appropriate.

**Objective EH O27**
**Improvement of Air Quality**
It is an objective of the Council to improve air quality and help prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in Limerick, through the support of sustainable modes of transport, renewable energy, promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes and urban greening.

### 6.3.15.2 Air Quality Monitoring

The Environmental Protection Agency manages the national ambient air quality monitoring network. The pollutants of most concern to the EPA are those associated with traffic such as particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide. The Council carries out its own indicative monitoring in Limerick City to assess emissions from traffic and industry, the pollutants assessed being particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and ozone.

**Objective EH O28**
**Air Quality Monitoring**
It is an objective of the Council to monitor and provide access to the public on the air quality in Limerick and support the EPA in the expansion and management of the national air quality monitoring network.

### 6.3.15.3 Air Quality During Construction

Construction and demolition activities can have a significant adverse impact on air quality. Dust and particle generation can be substantially reduced through carefully selected mitigation techniques and effective management.

**Objective EH O29**
**Air Quality during Construction**
It is an objective of the Council to protect environmental quality and implement site appropriate mitigation measures during construction and demolition phases of a development, with respect to air quality, including dust.

### 6.3.15.4 Odour

Many activities may generate odours that can cause odour nuisance or more serious health issues for the public and air quality. Odour generating activities include intensive agriculture (e.g. piggeries, poultry units, rendering), industrial/ manufacturing processes, waste disposal, renewable energies such as anaerobic digestion, intensive composting, bio-gas processes, odours from food preparation (e.g. restaurants, cafes) and use of solvent materials in the course of business.

**Objective EH O30**
**Odour**
It is an objective of the Council to protect the public from odour nuisance issues through odour abatement solutions.



## 6.4 Landscape and Visual Amenity

### 6.4.1 Landscape Assessment and Landscape Character Areas

Limerick possesses a varied landscape which is important not just for its intrinsic value and beauty, but also because it provides for local residents and visitors, both in terms of a place to live and for recreational and tourism purposes.

The importance of landscape and visual amenity in the role of planning is recognised in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The Act require that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and prospects. It requires objectives for Landscape Conservation Areas, Areas of Special Amenity and also for the assessment of landscape character. This approach towards landscape issues based on the *Draft Landscape Character Assessment Guidelines* stresses the distinctiveness of differing kinds of landscape and how differing kinds of development can best be integrated within them.

The landscape character areas have incorporated the scenic views and prospects of Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 (as extended), which will ensure continuity between and further development of, landscape policies for rural Limerick. For Limerick City, there are a number of Urban Character areas identified in Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy. The Landscape Character Areas are shown in Map 6.1.

**Policy EH P8**
**Landscape Character Areas**
It is a policy of the Council to promote the distinctiveness and where necessary safeguard the sensitivity of Limerick's landscape types, through the landscape characterisation process in accordance with the *Draft Guidelines for Landscape and Landscape Assessment* (2000) as issued by the Department of Environment and Local Government, in accordance with the European Landscape Convention (Florence Convention) and with *A National Landscape Strategy for Ireland – 2015-2025*. The Council shall implement any relevant recommendations contained in the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht's *National Landscape Strategy for Ireland, 2015 – 2025*.

Table 6.1 Rural Landscape Character Areas

| Character Area | Description | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| **LCA 01 Agricultural Lowlands** | This is the largest of the Landscape Character Areas in Limerick and comprises almost the entire central plain. This landscape is a farming landscape and is defined by a series of regular field boundaries, often allowed to grow to maturity. This well-developed hedgerow system is one of its main characteristics. In terms of topography, the landscape is generally rather flat with some locally prominent hills and ridges. The pastoral nature of the landscape is reinforced by the presence of farmyards. | a) Encourage, where housing is permitted, design that reflects existing housing stock, such as the two-storey farmhouses which are a feature in the area.<br>b) Encourage retention of existing landscape features such as hedgerows and trees and their incorporation into landscaping for new developments.<br>c) Discourage development of locally prominent sites.<br>d) Encourage the regular arrangement of turbines with equal spacing in proposed wind farm developments, which take field boundaries into account.<br>e) Encourage development within existing settlements. |
| **LCA 02 Ballyhoura /Slieve Reagh** | This is a locally dominant range of hills running along the Cork boundary. The lowland component of this landscape character area is generally a farmed landscape, but the range of hills provides an upland backdrop. The lower reaches of Ballyhoura are pastoral in character, but this changes as altitude increases and the vegetation cover changes to commercial forestry, interspersed with upland grassland and the remnants of peat bogs. Much of the Ballyhoura's are within a Special Area of Conservation. | a) Where housing is permitted, encourage appropriate scale and high-quality design for this landscape area, combined with sensitive site location and landscaping. Respect traditional scale particularly on elevated or locally prominent sites.<br>b) Strongly encourage retention of earth bank field boundaries, particularly in the more upland parts of this area, as the screening abilities of landscape features in this area are limited.<br>c) Encourage use of species native to this particular area in landscaping proposals. Species native to the upland parts of this area could be used, such as mountain ash and birch.<br>d) Ensure that forestry applications subject to planning are confined to infill and below 300m above sea level, as much of the Ballyhouras is a Special Area of Conservation.<br>e) Encourage development within existing settlements. |
| **LCA 03 Galtee Uplands** | This is the most visually striking of all Limerick's uplands. The foothills are generally a farmed landscape with an enclosed field pattern and scattered farmsteads, but as altitude increases open heath-land replaces the closed fields and forestry. The open upland terrain of the higher reaches of the Galtees, combined with with starker colours caused by the vegetation cover of heather, provides a strong visual contrast to the enclosed pastoral landscape below. Much of the Galtees are within a Special Area of Conservation. This is designated for upland habitats such as heath and upland bog amongst others. | a) Only permit housing development above the 230m contour line in exceptional circumstances. Where housing is permitted, encourage appropriate scale and high-quality design for this landscape area, combined with sensitive site location and landscaping. Respect traditional scale particularly on elevated or locally prominent sites.<br>b) Ensure that forestry developments, which are subject to planning, are confined to below 300m above sea level, following consultation with the Wildlife Service and National Parks.<br>c) Encourage development within existing settlements. |

| Character Area | Description | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| **LCA 04 Knockfierna** | This is one of the most dominant hills in the centre of Limerick. The vegetation cover of the hill is generally upland grassland with a well-developed field boundary system. The hill is important not just for its scenic value, but also because of the variety of archaeological and historical sites that exist on it. | a) Housing development shall be confined to below 150m sea level in order to protect the scenic amenity of the area, except in exceptional circumstances.<br>b) The use of high-quality site-specific designs, incorporating materials that assist the integration of the development into the landscape is encouraged.<br>c) The breaking of ridgelines or selection of locally prominent sites, within the Knockfierna Landscape Character area is strongly discouraged.<br>d) This area shall not be considered for forestry applications that are subject to planning requirements.<br>e) This area is considered unsuitable for wind energy development. |
| **LCA 05 Lough Gur** | Lough Gur is one of the most significant archaeological site in Limerick. Topographically it is made up of a series of rolling hills surrounding the lake, which is the centre point of the area. The landscape is pastoral with a long history of human habitation. The presence of a wide variety of archaeological monuments is one of the characteristic features of the area. The area around Lough Gur, with its pleasant rural setting and views of the lake and its well-developed hedgerows, is also an attractive amenity and is widely used by locals and visitors alike. | a) Safeguard the visual amenity of the area and to have regard to the views and prospects in and out of Lough Gur.<br>b) Restrict development including residential development in the area of Special Development Control, shown on Map 6.3 except in exceptional circumstances. Appropriate tourism development and extensions to existing properties, which respect the special character of Lough Gur will be considered.<br>c) To have regard to the archaeological importance and richness of the area indicated on Map 6.3 as a zone of archaeological amenity. Any developments within the zone will be required to provide for an archaeological examination during the course of excavations, or other ground disturbance.<br>d) To safeguard the existence of Natural Heritage Areas and the Wildfowl sanctuary when assessing applications for development in the area. |



| Character Area | Description | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| **LCA 06 Shannon Coastal Zone** | This zone comprises a large area of northern Limerick and is bounded on one side by the Shannon Estuary, while its southern boundary is defined by the gradually rising ground, which leads onto the agricultural zone and the western hills to the south west. The presence of the estuary is the defining characteristic of the region. The landscape itself is generally that of an enclosed agricultural type, essentially that of a hedgerow dominant landscape. This differs from the other agricultural landscapes of the County, in that the field patterns, particularly close to the Estuary, tend to be less regular than those elsewhere in Limerick. | a) Where housing is permitted, encourage appropriate scale and high-quality design for this landscape area, combined with sensitive site location and landscaping. Respect traditional scale, particularly on elevated or locally prominent sites.<br>b) To protect the views and prospects along the N69 (see Map 6.2), as a priority for the Planning Authority. Only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. domestic extensions and/or a suitably screened dwelling for an individual who is engaged in full time farming or other exceptional circumstances) will development be allowed between the road and the estuary.<br>c) To encourage the use of site-specific designs with careful attention to landscaping. Finishes such as plaster finish, which will assist in integrating the development into the landscape, are encouraged.<br>d) All of the above (a to c) does not apply within the settlements of the Shannon Coastal zone.<br>e) To permit holiday homes only within existing settlements.<br>f) To rigidly adhere to best practice in the installation and use of wastewater treatment systems, given the proximity of the Shannon and the importance of water-based habitats in the area, to ensure that no deterioration in water quality takes place.<br>g) Where wind farms are permitted, it is recommended that single lines of equally spaced turbines shall be considered, in order to limit the visual and landscape impact.<br>h) Development shall be encouraged within existing settlements.<br>i) Development identified under the SIFP will adhere to the mitigation measures for landscape management as appropriate. |

| Character Area | Description | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| **LCA 07 Southern Uplands** | The Mullaghareirk range of hills, which straddles the County Limerick, Cork and Kerry boundaries, is the principal defining feature of this landscape character area. This is a gently undulating range of hills, which rises to almost a plateau near the Cork border. Vegetation cover ranges from improved hill grassland, which tends to be wet in nature to disturbed peatland habitats, such as blanket bog, dry and wet heath. Few of these habitats are intact, occurring only in patches interrupted by commercial forestry and improved grassland. Commercial forestry, most of which is nearing maturity, is a dominant feature of this area. | a) Where housing is permitted, encourage appropriate scale and high-quality design for this landscape area, combined with sensitive site location and landscaping. Respect traditional scale particularly on elevated or locally prominent sites.<br>b) Strongly encourage use of landscaping plans, taking into account existing topography and landforms, in efforts to blend developments into the surrounding landscape. Retention of existing landscape features and their integration and use in helping development to blend into the landscape, is of great importance in any upland area.<br>c) Not permit further forestry developments that are subject to planning permissions over 280m above sea level.<br>d) Encourage development within existing settlements.<br>e) This area is open to consideration for wind energy development.<br>f) Where wind farms are permitted, a random spacing with random layout shall be considered in proposed wind farm developments, to limit the visual and landscape impact. |
| **LCA 08 Slieve Felim Uplands** | The Slieve Felim Hills located in the north east of the County are the most dominant feature in this part of Limerick. Though not particularly high (the most important peak is 395m), it is because of the low-lying surrounding landscape that they appear such a dominant feature. The hills themselves are rounded in shape, lacking the starkness that some of the Galtee range to the south possess and are generally pastoral in character, in that almost all the hills show evidence of enclosure for agricultural purposes, with a well-developed field boundary system in place. | a) Not normally permit housing development at or above 220m elevation, in order to protect the scenic amenity of the hills, except in exceptional circumstances.<br>b) Strongly encourage the use of designs based on the existing housing stock of the area and reuse of existing structures.<br>c) Encourage the construction of new agricultural developments as part of existing agricultural complexes where possible. |

| Character Area | Description | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| **LCA O9 Tory Hill** | Tory Hill is an isolated, locally prominent hill, which is within 2km of the town of Croom and is visible from the Cork/Limerick Road. It is an important feature in the surrounding countryside and is of geological importance as it is a limestone hill with deposits of gravel, which have been left since the last ice age. The hill supports areas of scrub and woodland as well as limestone grassland. The dominant nature of the hill, which rises from the surrounding flat landscape, magnifies the effect of potential development in this location. | a) It is an objective of the Council that there is a presumption against development in this location. |
| **LCA O10 Western Uplands (Western Hills/ Barnagh Gap/Sugar Hill)** | This is an upland area, which begins approximately 5km to the south west of Newcastle West with the Barnagh Hill area, which already has been designated as a scenic route in previous Development Plans. This hill range dominates the lower landscape to the east and is clearly visible from Newcastle West. Because of this and the extensive traffic through the region on the N21, any visual disturbance would be very obvious. The Barnagh Gap/Sugar Hill area in particular, deserves separate treatment within this region. The area generally has an upland character with isolated farmsteads and improved grassland punctuated by blocks of forestry, which is one of the characteristics of the area. | a) Where housing is permitted, encourage appropriate scale and high-quality design for this landscape area, combined with sensitive site location and landscaping. Respect traditional scale particularly on elevated or locally prominent sites.<br>b) Discourage the selection of locally prominent sites.<br>c) Encourage the use of local landform and landscape features, combined with sensitive landscaping in order to screen development.<br>d) Ensure that forestry that is subject to planning permission, is confined to below 280m above sea level to protect intact remnants of peatland habitat.<br>e) This area is open to consideration for wind energy development.<br>f) Where wind farm development is permitted, a random spacing layout shall be considered to limit the visual and landscape impact. |

### 6.4.2 Views and Prospects

Limerick contains many sites and vantage points from which scenic views over areas of great natural beauty, local landmarks, historic landscapes, Shannon Estuary and adjoining Counties, may be obtained. Due to the topography of Limerick City, its quality townscapes, riverscapes and landscapes, as well as its visual landmarks, there are many views of significance within the City. The City has a number of linear views consisting of landmark buildings, such as King John's castle, the City walls and City skyline. River prospects are also important and usually, though not exclusively, experienced while crossing a bridge. River prospects in this instance refer to the ability to see landmark building(s) from bridges.

In addition, the County also contains important prospects i.e. prominent landscapes or areas of special amenity value, or special interest, which are widely visible from the surrounding area. While views and prospects can be an attraction in their own right, they can also serve to complement other nearby attractions. Examples include the routes in the south east of the County, such as those close to Galbally, Ardpatrick and Ballylanders which provide an additional attraction for the area, to complement the Ballyhoura Mountain bike trail. New recreational cycle routes, with Kilmallock as a hub, have also been developed in this area. The Lough Gur and Tory hill views and prospects further complement the attractions of these areas. In the east of the County, the Slieve Felim way route close to Murroe, makes an attractive walking route to complement the attractions of the Clare Glens.

The views and prospects within Limerick are shown on the Views and Prospects Map 6.2 further below, while details on the City views and prospects are set out in the Building Height Strategy in Volume 6.

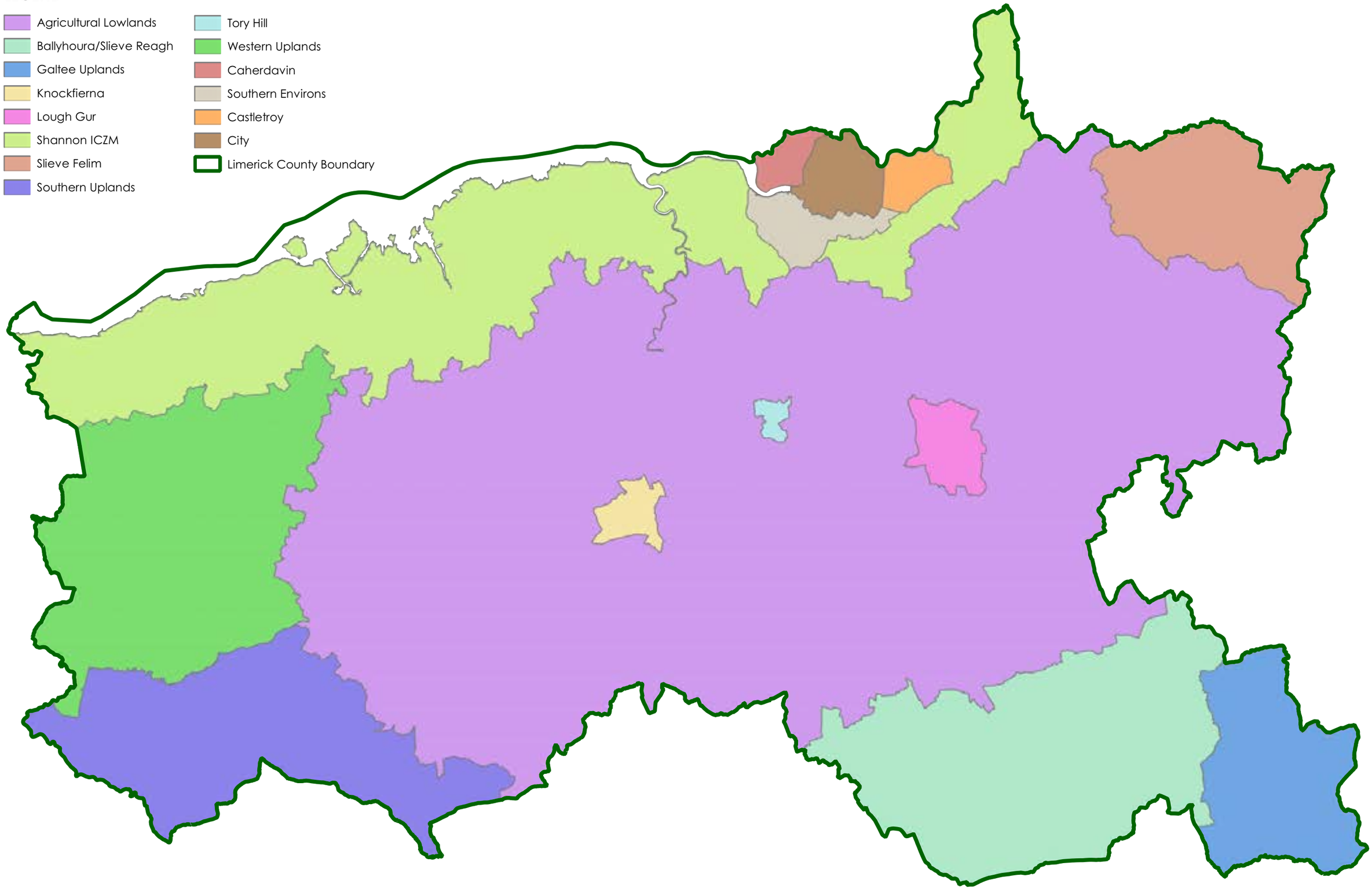
**Objective EH O31**
**Views and Prospects**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Preserve, protect and encourage the enjoyment of views and prospects of special amenity value or special interests and to prevent development, which would block or otherwise interfere with views and/or prospects.

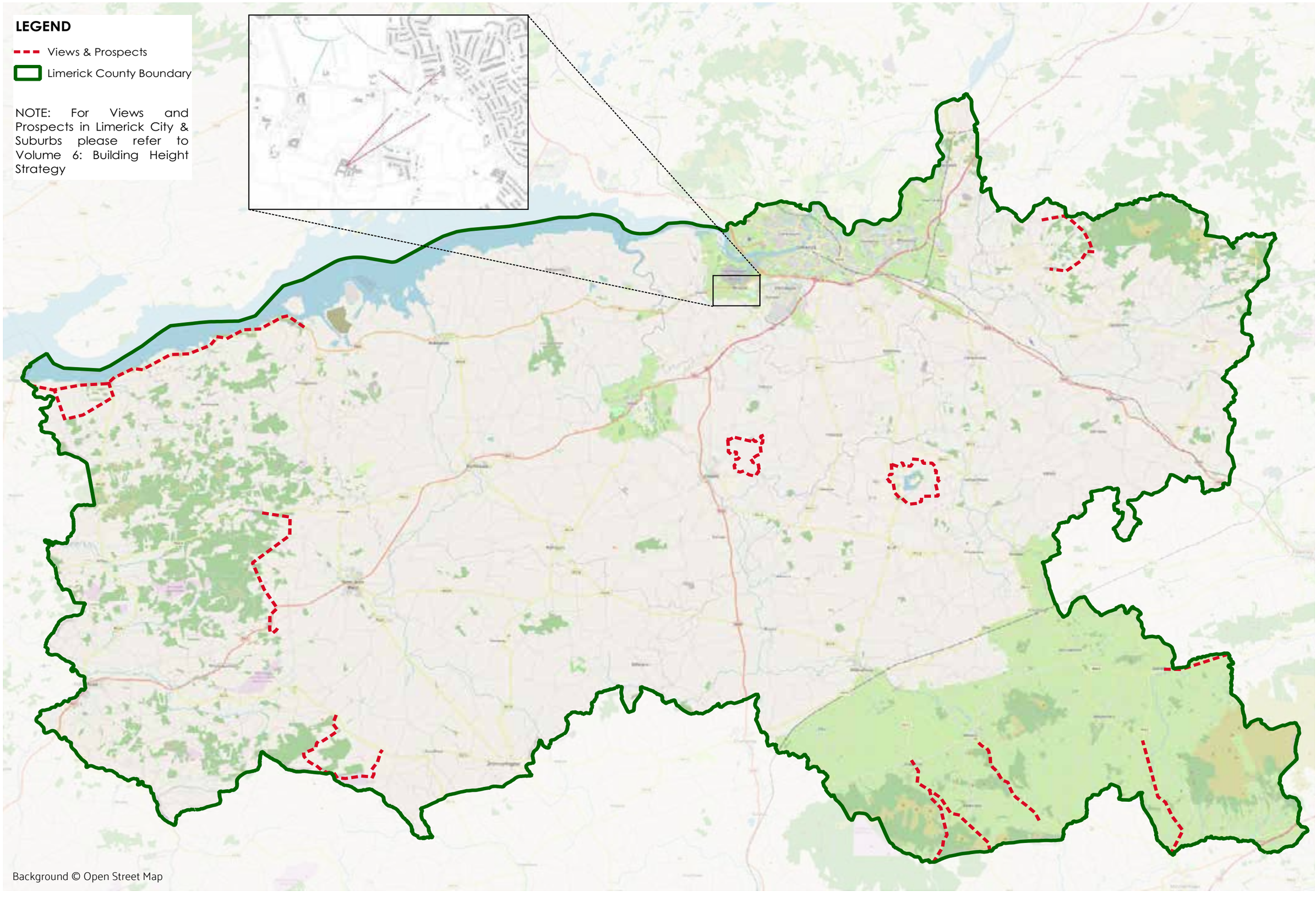
b) In areas where scenic views and prospects are listed in the Plan, there will be a presumption against development, except that required to facilitate farming and appropriate tourism and related activities. The development must be appropriately designed so that it can be integrated into the landscape.

Map 6.1: Landscape Character Assessment




Background © Open Street Map

Map 6.2 Views and Prospects



### 6.4.3 Historical Landscapes

The pace of landscape change in Ireland has until recent years been gradual, which has ensured the survival of a rich upstanding archaeological heritage, in addition to the survival of features such as field boundaries and old demesnes. All these features play their part in telling the story of Limerick's past. Historical landscapes can be defined as the archaeological and historical elements that survive in the current landscape. Limerick is rich in such areas. Lough Gur is a well-established archaeological landscape and public amenity. Other areas, such as Limerick City and surrounding areas, Kilmallock, Adare and Knockainey, are also important from an archaeological and historical perspective.

Apart from their historical interest, such landscapes can form the basis of specialist tourist attractions. The environs of Kilmallock, combined with the historic town itself, is one instance where part of County Limerick could, through its historical interest, provide the basis for a specialist tourist attraction. This could also be true of urban areas such as Limerick, where parts of the City core have intrinsic historical value.

The carrying out of a historic landscape assessment would be a valuable step towards documenting the past landscapes of Limerick and a valuable tool in heritage promotion and awareness.

**Objective EH O32**
**Historical Landscapes**
It is an objective of the Council to, during the lifetime of the Plan, develop an historical landscape assessment process, which will identify key historical landscapes within Limerick.

### 6.4.4 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes

The DEHLG have undertaken a *Survey of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes* where this inventory includes over 6000 records of historic gardens and designed landscapes throughout Ireland. Phase One and Two (Historic Ordinance Surveys and Aerial Photography) desktop surveys are complete for Limerick City with Phase three (field surveys) yet to be complete. Within Limerick City, some of these historic gardens include:

- Castlepark House (Moyross) Reference: LI-65-R-561597, Grid Reference: 561597;
- Corbally House (Corbally) forming grounds of St Munchin's College, Reference: LI-65-R584590;
- Clonmacken House: LI-65-R-548568. Grid Reference: 548568.

**Policy EH P9**
**Historic Gardens, Designed Landscapes and Parklands**
It is a policy of the Council to protect and maintain surviving remnants of Historic Gardens, Designed Landscapes and surrounding Parklands including form and patterns of hard and soft landscaping and all mature trees and vegetation as highlighted in the DEHLG *Survey Of Historic Gardens & Designed Landscapes Inventory.*

**Objective EH O33**
**Castlepark**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that the parkland characteristics and mature trees in the area surrounding Castle Park House which is zoned for Enterprise and Employment shall be retained as part of any new development.

## 6.5 Archaeology and Built Heritage

### 6.5.1 Archaeological Heritage

Limerick is extremely rich in the diversity and quality of the archaeological monuments and landscapes within the City and County. There is a high rate of survival of rural monuments, which is largely due to the pastoral nature of farming. To date there are over 7,000 sites and individual monuments recorded in Limerick. These range from isolated pits to the inspiring ruins of the friary at Askeaton and the majestic King John's Castle in the City. They include the graves, homes, farmsteads and towns of our ancestors. They are an intrinsic part of the landscape, they form our immediate environment and shape our experience and outlook and they are part of what makes Limerick unique. They are also, however, a fragile and irreplaceable resource. Limerick City and County Council is dedicated to safeguarding the archaeological heritage of Limerick.

The location of each archaeological monument is provided in the Record of Monuments and Places, which is maintained and up-dated by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. Hard copies are available for public consultation in the Council's Planning Department and in all the libraries. Under the provisions of Section 12 of the 1994 National Monuments Act Amendment, any person proposing any works (this includes exempted development) 'at or in relation to such a monument' has to give two months' notice to the National Monuments Service. Sites continue to be discovered, some of those found subsequent to 1997 have been included in the Site and Monuments Database which is available on the website archaeology.ie

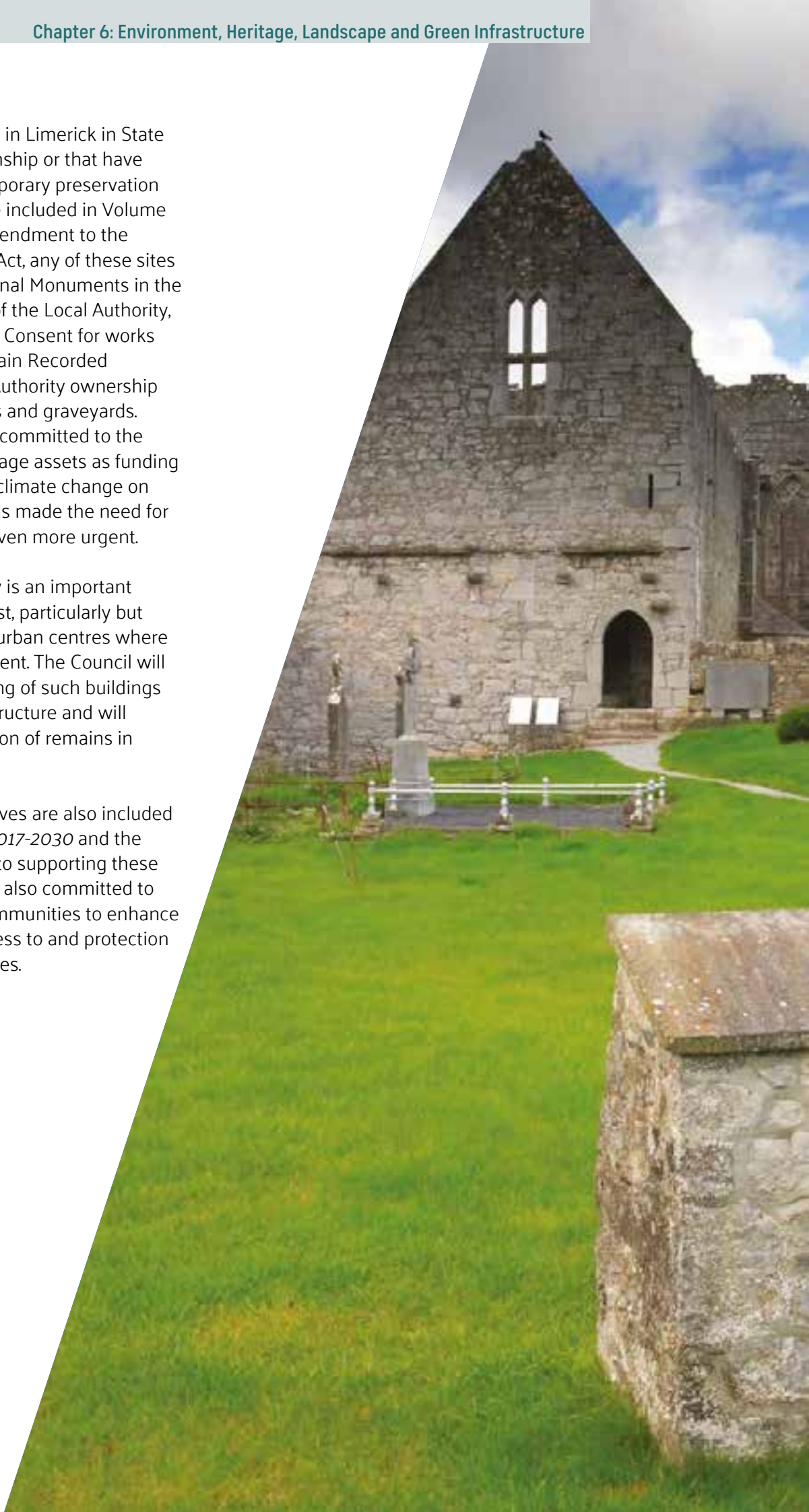
There is a stated preference under National Policy for preservation in situ. Consequently, the Planning Authority recommends that issues of archaeological heritage be addressed as early as possible by potential developers, through consultation with the relevant agencies, the Planning Department and the Local Authority Archaeologist. The Planning Authority will request potential developers to carry out archaeological assessments, in areas adjacent or in the vicinity of Recorded Monuments. Proposed developments can have a visual as well as a physical impact on the archaeological remains and developers are advised to respect the setting of the monuments in the wider landscape, when considering areas for development potential. The Planning Authority will refer all proposed developments likely to impact on the archaeological heritage to the National Monuments Service.

Archaeological remains are also to be found in riverine, lacustrine and in estuarine and marine- foreshore, inter-tidal and underwater environments. There is the potential for previously unknown and unrecorded underwater archaeological sites and artefacts to exist. Where there is potential impact to Underwater Archaeology, the Council will require a licensed Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment. The results are to be amalgamated with the terrestrial assessment to provide the overall archaeological heritage of the particular study area. Section 3 of The National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1987 provides for the protection of sites of historic wrecks and lists of known wrecks are available on the website data.gov.ie/dataset/national-monuments-service-shipwreck-inventory-of-ireland

There are certain sites in Limerick in State ownership or guardianship or that have been served with temporary preservation orders. These sites are included in Volume 5. Under the 2004 Amendment to the National Monuments Act, any of these sites or sites deemed National Monuments in the care or guardianship of the Local Authority, will require Ministerial Consent for works in their vicinity. The main Recorded Monuments in Local Authority ownership are the older churches and graveyards. The Local Authority is committed to the preserving these heritage assets as funding permits. The effect of climate change on masonry structures has made the need for consolidation works even more urgent.

Industrial Archaeology is an important facet of our shared past, particularly but not exclusively in our urban centres where it advanced development. The Council will expect proper recording of such buildings and associated infrastructure and will encourage incorporation of remains in future developments.

Archaeological objectives are also included in the *Heritage Plan 2017-2030* and the Council is committed to supporting these actions. The Council is also committed to working with local communities to enhance understanding of, access to and protection of locally important sites.



### 6.5.2 Special Control Areas

The Planning Authority is fully committed to preserving the site and setting of our archaeological heritage. Since the adoption of the first Development Plan in 1967, the then Limerick County Council recognised the archaeological landscape at Lough Gur, creating an area of Special Development Control around the archaeological landscape. Other areas of Special Development Control have been established at archaeologically important settings around the county and further areas may be proposed during the lifetime of the Plan. Special Control Areas are applied to preserve and enhance the setting of these landscapes and sites. In the land-use zoning matrix, generally no use is permitted.

The Special Control Areas within Limerick are as follows:

- Special Control Area at Mungret Monastic Complex, (See Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty Zoning Map, Volume 2) incorporating all national monuments and protected views, including:
  (1) View from Mungret College northeast to the Monastic Complex and;
  (2) Views northwest across the Monastic Complex (See Map 6.2);
- School House Road, Castletroy (See Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty Zoning Map, Zoning Map, Volume 2);
- Lough Gur (See Map 6.3);
- Abbey in Askeaton (area identified in the Local Area Plan);
- Collegiate Church and Priory, Kilmallock (area identified in the Local Area Plan);
- Croom Castle (area identified in the Local Area Plan);
- The Motte in Kilfinane (See Map in Volume 2 – Kilfinane Zoning Map);
- Special Control Area in Ballingarry (See Map in Volume 2 – Ballingarry Zoning Map).

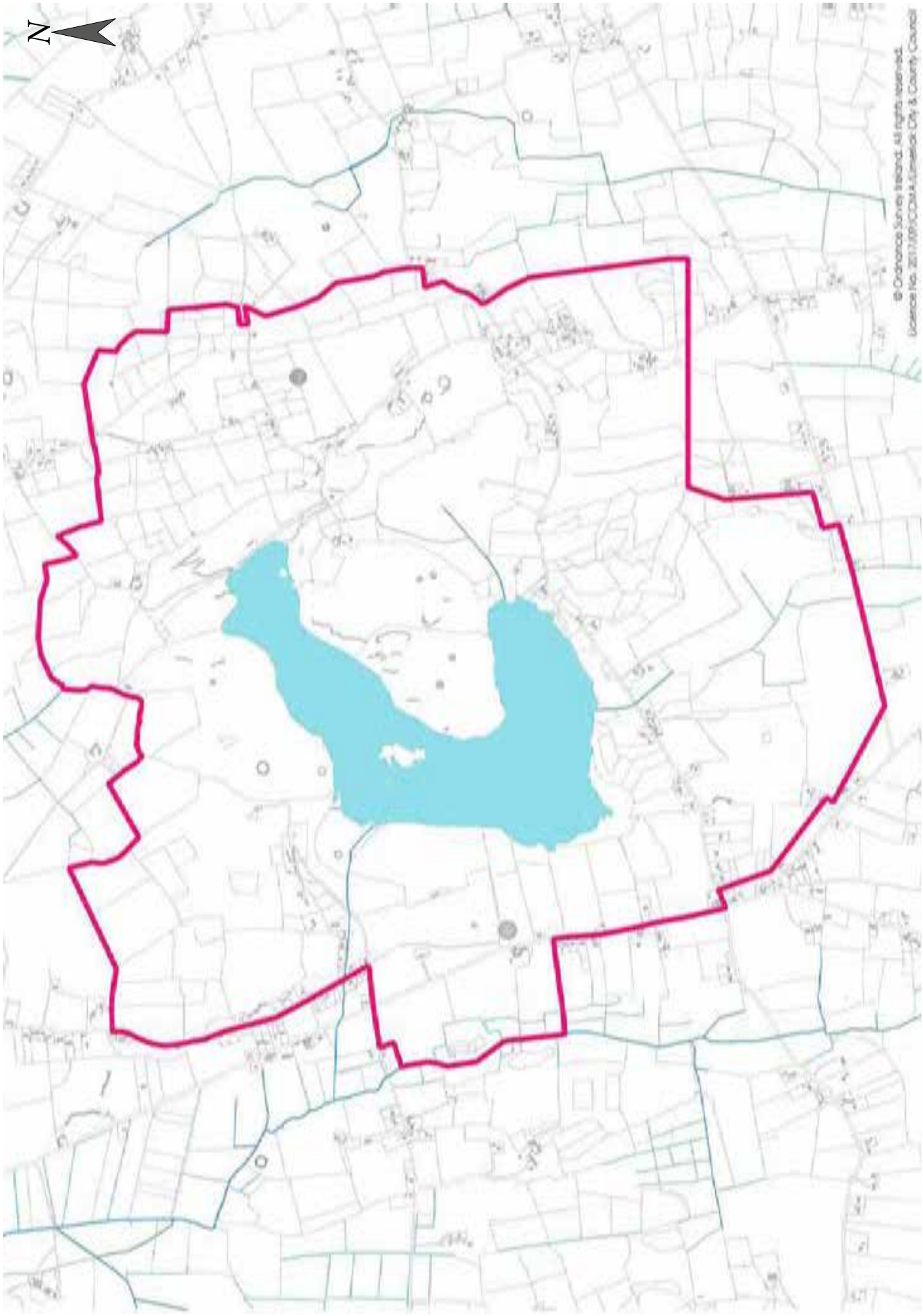
**Objective EH O34**
**Special Control Areas**
It is an objective of the Council to protect and maintain the integrity of the Special Control Areas. Continue to zone important archaeological areas as appropriate as Special Control Areas where no development is permitted, other than possibly sensitively designed access.

**Objective EH O35**
**Special Control Areas Mungret**
It is an objective of the Council to protect and maintain the integrity of the Special Control Areas at Mungret Monastic Complex, incorporating all national monuments and protected views including:

1) View from Mungret College northeast to the Monastic Complex and;
2) Views northwest across the Monastic Complex.

Development within this area will be prohibited with the exception of leisure facilities and moderate extensions to existing dwellings, which will not adversely impact on the character or setting of the complex. The Council will facilitate the provision of interpretative panels and directional signage for Mungret Monastic Complex and park, will be considered in consultation with local community groups.

Map 6.3 Lough Gur Special Control Area



### 6.5.3 Conservation and Management Plans

Conservation and Management Plans are a fundamental step in the preservation and enhancement of important complex sites. Currently the City Walls and Kilmallock Walls, both deemed National Monuments, have these plans in place. These plans also address issues such as medieval street and plot layout and the importance of preserving these urban remnants. There is increasing evidence that there is much more medieval and historic fabric contained within our standing buildings. The Planning Authority recognises the significance of these remains. In historic urban cores, detailed building surveys by experienced professionals will be required. Within urban environments the best method of preservation of both the existing built environment and any buried remains, is the reuse of existing structures, or through light buildings or appropriately designed foundations.

**Objective EH O36**
**Preservation of the Archaeological Heritage**
It is an objective of the Council to seek the preservation of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest. This is to include all the sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. The preferred option is preservation in situ, or at a minimum preservation by record.

**Objective EH O37**
**Preservation of unrecorded/newly discovered Archaeological Heritage**
It is an objective of the Council to protect and preserve the preservation in situ (or at a minimum by record) of all sites and features of historical and archaeological interest, discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.

**Objective EH O38**
**Preservation of the Underwater Archaeological Heritage**
It is an objective of the Council to seek the preservation (in situ, or at a minimum, preservation by record) of all known and all previously unrecorded sites and features of historical and archaeological record in wetland, riverine, lacustrine, estuarine and or marine environments.

**Objective EH O39**
**Protection of the setting of Archaeological Monuments**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that no development shall have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument.

**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.

**Objective EH O41**
**Archaeological Monuments in Local Authority ownership/guardianship**
It is an objective of the Council to preserve and enhance as appropriate and as funding allows monuments vested in the Local Authority.

**Objective EH O42**
**Town Defences and Layout**
It is an objective of the Council to protect town defences and plot layout, carry out the objectives of the Conservation and Management Plans for Limerick City and Kilmallock and support the work of the Irish Walled Towns Network. Review the potential for surviving medieval and historic fabric within the standing buildings in our medieval urban cores.

**Objective EH O43**
**Industrial Archaeology**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Seek the preservation of buildings and infrastructure associated with former industrial sites;
b) Ensure detailed recording of these remains; promote knowledge and interpretation of these sites among the general public;
c) Support the work of the Interreg Atlantic Coast Area project, (MMIAH) *The recovery and valorisation of Maritime Military and Industrial Heritage.*

**Objective EH O44**
**Lough Gur**
It is an objective of the Council to protect the unique archaeological landscape at Lough Gur and to support the archaeological objectives in the Lough Gur Environment and Management Study 2009.

**Objective EH O45**
**Raise public awareness and encourage active participation**
It is an objective of the Council to generally raise public awareness of the archaeological and historic heritage and to assist and encourage active participation by the public, following consultation with National Monuments Service, in the conservation, consolidation and presentation of landmark sites, where this is appropriate and subject to available resources.

**Objective EH O46**
**Heritage Plan 2017-2030**
It is an objective of the Council to support the archaeological objectives in the Heritage Plan.

**Objective EH O47**
**Increase access to Archaeological Monuments**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate public access to National Monuments in State or Local Authority care.

**Objective EH O48**
**Assessment and Recognition of Archaeological Landscapes**
It is an objective of the Council to designate archaeological landscapes as part of an ongoing appraisal for Historic Landscape Characterisation of Limerick.

**Objective EH 049**
**Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archeological Heritage**

It is an objective of the Council to support the Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan for Built and Archaeological Heritage 2019, as published by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and any subsequent guidance or plans for dealing with climate change and archaeological heritage. The Council shall seek to:

- Promote awareness and the appropriate adaptation of Ireland's built and archaeological heritage to deal with the effects of climate change;
- Identify the built and archaeological heritage in Local Authority ownership and areas at risk from climate change including, but not necessarily restricted to, the Record of Monuments and Places, Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas designated in the Development Plan;
- Undertake climate change vulnerability assessments for the historic structures and sites in its area, subject to resources and funding;
- Develop disaster risk reduction policies addressing direct and indirect risks to the built and archaeological heritage in its area;
- Develop resilience and adaptation strategies for the built and archaeological heritage in its area;
- Develop the skills capacity within the Local Authority to address adaptation/ mitigation/emergency management issues affecting historic structures and sites in order to avoid inadvertent loss or damage in the course of climate change adaptation or mitigation works.

### 6.5.4 Architectural Heritage

Limerick has diverse architectural heritage that is reflected in the significant number of areas of special character, which are defined as Architectural Conservation Areas - and the very high number of Protected Structures. Limerick's built environment legacy stretches back over 5,000 years and more. Scattered throughout the landscape are the remains of deserted medieval settlements, as at Abington and Tomdeeley, near Askeaton. However, it is in towns such as Kilmallock and Newcastle West, Adare and Askeaton, as well as Limerick City itself that the richest physical remains of the medieval past can be found. These range from town walls, religious foundations and castles and more modest houses and structures.

Other features, such as the pigeon house at Adare, can be found in both urban and rural locations. The historic built environment makes a significant contribution to the economic prosperity of an area by attracting investment, providing direct and indirect employment, as well as sustaining a traditional skills base.

Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides the legislative basis for the protection of architectural heritage. To complement this, the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht issued *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2011). These offer assistance and advice to owners and occupiers of Protected Structures and buildings within Architectural Conservation Areas, in addition to offering guidance to Planning Authorities.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires each Planning Authority to include in their Development Plan objectives for the protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical or social interest. These buildings and structures are compiled on a register referred to as the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). The RPS for Limerick City and County currently as listed in Volume 3 includes over 2000 structures, with a further 345 structures proposed for addition.

A Protected Structure, unless otherwise stated, includes the interior of the structure, the land lying within the curtilage of the structure, any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interior and all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of that structure. The protection also extends to any features specified as being in the attendant grounds including boundary treatments.

**Objective EH O50**
**Work to Protected Structures**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Protect structures included on the RPS from any works that would negatively impact their special character and appearance.
b) Ensure that any development proposals to Protected Structures, their curtilage and setting, shall have regard to the *Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities* published by the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.
c) Ensure that all works are carried out under the supervision of a qualified professional with specialised conservation expertise.
d) Ensure that any development, modification, alteration, or extension affecting a Protected Structure and/or its setting, is sensitively sited and designed and is appropriate in terms of the proposed scale, mass, height, density, layout and materials.
e) Ensure that the form and structural integrity of the Protected Structure is retained in any redevelopment and that the relationship between the Protected Structure and any complex of adjoining buildings, designed landscape features, or views and vistas from within the grounds of the structure are respected.
f) Respect the special interest of the interior, including its plan form, hierarchy of spaces, architectural detail, fixtures and fittings and materials.
g) Support the re-introduction of traditional features on protected structures where there is evidence that such features (e.g. window styles, finishes etc.) previously existed.
h) Ensure that new and adapted uses are compatible with the character and special interest of the Protected Structure.
i) Protect the curtilage of Protected Structures and to refuse planning permission for inappropriate development within the curtilage and attendant grounds, that would adversely impact on the special character of the Protected Structure.
j) Protect and retain important elements of built heritage including historic gardens, stone walls, entrance gates and piers and any other associated curtilage features.
k) Ensure historic landscapes and gardens associated with Protected Structures are protected from inappropriate development.

**Objective EH O51**
**Energy Efficiency of Protected Structures**

It is an objective of the Council to have regard to the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's publication on *Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings* (2010) and the Irish Standard IS EN 16883:2017 *Conservation of Cultural Heritage – Guidelines for Improving the Energy Performance of Historic Buildings* (2017) and any future advisory documents in assessing proposed works on Protected Structures.

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht is responsible for carrying out surveys of the architectural heritage on a county-by-county basis. Following the publication of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) of Limerick and any subsequent Ministerial recommendations, the Council will consider further amendments to the Record of Protected Structures. The NIAH survey may be consulted online at buildingsofireland.ie

**Objective EH O52**
**National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)**
It is an objective of the Council to review and update the RPS on foot of any Ministerial recommendations including the NIAH and any future updates. The Ministerial Recommendations, made under Section 53 of the Planning Act, will be taken into account when the Planning Authority is considering proposals for development that would affect the historic or architectural interest of these structures.

### 6.5.5 Architectural Conservation Areas

Limerick City and many of the towns and villages of Limerick contain areas which exhibit a distinct character and intrinsic qualities based on their historic built form and layout. These are afforded special protection given their contribution collectively to the historical streetscape in areas designated as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA). A full list Limerick's ACAs can be found in Volume 3. Whether an individual building, or a constituent part in an assemblage, each element contributes enormously to our understanding of past society and our knowledge of past building practices. This is a valuable contributor to the character of the places where we live and work and providing areas of atmosphere and ambience for visitors to Limerick. The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) defines an ACA as a place, area, group of structures or townscape, that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, technical, social interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of Protected Structures. An ACA may consist of groupings of buildings and streetscapes and associated open spaces.

The protected status afforded by inclusion in an ACA only applies to the exteriors of structures and features of the streetscape. It does not prevent internal changes or rearrangements, provided that these changes do not impact on the external appearance of the structure. These areas do not preclude development, but the development permitted must be of a high standard and complement the surviving architectural styles.

**Objective EH O53**
**Architectural Conservation Areas**

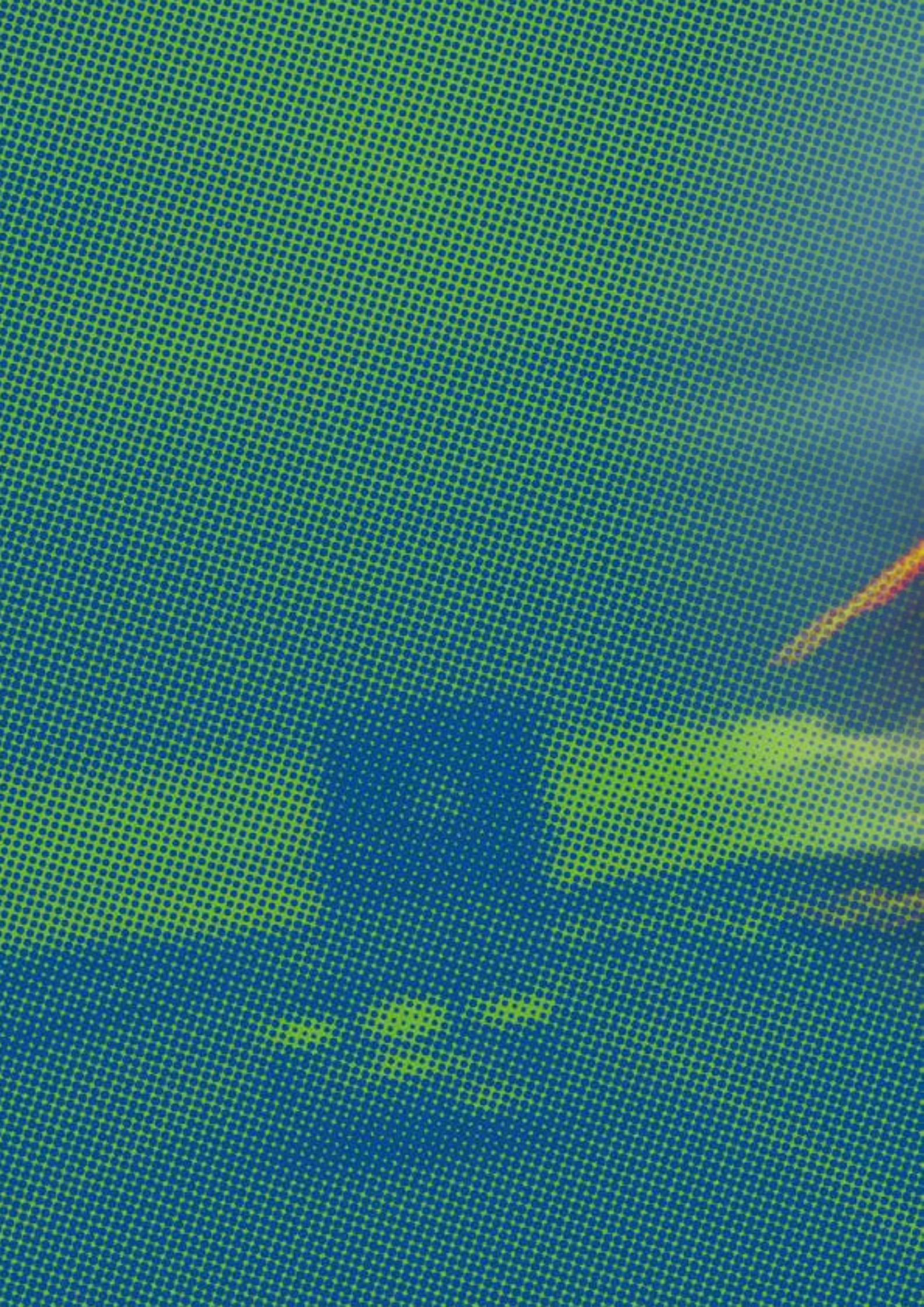
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Protect the character and special interest of an area, which has been designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) as set out in Volume 3.
b) Ensure that all development proposals within an ACA be appropriate to the character of the area having regard to the Character briefs for each area.
c) Ensure that any new development or alteration of a building within an ACA or immediately adjoining an ACA, is appropriate in terms of the proposed design, including scale, height, mass, density, building lines and materials.
d) Seek a high quality, sensitive design for any new development(s) that are complementary and/or sympathetic to their context and scale, whilst simultaneously encouraging contemporary design which is in harmony with the area. Direction can also be taken from using traditional forms that are then expressed in a contemporary manner, rather than a replica of a historic building style.
e) Seek the retention of all features that contribute to the character of an ACA, including boundary walls, railings, soft landscaping, traditional paving and street furniture.
f) Seek to safeguard the Georgian heritage of Limerick.

**Objective EH O54**
**Shopfronts within an ACA**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure that all original and traditional shopfronts, which contribute positively to the appearance and character of a streetscape, within an ACA are retained and restored.
b) Ensure that new shopfronts are well-designed, through the sympathetic use of scale, proportion and materials.



# 7

# Sustainable Mobility and Transport

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter will set out the Council's strategy to provide an effective, sustainable and accessible transport system. A functional and effective transport network is fundamental to the creation of a compact and connected place. The NPF and RSES seek to reduce dependency on the private car and secure a shift towards sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport.

During the lifetime of the Plan, the Council will strengthen the links between land use and transportation planning and will seek to promote sustainable transport, through the management of the road network in Limerick, by providing attractive, inclusive and connected walking and cycling networks, improving permeability within settlements, supporting car-share facilities and the use of electric vehicles and securing investment in public transport. It is anticipated that all of these combined measures will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors, create more attractive environments and help transition Limerick to a low carbon and climate resilient society.

The overall policy approach seeks to integrate land use and transport policies to achieve the delivery of a high quality, climate resilient and sustainable transport networks for Limerick, which is supported by appropriate objectives. Planning policy needs to look beyond catering for car dominated road space. It needs to utilise the 'Avoid – Shift – Improve' approach to integrating land use and transport planning. Focus will be on the reduction in the need for people to travel and the development of 10-minute cities and towns, where people live close to their workplace, community facilities and services. This will create a shift to more sustainable transport modes, enhanced walking and cycling facilities and by improving energy efficiency of our transport, reducing our carbon footprint.



## 7.2 National and Regional Planning

The NPF and RSES sets out the overarching policy for the integration of land use and transport policy, which seeks to deliver compact growth and sustainable mobility, as a means to reduce our carbon footprint and transition to a low carbon economy. The NPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable mobility, with a focus on the transition to more sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, cycling and increased use of public transport. It also highlights the need for electrification of public transport fleets and to significantly increase the use of electric vehicles. The RSES seeks to support the transition to a low carbon society, through modal shift from carbon heavy transport to more sustainable transport modes of travel.

### 7.2.1 Climate Action Plan 2021

The *Climate Action Plan* identifies how Ireland will achieve its 2030 targets for reduction in carbon emissions and a pathway towards achieving net zero emissions by 2050. A priority of the Action Plan is tackling emissions from the transport sector, which accounted for almost 20% of Ireland's greenhouse gases in 2017.

In order to achieve significant reductions in greenhouse gases, the Government's approach to reducing emissions from the transport sector is to adopt policies, to influence both the transport intensity of growth and the carbon intensity of travel.

### 7.2.2 National Guidance

The policies and objectives of the Plan shall be informed by the following National and Regional guidance and policies:

- *The National Climate Mitigation Plan and Climate Adaptation Framework;*
- *Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016 – 2021;*
- *National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP);*
- *Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways, 2018;*
- *Local Link Rural Transport Programme Strategic Plan 2018 to 2022;*
- *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, 2019;*
- *2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid -19 Pandemic Response;*
- *Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future: A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020 and any subsequent updates;*
- *Smarter Travel - National Cycle Policy Framework 2009 – 2020 and any subsequent updates;*
- *Developing Resilience to Climate Change in the Irish Transport Sector;*
- *The National Cycle Manual (NTA, 2011);*
- *Spatial Planning and National Roads-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012).*
- Whole of Government's National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022

The Department of Transport is currently developing its new high-level strategic framework for prioritising future investment in the land transport network. Underpinned by the National Strategic Objectives, the transport strategy establishes high-level investment priorities to address key transport challenges, and to ensure that transport investment is aligned with and supports Government's overarching spatial and climate change objectives, as articulated in the National Planning Framework and Climate Action Plan. In addition, the Department of Transport's *Five Cities Demand Management Study* identifies transport demand drivers, and assesses the suitability of measures to reduce demand in Ireland's five largest urban centres–Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Limerick and Galway. The study looks at international best practice and examines measures to assess impact in reducing emissions, tackling congestion, improving air quality and improving the overall urban environment of the five cities. The Strategy provides a focused and evidence-based approach to addressing the carbon, congestion and air quality challenges facing Irish Cities.

**Policy TR P1**
**National Investment Framework for Transport Investment**
It is a policy of the Council to support the implementation of the Department of Transport's *National Investment Framework for Transport Investment.*

**Policy TR P2**
**Five Cities Demand Management Study**
It is a policy of the Council to support the recommendations of the Department of Transport's *Five Cities Demand Management Study.*

## 7.3 Integration of Land Use and Transport Planning

**Policy TR P3**
**Integration of Land Use and Transport Policies**
It is a policy of the Council to support and facilitate the integration of land use and transportation policies ensuring the delivery of sustainable compact settlements served by sustainable modes of transport.

The integration of land use and transportation is a fundamental principle of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region. In shaping the pattern of development and influencing the location, scale, density, design and mix of land-uses, the integration of land-use and transportation can help reduce the need to travel and facilitate sustainable development.

Rebalancing the transport system towards walking, cycling and public transport, including ensuring high quality interchanges between modes, will require sustained investment, including improving street environments to make walking and cycling safer and more attractive and providing enhanced public transport services to ensure that alternatives to the car are accessible, affordable and appealing. Consolidation of development in appropriate locations is fundamental to ensure that development can be well served by sustainable modes of travel, including public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure.

Limerick comprises a significant rural based population and as such, the Council acknowledges that some essential travel will continue to be made by cars and goods vehicles. The Plan will also facilitate improvement in road infrastructure to cater for these movements. In line with national policy, it is accepted that, in the longer term, the population of the towns and villages will increase with the potential for reduced car dependency particularly, for shorter journeys.

**Policy TR P4**
**Promotion of Sustainable Patterns of Transport Use**
It is a policy of the Council to seek to implement in a positive manner, in cooperation with other relevant authorities and agencies, the policies of the NPF, RSES and the Department of Transport's *Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020* (and any subsequent updates), to encourage more sustainable patterns of travel and greater use of sustainable forms of transport, including public transport, cycling and walking.

**Policy TR P5**
**Sustainable Mobility and Regional Accessibility**
It is a policy of the Council to support sustainable mobility, enhanced regional accessibility and connectivity within Limerick, in accordance with the National Strategic Outcomes of the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

## 7.4 Key Enablers for Growth in Limerick

The NPF, NDP and RSES identifies a number of key enablers to support the growth of Limerick which will enhance connectivity within Limerick and benefit the wider region.

**Policy TR P6**
**Delivery of Transport Infrastructure in line with National Policy**
It is a policy of the Council to support the delivery of transport infrastructure identified within the National Planning Framework, National Development Plan 2021-2030 (and any update) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region and to support enhanced connectivity within Limerick and inter-urban connectivity within the regions.

A number of transport projects, both road infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements, are considered key enablers for the successful economic, social and sustainable growth of Limerick, as outlined in the RSES. Whilst the Plan supports the rebalancing of the transport system towards more sustainable modes of transport, it is recognised that the road network maintains a critical position in the economic growth of Limerick, to allow for the movement of people, goods, services and freight on a well-connected and accessible road network. Key projects which are critical to enabling the sustainable mobility and economic growth in Limerick include:

- Delivery of the full BusConnects programme (inclusive of ticketing systems, bus corridors, additional capacity, new bus stops and bus shelters) for Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty;
- Development of a Park and Ride programme for Limerick, linked with BusConnects Programme;
- Delivery of a comprehensive cycling and walking network for Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty;
- N/M20 Cork to Limerick Scheme, which is key to the delivery of improved connectivity between the urban centres and the wider region;
- Foynes to Limerick (including Adare Bypass) Road, which will link the port of Foynes with the M7/N18 at Limerick and enhance regional and international connectivity;
- N21 Newcastle West and N21 Abbeyfeale Road Scheme – key projects in enhancing regional connectivity with the South West Region and alleviating congestion in both Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale;
- N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction - Current Constraints Study Area (CSA) extends into the Limerick administrative area (North of Oola and Brookes Bridge);
- Limerick Northern Distributor Road - improving accessibility to the City from County Clare, relieving pressure on the existing river crossings in the City Centre and providing significant improvement in connectivity between different areas along the northern fringe of the City;
- O'Connell Street Improvement Works – Provision of enhanced public realm, widened footpaths and segregated cycle ways on Limerick's main thoroughfare, as well as facilitating future transport mode needs in accordance with the requirements of LSMATS.

Objectives in support of road projects identified as key growth enablers are outlined in Section 7.8 Strategic Roads Infrastructure.

## 7.5 Sustainable Mobility

Sustainable mobility relates to the movement of people and goods in a manner, which enhances ease of movement and a better quality of life for all and seeks to create a modal shift in favour of more active modes of travel. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on more sustainable modes of transport, in order to mitigate against the potential impacts of climate change and to remove congestion from our cities, towns and villages and make them more attractive places to live, work and relax. This requires increased priority for cycling, walking, car share/carpooling and public transport infrastructure and a greater uptake in the use of cleaner greener vehicles.

The Department of Transport is carrying out a review of sustainable mobility policy, which will deliver the ambitions of the new Programme for Government, replacing the 2009 policy documents - *Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020* and the *National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020*. The new national policy will be aligned with the National Strategic Outcomes of *Project Ireland 2040*, will support the actions in the *Climate Action Plan* and will also consider the impacts of COVID-19. The promotion of use and increased delivery of sustainable modes of transport is fundamental to achieving Ireland's carbon emission reduction requirements of 51% by 2030.

**Policy TR P7**
**Sustainable Travel and Transport**
It is a policy of the Council to support, facilitate and co-operate with relevant agencies to secure sustainable travel within Limerick and seek to implement the 10-minute city/town concept, promote compact growth and reduce the need for long distance travel, as a means to reduce the impact of climate change.

**Objective TR O1**
**Climate Proofed Transport Infrastructure**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that all future and retrofitted transport infrastructure is climate proofed, through design and construction, to function in a climate altered future and would, where possible, be multifunctional e.g. provide accessible routes for other services such as fibre optics or water, energy connections or other services and technologies that might come about during the lifetime of the infrastructure.

**Objective TR O2**
**Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets**
It is an objective of the Council to support the appropriate road design standards of all roads and streets within the urban areas, including suburbs, towns and villages within the 60km/h zone as per the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* and TII Publication Standards DN-GEO-03084 *The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads.*

**Objective TR O3**
**Delivery and Servicing Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Reduce the amount of 'last mile trips' being made by motorised vehicles;
b) Facilitate the transition to zero-emission delivery vehicles such as cargo bikes, solar powered and electric vehicles; and
c) Support local 'Click and Collect' facilities where appropriate to minimise trips to individual homes and workplaces.

A universal design approach, in line with the *Whole of Government National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022*, and the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD), will insure high-quality, accessible and permeable transport links are incorporated into all urban public realm designs.

**Objective TR O4**
**Universal Design**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that all transport schemes incorporate high-quality urban realm design that is attractive, safe, comfortable and accessible for all individuals.

The National Transport Authority in conjunction with Limerick City and County Council and Clare County Council have prepared a *Draft Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy* (LSMATS). The Draft LSMATS sets out an integrated and balanced sustainable transport strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and addresses all travel modes including walking, cycling, road, bus and rail.

**Objective TR O5**
**Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the implementation and delivery of the proposals that will be contained in the final *Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy*, in conjunction with the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Clare County Council and other relevant stakeholders. This partnership will achieve successful integration between land use and transport planning, and targeted growth along high quality public transport corridors and sustainable higher densities.

The Council will continue to play an important role in the development of an efficient transport system and in planning for the future transport needs of Limerick. In pursuing the objective of encouraging modal shift, the Council will co-operate closely with other relevant agencies and stakeholders, including the NTA.

The Council aims to deliver infrastructure and public realm projects required to significantly increase levels of walking, cycling and public transport use throughout Limerick, making it more accessible, inclusive, safe and welcoming to all.

The RSES includes policy objectives requiring the preparation of Local Transport Plans in selected settlements in the region, including Newcastle West, which is identified as a key town.

**Policy TR P8**
**Local Transport Plans**
It is a policy of the Council to prepare a Local Transport Plan (LTP), Mobility and Public Realm Plan for the Key Town of Newcastle West, in consultation with the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and other relevant stakeholders, as part of the Local Area Plan process and for other settlements as deemed necessary.

Local Transport Plans will include an analysis of transport flows, movements and investment priorities that will support more sustainable modes of transport.

### 7.5.1 Avoid-Shift-Improve (A-S-I) Concept

The Avoid-Shift-Improve (A-S-I) approach to transport planning seeks to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gases, energy consumption, congestion and enable more liveable environments, by creating alternative mobility solutions and developing sustainable transport systems. The 'avoid' means reducing the need for travel by integrating land use and transport planning, creating an environment where the need to travel and trip length is reduced. The 'shift' refers to moving away from energy consuming transport modes to more sustainable transport. The 'improve' means improving the efficiency of transport modes including energy efficiency and enhance the attractiveness of public transport.

The Plan focuses on integrating land use and transportation to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, facilitating the transition to a low carbon society, the promotion of the 10-minute town/neighbourhood and the move towards sustainable transport options with the implementation of both infrastructure and behavioural change measures. Table 7.1 below outlines the Plan's Policies and Objectives which support the A-S-I Concept.

Table 7.1 Avoid-Shift-Improve – Integrated Land use and Transport Policy

| | Avoid | Shift | Improve |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Policy/ Objective** | • **Policy CGR P1** - Compact Growth and Revitalisation<br>• **Policy TR P3** - Integration of Land Use and Transport Policies<br>• **Objective ECON O1** - City Centre<br>• **Objective ECON O41** - Home Working/E-Working<br>• **Objective SCSI O4** - 10 - Minute Neighbourhood<br>• **Objective SCSI O8** - Place-making for the Community | • **Objective CGR O2** - Place-making, Universal Design and Public Realm<br>• **Objective ECON O3** - District Centres<br>• **Objective ECON O5** - Local/ Neighbourhood Centres Objectives<br>• **Policy TR P2** - Five Cities Strategy<br>• **Policy TR P4** - Promotion of Sustainable Patterns of Transport Use<br>• **Policy TR P5** - Sustainable Mobility and Regional Accessibility<br>• **Policy TR P9** - Sustainable Transport in Rural Areas<br>• **Policy TR P10** - Rural Transport<br>• **Objective TR O5** - Limerick – Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy<br>• **Objective TR O6** - Delivering Modal Split<br>• **Objective TR O7** - Behavioural Change Measures<br>• **Objective TR O8** - Walking and Cycling Infrastructure<br>• **Objective TR O9** - Limerick Cycle Network<br>• **Objective TR O10** - Limerick Regeneration Areas Sustainable Travel Infrastructure<br>• **Objective TR O13** - Core Bus Corridors<br>• **Objective TR O20** - Car Clubs/Carshare<br>• **Objective TR O23** - Mobility Management<br>• **Objective TR O24** - Area Wide Mobility Management Planning/Networks<br>• **Objective TR O25** - Inter-City, Regional and Commuter Service<br>• **Objective TR O26** - Bus Transport Infrastructure<br>• **Objective TR O45** - Industrial and Enterprise and Employment lands adjacent to Junction 2, Dock Road<br>• **Objective SCSI O21** - Improve Open Space Provision | • **Policy TR P7** - Sustainable Travel and Transport<br>• **Policy TR P9** - Sustainable Transport in Rural Areas<br>• **Objective TR O1** - Climate Proofed Transport Infrastructure<br>• **Objective TR O3** - Delivery and Servicing Strategy<br>• **Objective TR O4** - Universal Design<br>• **Objective TR O8** - Walking and Cycling Infrastructure<br>• **Objective TR O9** - Limerick Cycle Network<br>• **Objective TR O11** - Enhanced Public Transport<br>• **Objective TR O12** - Limerick BusConnects Programme<br>• **Objective TR O13** - Core Bus Corridors<br>• **Objective TR O15** - Transport Interchange<br>• **Objective TR O16** - Rail Network<br>• **Objective TR O18** - Park and Ride Facilities<br>• **Objective TR O19** - Park and Stride Facilities<br>• **Objective TR O21** - Electric and Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles<br>• **Objective TR O27** - Shannon Airport<br>• **Objective TR O42** - Roads and Streets<br>• **Objective TR O49** - Car and Cycle Parking |

### 7.5.2 Promoting Active Travel

Active travel is a concept of travel that includes only those forms of transport that require using your own energy to travel. This includes walking, cycling or other non-motorised wheel-based transport modes for purposeful travel rather than for leisure reasons. Active travel focuses on shorter trips as a natural choice for every day journeys such as to school, work, social or shopping. There are many positive health, environmental and economic benefits from participating in active travel including reduced road congestion, improved air quality, addressing climate change, increased access to employment and reduced social exclusion.

Following the announcement of significant funding by the Department of Transport, a new Limerick Active Travel unit has been established within Limerick City and County Council. The Council is committed to supporting active travel measures including the investment in sustainable infrastructure to better connect communities, creating new walking and cycling links and reducing the physical barriers that currently exist. Redesigning our streets to prioritise walking, cycling and other non-motorised wheel-based modes is just one crucial aspect of enabling and creating a modal shift from the private car, we also need to support individual citizens to make the switch to active travel through behavioural change projects and support initiatives.

A key priority for the Plan is the development of a sustainable transport system, promoting measures to increase the use of public transport, while also increasing the modal share for walking, cycling and car share/pool schemes in the City, towns and villages across Limerick. A transition towards more sustainable modes of transport is essential to reduce Ireland's carbon emissions and reach the Government's goal of a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. In order to achieve more sustainable travel patterns, a significant focus on reducing car dependency and increasing permeability is required. One of the main focus areas of national policy is to achieve a modal transfer from short duration car mode trips to more active and public transport modes. More focused investment (be it infrastructure or behavioral change measures) on increasing walking and cycling for short trips is required to increase uptake of sustainable transport options and in doing so, reducing car mode share.

### 7.5.3 Promoting Modal Split

To ensure the effective planning, implementation and monitoring of the Development Plan in relation to sustainable mobility and transport, it is important to first look at where Limerick is with regards to existing baseline modal split. Analysis of POWSCAR data for Limerick shows the obvious imbalance of our transport system to the private car for all trips. It also identifies where opportunities exist for movements to more sustainable and active transport options. A full breakdown of baseline modal split is provided in Table 7.2. There is significant scope to achieve modal shift to sustainable modes of transport. In particular, there are opportunities to convert many of the shorter journeys (under 2km) from the private car to walking and cycling.

On analysis of POWSCAR trip data for education and work-based travel, the following travel patterns were established:

- The most popular means of travel for those living in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, was by car (44%) which increased to 64% for those travelling for work purposes only.
- 37% of those living in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, travelling for work purposes are travelling within six minutes of their workplace (15,424 people); 22% use walking as their primary mode for work and school (16% to work, 33% educational) and 4% are travelling by bike (4% to work, 3% for educational purposes).

Table 7.2: Baseline Mode Share

| Baseline Mode Share (%) for Commuting to Work/Educational Purposes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Settlement** | | **Walk** | **Cycle** | **Public Transport** | **Car** |
| **Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty** | | 22 | 4 | 8 | 44 |
| | Work Trips[1] | 16 | 4 | 16 | 64 |
| | Edu Trips[2] | 33 | 3 | 13 | 8 |
| **Newcastle West** | | 14 | 1 | 4 | 52 |
| | Work Trips[1] | 9 | 1 | 1 | 73 |
| | Edu Trips[2] | 24 | 1 | 11 | 56 |
| **Settlement Levels 3-6/ Rural Areas** | | 7 | 1 | 8 | 54 |
| | Work Trips[1] | 4 | 1 | 1 | 80 |
| | Edu Trips[2] | 12 | 1 | 19 | 57 |

1 Mode share data – % of total work purpose trips
2 Mode share data – % of total educational purpose trips

- The most popular means of travel for Newcastle West was by car (52%), however, 56% of those commuting for work purposes are within a 7-minute journey time of their workplace; 476 people living in Newcastle West are within a 4-minute drive of their workplace. 14% of workplace/ educational trips were made by walking. This increased to 24% for education purpose trips only.
- The most popular means of travel for those living outside Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, is by car at 54%, but this increases to 80% for work purposes only. The total number of those who travel by walking for work and/or school purposes is 7% (Work (4%), Education (12%)). Trips taken by bike are at 1% for both education and work purposes.

Table 7.3 provides the 2028 mode share target for commuting to work and education, and includes walking/cycling/ public transport mode share targets for the LSMATS study area, Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret, Annacotty, Newcastle West and the remainder of the County. Following consultation with the National Transport Authority, both work and school trips have been considered for both baseline and modal share targets. Based on existing scenarios and in line with LSMATS, the Council is confident that the targeted modal shift is achievable. It is noted that the target audience is not just workplace and educational based travel but all transport associated travel.

POWSCAR modal split data is the most robust data available and is shown in Table 7.3. The majority of people driving to work travel relatively short distances. This group will offer the greatest potential for modal shift, as these journeys can be most easily shifted to walking and cycling.

Table 7.3: Target Mode Share

| LSMA Mode Share Targets (%) for Commuting to Work/Educational Purposes | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Settlement** | **Walk** | | **Cycle** | |
| | 2040 | 2028 | 2040 | 2028 |
| **Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Study Area** | 35 | 15-20 | 15-20 | 7-10 |

| Mode Share Targets(%) for Commuting to Work/Educational Purposes (2028) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Settlement** | **Walk** | **Cycle** | **Public Transport** |
| **Limerick and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty (All Work/ Education Trips)** | 30% | 10% | 14% |
| **Newcastle West (All Work/ Education Trips)** | 20% | 5% | 7% |
| **Settlement Levels 3-6/Rural Areas (All Work/Education Trips)** | 15% | 5% | 12% |

The data confirms and highlights the challenges facing Limerick, in both the urban and rural context, with regard to promoting a modal shift away from the private car. The Plan will strive to reduce the reliance on the private car, by promoting and facilitating more sustainable modes of transport and supporting development in locations, which can support compact growth. In facilitating the delivery of the objectives of the final LSMATS and in pursuing the objective of encouraging modal shift, the Council will co-operate closely with other relevant agencies and stakeholders, including the NTA and TII.

**Objective TR O6**
**Delivering Modal Split**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Promote a modal shift away from the private car towards more sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, carpool and public transport in conjunction with the relevant transport authorities;
b) Support investment in sustainable transport infrastructure that will make walking, cycling, carpool and public transport more attractive, appealing and accessible for all.

**Objective TR O7**
**Behavioural Change Measures**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Continue to implement behavioural change initiatives and 'softer measures' aimed at enabling and promoting sustainable travel across Limerick's workplaces, campuses, schools and communities as identified in LSMATS;
b) Facilitate and implement school streets and school zones, including slow zones around schools, park and stride facilities and promote and facilitate active travel options for school children, to reduce the health and safety risks associated with traffic congestion, pollution and inactive lifestyles.

### 7.5.4 Walking and Cycling

Walking and cycling are the most sustainable forms of transport as they assist with climate change mitigation and are important for promoting healthy lifestyles. The creation of safe, inclusive and attractive spaces to walk around is fundamental to achieve good place-making. The Council is committed to ensuring that the physical environment in Limerick is accessible to all.

The Council will support the delivery of a programme of public realm improvements, designed to create attractive places that encourage economic and social activity, improve conditions for pedestrians and make walking a safer, healthier, quicker, more direct and more attractive form of travel.

The Council will promote walking through improvements to pedestrian routes, streets and public spaces, by giving greater priority to pedestrians in the use of road space and increasing permeability where possible. Improvements will include appropriate traffic management measures and improvements to signage and way-finding.

In order to enhance the convenience and attractiveness of cycling, routes need to be continuous and direct to facilities, places of work and interchanges. The Council will continue to develop a network of high quality, continuous cycle routes throughout the City and County, improve the permeability of the road network for cyclists, and create a more cycle friendly environment, through reducing the volume and speed of motorised traffic.

#### 7.5.4.1 Walking and Cycling Infrastructure

The Council will continue the roll out of active travel initiatives across Limerick, including promoting and facilitating safe walking and cycling. The installation of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, together with roadway re-design, where necessary, will assist in encouraging active travel and thereby achieve modal shift.

The Council will seek to deliver improved pedestrian linkages within the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) and towns/villages. This will include the provision of improved pedestrian facilities at junctions and improved footpath width and quality, where required and subject to resources.

**Objective TR O8**
**Walking and Cycling Infrastructure**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Improve and provide clear, safe and direct pedestrian linkages, cycle networks, including the greenways and primary segregated cycle routes, between the employment zones, shopping areas and residential areas throughout Limerick;
b) Maintain and expand the pedestrian route network, infrastructure and where possible, retrofit cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network, to provide for accessible safe pedestrian routes within Limerick.

**Objective TR O9**
**Limerick Cycle Network**
It is an objective of the Council to implement in full, the Cycle Network, which will be set out in the final LSMATS, with priority given in the short term to delivering the primary cycle network and cycle routes serving schools.

The design of the pedestrian and cycle networks will be informed by the four core principles of the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets*, which are connected networks, multifunctional streets, pedestrian focus and a multi-disciplinary approach.

#### 7.5.4.2 Limerick Regeneration Areas

Limerick's Regeneration Areas of Southill, Moyross, St. Mary's Park and Ballincurra Weston have the lowest car ownership across Limerick, in tandem with experiencing physical transport disadvantages. Sustainable mobility, connectivity and permeability has an important role to play in overcoming geographic isolation, severance and in creating a non-hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The Plan will support LSMATS in the identification and delivery of improved walking and cycling

infrastructure and improvements to the public transport network across the Regeneration Areas based on the measures identified in the *Limerick Regeneration Framework Plan*.

**Objective TR O10**
**Limerick Regeneration Areas Sustainable Travel Infrastructure**
It is an objective of the Council to support LSMATS in the identification and delivery of improvements to walking/cycling infrastructure and improvements to public transport, based on those measures identified in the *Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan*.

### 7.5.5 Public Transport

Public transport in Limerick consists of bus, rail, rural transport services and taxi services. There are local services that provide connections between settlements within Limerick and regional services that provide connections to the wider region and beyond.

Throughout the lifetime of the Plan, the Council will continue to engage with the NTA in seeking to improve transport services and infrastructure throughout Limerick.

**Objective TR O11**
**Enhanced Public Transport**
It is an objective of the Council to support and encourage public transport providers to enhance the provision of public transportation and frequency of services in Limerick, including the provision of enhanced accessibility from the City Centre to Shannon Airport.

The Council will support increased population, employment and educational densities in accessible centres and along public transport corridors and will seek to ensure that lands required for the development of planned public transport facilities (transport corridors) and interchanges are safeguarded from development.

### 7.5.6 Bus Network

The NPF identifies the provision of a citywide public transport network as a key enabler for Limerick. This aim is consistent with the *Climate Action Plan*, NPF and RSES, which envisage a significantly enhanced bus service in Limerick by 2027. The provision of a citywide public transport network in Limerick has the potential to provide the capacity needed to move large volumes of people, who travel to work, education, shops and leisure facilities around the City and suburbs each day. BusConnects Limerick will provide a reliable, high-frequency public transport service to improve connectivity within Limerick City and Suburbs, Mungret and Annacotty. The enhanced BusConnects proposal represents a significant upgrade on the existing system and will comprise of a more comprehensive network, bus priority and new upgraded fleet. It will serve all key destinations and provide an interchange with the rail network and proposed Park and Ride services.

**Objective TR O12**
**Limerick BusConnects Programme**
It is an objective of the Council to support the implementation of the Limerick BusConnects programme including the following:

a) An improved Metropolitan Bus Service Network which will deliver a step change in the quality of bus service across the City and suburbs;
b) A programme of Core Bus Corridors, which seeks to provide end-to-end full bus priority on key bus routes via measures such as new bus lanes, bus gates and bus priority signals, in order to ensure that bus services are no longer subject to traffic congestion impacts in Limerick. The following corridors are a priority:
   - from the M7/Dublin Road junction to the City Centre;
   - from Mungret, Raheen and Dooradoyle to the City Centre;
   - on the Ennis Road to the City Centre;
   - on the Ballysimon Road from the proposed Park and Ride site to the City Centre and on Childers Road between Parkway Roundabout and Ballinacurra Road;

c) To provide for further bus priority measures on radial routes into the City Centre, as identified by the NTA and Limerick City and County Council as part of BusConnects Limerick;
d) To provide for bus priority measures through the development site to the rear of Colbert Station, as part of an emerging masterplan to be agreed between the NTA, Limerick City and County Council, the landowner and other stakeholders;
e) To provide for bus priority through Limerick City Centre linking the Dublin Road Bus Corridor to the Raheen/ Dooradoyle corridor, with a preference for O'Connell Street as the most direct route into the centre, delivering passengers as close as possible to their destinations;
f) To increase the capacity of Sarsfield Bridge by reallocating the carriageway to the movement of buses, cyclists, pedestrians and taxis;
g) To carry out any minor works required to facilitate additional and altered service patterns arising out of a review of the service network under BusConnects Limerick.

**Objective TR O13**
**Core Bus Corridors**
It is an objective of the Council to safeguard the proposed Core Bus Corridors from inappropriate development and ensure adequate set back is maintained to facilitate the implementation of the programme, in consultation with the NTA.

**Objective TR O14**
**Management of Coaches**
It is an objective of the Council to prepare a strategy for the management of coaches in collaboration with the National Transport Authority.

The final bus network that will be implemented in the short to medium term is still being developed, having regard to detailed operational requirements and local traffic considerations. Notwithstanding, the BusConnects programme is fully supported within the Draft LSMATS.

### 7.5.7 Public Transport Interchange

The Council supports the development of quality public transport interchanges, including Colbert Station, as a key transport hub and the central role it plays in encouraging and enabling modal shift in Limerick. Through the implementation of the LSMATS, opportunities will be created for intermodal transfer between rail, bus, taxi and other sustainable modes of transport, such as walking and cycling.

**Objective TR O15**
**Transport Interchange**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of quality transport interchanges, in order to facilitate focused access to multiple public transport modes and to maximise the movement of people via sustainable modes.

Through the development of the Limerick BusConnects programme there will also be opportunities for interchange at the proposed Park and Ride locations outlined later in this chapter. The Council will seek to ensure that appropriate levels of safe and secure cycle parking, cycle facilities and electric charging infrastructure are provided at public transport interchanges.

### 7.5.8 Rail Connections

There are three established rail transport corridors that serve Limerick, including Nenagh/Ballybrophy, Ennis/Galway and Dublin, together with the interchange at Limerick Junction for Cork/Tralee and Waterford. The three corridors converge at Limerick Colbert Station, which is progressing as a major transport hub for Limerick, providing a transformational integrated sustainable transport network. Castleconnell is the only operating station outside of Limerick City.

There are three other railway lines in Limerick which are either no longer used or which have been effectively dismantled. These are the Limerick to Charleville line (there has already been significant development on this line, including parts of the N20), the Limerick to Tralee line (via Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale) and the

Limerick to Foynes line. Irish Rail supports the protection of the Foynes line as far as Foynes Port, as it could facilitate a further extension to Shannon Foynes Port for freight services.

**Objective TR O16**
**Rail Network**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Explore a pathway to rail-based development in the review of the RSES and MASP, in conjunction with the National Transport Authority and the Southern and Western Regional Assemblies;
b) Support and facilitate new and upgrading of existing rail networks, railway stations and services across Limerick as identified in LSMATS and protect, as required, lands necessary for the upgrading of existing railway lines or stations, which would improve journey times and enable an increase in the frequency of services and connections.

**Objective TR O17**
**Limerick to Foynes Line**
It is an objective of the Council to retain the Limerick to Foynes rail line and avoid encroachment of inappropriate development, which may compromise the line's potential future use.

### 7.5.9 Park and Ride/Stride Facilities

Park and Ride facilities integrate car use with public transport and assist those living in remote locations not well served by public transport to access public transport connections. It is important that park and ride facilities improve public transport accessibility without unduly intensifying road congestion or increasing the total distance travelled by car. The Draft LSMATS has identified a number of locations in Limerick for Park and Ride. The Council will support the delivery of Park and Ride facilities as identified in the final LSMATS.

In addition to Park and Ride facilities, Park and Stride can also assist in reducing congestion, particularly in the last 10 minutes of the journey, the use of such sites in close proximity to schools, can reduce or eliminate the congestion at the school gates.

**Objective TR O18**
**Park and Ride Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of Park and Ride facilities in line with the final *Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy* and to investigate the feasibility of the provision of 'park and ride' facilities. These facilities shall accommodate suitable electric charging structures, carpooling, car sharing and bike sharing infrastructure to incorporate car parking and a bus stop/terminus at appropriate locations as identified in the final LSMATS. In pursuing the objective to facilitate the provision of Park and Ride, the Council will co-operate closely with relevant transport bodies, authorities and agencies.

**Objective TR O19**
**Park and Stride Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to investigate the potential of providing a number of 'Park and Stride' facilities in appropriate locations in Limerick.

### 7.5.10 Car Clubs/Car Sharing and Car Pooling

'Car clubs' and 'pool car schemes' are shared pools of cars available locally for short term hire and are a convenient alternative to car ownership. They allow for occasional car use but discourage unnecessary car journeys.

Car sharing schemes involve members pre-booking the use of communal cars for their personal use, thereby reducing the number of cars on the roads and helping the environment. They allow members access to a car when they need it, from a place near their home or workplace, without the costs of owning a car. They are an important method of facilitating the reduction of car ownership and supporting the shift to low carbon modes.

The Council will seek - in accordance with the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) and any future updates/ amendments thereto – the provision of car clubs in residential developments, particularly where a reduction in car parking is being sought.

**Objective TR O20**
**Car Clubs/Car Sharing**
It is an objective of the Council to support the set up and operation of car clubs/ car sharing and car-pooling schemes to facilitate an overall reduction in car journeys and car parking requirements.

### 7.5.11 Electric and Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles

In 2008, the Government launched an *Electric Transport Programme* with a target that 10% of the national road transport fleet be electrically powered by 2020. Most recently, the *Climate Action Plan* set an ambitious target of achieving 100% or 950,000 of all new cars and vans to be electric vehicles (EVs) by 2030. Developing the infrastructure for alternatively fuelled vehicles will be a vital step in encouraging consumers to make more environmentally friendly transport choices.

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) is a natural gas that has been compressed to fit into a vehicle's tank and is particularly suitable for use in commercial vehicles. The development of CNG infrastructure enables switching from diesel fuel to CNG for HGVs and buses. CNG is an established technology that is used in many countries around the world. CNG contains virtually no particulate matter (PM) and also has low emission levels of nitrogen oxides (NOx), which is beneficial from an air quality perspective. CNG vehicles can be run on 100% renewable gas. This is a renewable and carbon neutral fuel, produced using anaerobic digestion technology from existing waste streams and a variety of sustainable biomass sources, including grass, animal waste, crop residues and food waste. Infrastructure development for CNG is already underway in Ireland, with 14 fast fill CNG stations being installed across the Core TEN-T road network via a project called the Causeway Study that is supported by the European Commission through the CEF Transport Fund, and the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU). The Council will support the use of gas in transport by a presumption in favour of applications for CNG refuelling infrastructure, provided planning and environmental criteria are adequately addressed.

**Objective TR O21**
**Electric and Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Encourage the switch to Electric Vehicles and e-bikes through the roll-out of additional electric charging points at appropriate locations, throughout Limerick, in association with relevant agencies and stakeholders;
b) Facilitate the provision of electricity charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, both on street and in new developments, in accordance with the Development Management Standards set out in Chapter 11;
c) Encourage the switch to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles through the roll-out of additional CNG points at appropriate locations, throughout Limerick, in association with relevant agencies and stakeholders.

### 7.5.12 Micro-Mobility

Micro-mobility refers to personal vehicles such as bikes and scooters including electric and dockless models. Micro-mobility has emerged in recent years and e-scooters in particular, have become a visibly more popular transport mode in Limerick. Micro-mobility allows for a convenient and flexible level of local mobility, supporting better connections with public transport and enabling active mobility intermodal trips.

New legislation is due to be approved to regulate the use of e-scooters in public places in Ireland.

**Objective TR O22**
**Micro-Mobility**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate and support the use of scooters, e-scooters and emerging personal mobility modes of travel in line with relevant legislation.

### 7.5.13 Mobility Management Plans

Mobility Management Plans/Workplace Travel Plans are proposals, which will minimise the impact of the traffic generated by their development. They include mitigation measures which will take account of the findings of a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and a series of actions aimed at supporting sustainable travel for employers and staff. A Mobility Management Plan also addresses site-specific issues or barriers affecting travel choice for employees and modal split targets for the workplace. Measures that should be included are integration with public transport, promotion of car sharing/pooling, parking pricing and control and the encouragement of cycling and walking by the provision of cycling and walking routes and secure cycle parking. The NTA document *Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans – Guidance for Local Authorities* also provides guidance on proposals to encourage employees to walk, cycle or carpool to the workplace.

**Objective TR O23**
**Mobility Management**
It is an objective of the Council to require the submission of Mobility Management Plans, subject to the guidance provided in the *Toolkit for School Travel, Safe Routes to School Programme, Workplace Travel Plans – A Guide for Implementers and Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans – Guidance for Local Authorities*, for any development that the Council consider will have significant trip generation and attraction rates, at peak hours or throughout the day and where existing or proposed public transport may be utilised.

**Objective TR O24**
**Area Wide Mobility Management Planning/Networks**
It is an objective of the Council to support and promote Area Wide Mobility Planning/Networks, to develop a collective approach to sustainable travel and support a culture of sustainable travel practices among workplaces at Strategic Employment Locations.

### 7.5.14 Greenways

Greenways is a term for the collective networks of parks and open spaces, which facilitate green modes of movement, (walkers, cyclists, roller skaters and horse riders) for pleasure, recreation, tourism and daily journeys. Greenways often coincide with wildlife corridors, which highlights the need for careful planning and design to ensure that they will be assessed for potential impacts on biodiversity. Limerick City and County Council are currently progressing a Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy for Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) Mungret and Annacotty, which will seek to capitalise on opportunities for linkage and enhanced connectivity using blue and green infrastructure. Additional information on Blue/Greenways can be found in Section 6.3.7 in Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure.

### 7.6 Rural Transport

The recently published Department of Rural and Community Development's *Our Rural Future: Government's Blueprint to Transform Rural Ireland* acknowledges the huge potential for cycling within and between rural towns and villages, particularly in the hinterland of rural towns. The Government has committed a €50 million fund in 2021 for Local Authority investment in high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure, specifically targeted at towns and villages across the country. The policy document further highlights the need for an improved rural public transport service, including proposals for piloting new transport initiatives for people of all ages and abilities living in rural areas. Limerick City and County Council will support the Government's commitment to rural transport including piloting sustainable transport schemes in towns and villages.

**Policy TR P9**
**Sustainable Transport in Rural Areas**
It is a policy of the Council to support the objectives contained in *Our Rural Future: Government's Blueprint to Transport Rural Ireland*, including investment in public transport and high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure specifically targeted at towns and villages.

There are a number of Local Link bus routes in operation throughout Limerick, which provide vital public transport links for rural areas to key settlements within Limerick. The promotion of permeability within and connectivity between the existing urban towns and smaller urban settlements and rural areas remains a key transport goal of the Council. In addition to bus routes operated under the Rural Transport Initiative, private bus operators service both urban centres and rural communities. It is important that these services are retained and improved. Public transport services in rural areas provide a vital means of access for rural inhabitants, to key employment and social services and a means of further sustaining rural settlements.

**Policy TR P10**
**Rural Transport**
It is a policy of the Council to continue to support the 'Local Link' rural transport service and to encourage operators to improve the service to meet the social and economic needs of the rural communities in Limerick.

**Objective TR O25**
**Inter-city, Regional and Commuter Services**
It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the on-going review and enhancements to the inter-city, regional and commuter services in conjunction with the National Transport Authority.

**Objective TR O26**
**Bus Transport Infrastructure**
It is an objective of the Council to support the development of bus shelters and bus stops to incorporate universal access and bicycle parking facilities, where possible.

## 7.7 Strategic Connections

### 7.7.1 Airport

The Council recognises the importance of air travel for international connectivity and in improving the attractiveness of Limerick for business opportunities and development of the tourism industry. Limerick is strategically positioned within close proximity to Shannon International Airport. The Council supports the continued operation and growth of Shannon Airport as an important element of the transport and communications infrastructure of the region. The Council also supports measures to enhance public transport connections from Limerick City to the Airport.

**Objective TR O27**
**Shannon Airport**
It is an objective of the Council to support the continued operation and growth of Shannon International Airport and measures to enhance public transport connections to the Airport from the City Centre.

### 7.7.2 Strategic Ports and Harbours

Limerick has significant port facilities in the natural harbour of the Shannon Estuary. These comprise of the Shannon-Foynes deep-water cargo port, Limerick Docks in Limerick City and a jetty facility at Aughinish, between Foynes and Askeaton.

Shannon Foynes Port is identified as a Tier 1 Port of National Significance in the current National Ports Policy (DTTAS, 2013) and is an EU Core Network Port (TEN-T), located on the North-Sea Mediterranean TEN-T Core Network Corridor. The Port has a key role both regionally and nationally in meeting the external trading requirements of the Irish economy. The Council supports the development of improved connectivity and enhanced transport networks to Shannon Foynes Port.

The Council supports the operation of the existing Limerick Docks and the sustainable redevelopment of the adjacent lands. The Limerick Docks are within close proximity of the City Centre and the Council will support and facilitate improved connectivity with the City Centre, including public transport and pedestrian linkage.

**Objective TR O28**
**Docks and Ports**
It is an objective of the Council to support the continued development of Shannon Foynes Port as an EU Core Network Port (TEN-T) and Limerick Docks as marine related assets, in accordance with the 2013 National Ports Policy.

### 7.8 Strategic Roads Infrastructure

The road network is a vital part of Limerick's transport infrastructure due to the wide spread use and reliance on road transport for economic movements as well as for social journeys. Key projects which are critical to enabling sustainable mobility and economic growth in Limerick, as identified in RSES, are outlined earlier in the chapter. The importance of providing a safe, efficient road system in the County to support enhanced connectivity within Limerick and between the regions is critical to Limerick's economic growth. The Plan provides the following objectives in support of this growth:

**Objective TR O29**
**N/M20 Cork to Limerick Project**
It is an objective of the Council to support the delivery of the N/M20 Cork to Limerick Project, which will connect Cork and Limerick, subject to all environmental and planning assessments.

**Objective TR O30**
**Foynes to Limerick (including Adare Bypass) Road**
It is an objective of the Council to support the delivery of the Foynes to Limerick (including Adare Bypass) Road, subject to all environmental and planning assessments.

**Objective TR O31**
**N21 Newcastle West and N21 Abbeyfeale Road Schemes**
It is an objective of the Council to support the delivery of N21 Newcastle West and N21 Abbeyfeale Road Schemes, subject to all environmental and planning assessments.

**Objective TR O32**
**N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction**
It is an objective of the Council to support the delivery of N24 Cahir to Limerick Junction Road Scheme, subject to all environmental and planning assessments.

**Objective TR O33**
**Motorway Network Arterial Roads**
It is an objective of the Council to upgrade arterial roads from the motorway network to increase capacity, where deemed necessary.

**Objective TR O34**
**O'Connell Street Improvement Works**
It is an objective of the Council to support the delivery of the O'Connell Street Improvement Works in the provision of a more efficient traffic management system, as well as facilitating future transport mode needs in accordance with requirements of LSMATS.

**Objective TR O35**
**Connecting Limerick's Southside**
It is an objective of the Council to explore improved accessibility to Limerick Southside, including the possible provision of a motorway interchange connection from the M20/M7 to Limerick Southside, subject to:

- The requirement for a Motorway Order;
- Demonstration of consistency with the criteria in Section 2.7 of the *Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2012), including that additional traffic loading can be satisfactorily accommodated at the junction and on the national road network;
- The special requirements of the tolling scheme (N18 and Limerick Tunnel Scheme) and the financial implications for the Exchequer of new road schemes in that context shall be evaluated;
- An assessment of environmental impacts.

The development of the Limerick Northern Distributor Road (LNDR) is a key strategic road infrastructure project as outlined in RSES. The LNDR will improve access to the University of Limerick and the IDA National Technology Park and will reduce City Centre traffic. It will provide a direct link between Shannon International Airport, the businesses and industries in the Shannon area and the university campus.

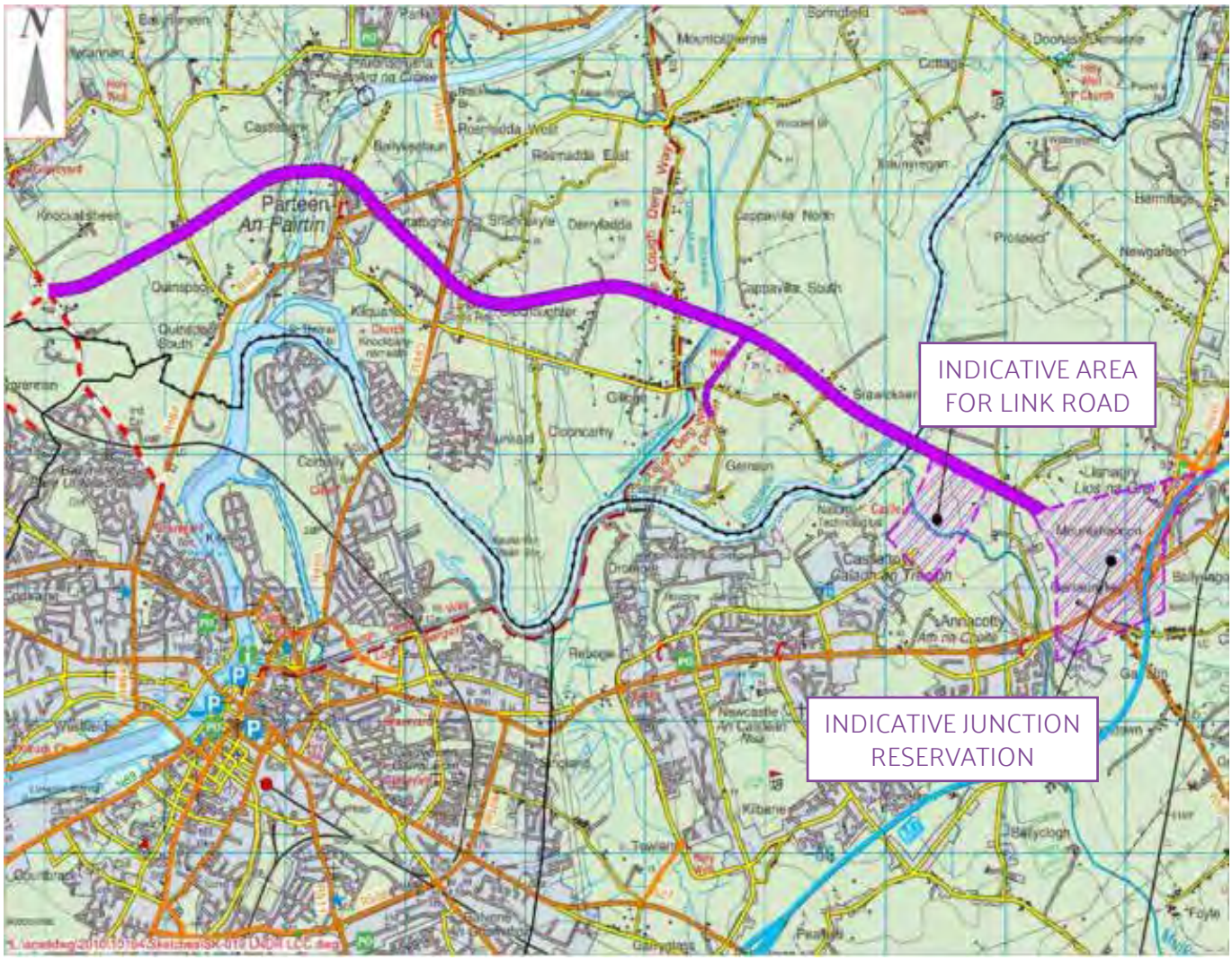
In terms of land use planning policy, although the LNDR will be a Regional route, it will be treated in a similar way to national roads and the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines will be applied to potential changes to land use policy on this corridor. Aside from what is proposed in RSES and the associated Local Authority Core Strategies, any significant developments along the LNDR will not be supported and its strategic function will be protected.

**Objective TR O36**
**Limerick Northern Distributor Road**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the development of the Limerick Northern Distributor Road, which will connect the Coonagh to Knockalisheen Road Scheme to the existing R445 (old N7) and adjoining road network to the east of Limerick City, which will incorporate Smarter Travel measures, in accordance with all environmental and planning assessments.

b) Ensure the LNDR will be subject to the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines and its implementation will not support any significant development along the route, subject to any strategic and/or national considerations.

Map 7.1 Preferred Route for the Limerick Northern Distributor Road



## 7.9 Protection of Road Hierarchy

The road network also plays a vital part of Limerick's transport infrastructure to support economic development as well as for social journeys. Proper management of use, maintenance of roads and improvements to the network is vital.

A hierarchy of roads exist in Limerick, including sections of motorway, national roads, regional roads, local roads and urban roadways. There has been significant investment in road infrastructure and therefore it is important to protect and maintain the carrying capacity of the road network within Limerick.

**Policy TR P11**
**Road Safety and Carrying Capacity of the non-national Road Network**
It is a policy of the Council to safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of the non-national road network throughout Limerick.

In implementing the above policy, the Council will have regard to the following objectives:

**Objective TR O37**
**Land Uses and Access Standards**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure that any development involving new access to a non-national public road, or the intensification of use of an existing access onto a non-national public road meets the appropriate design and safety standards.
b) Ensure that on roads that are sub-standard, either in terms of their width, (less than 3m), alignment, surface condition or junction with the nearest main road, development for one off rural housing will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. This includes applicants who have a demonstrable social need to live on the particular road, where no alternative site is available, or where the only alternative access available is onto a strategic regional road as designated in the Development Plan.

The Council will ensure traffic safety is a priority in the case of all accesses onto public roads.

**Objective TR O38**
**Improvements to Regional and Local Roads**
It is an objective of the Council to provide for and carry out sustainable improvements to sections of regional roads and local roads, that are deficient in respect of alignment, structural condition, or capacity, where resources permit and to maintain that standard thereafter.

### 7.9.1 National Road Network

Limerick occupies a strategic location on the national road network, with a large number of National Routes traversing through it. The primary purpose of the national road network is to provide strategic transport links between main centres of population and employment. The M7, the M8 and Foynes Port (Foynes to Limerick (including Adare Bypass) Road) have been identified as part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). Additionally, the N18 Limerick to Galway, the N21 Limerick to Tralee and the N20 Limerick to Cork National Primary routes are identified as part of the EU TEN-T Comprehensive Network. The N24 Limerick to Waterford and the N69 Limerick to Tralee National Primary roads also provides important regional and inter-regional connectivity within and through Limerick. There are a number of forthcoming road schemes which will improve accessibility and connectivity between urban centres in the region and beyond.

**Policy TR P12**
**Safeguard the Capacity of National Roads**
It is a policy of the Council to:
a) Protect the capacity of the national road network, having regard to all relevant Government guidance and associated junctions, including DoECLG *Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines* (DoECLG, 2012) in the carrying out of Local Authority functions and;
b) Ensure development does not prejudice the future development, or impair the capacity of, the planned national roads, which includes the N/M20 Cork to Limerick Scheme and Foynes to Limerick Road (including Adare Bypass) projects and other schemes referenced in Section 7.4;
c) Continue to engage, at an early stage, with relevant transport bodies, authorities and agencies in respect of any plans or projects that are located in proximity to national road infrastructure.

**Objective TR O39**
**National Roads**
It is an objective of Council to:
a) Prevent, except in exceptional circumstances and subject to a plan-led evidence-based approach, in consultation with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, in accordance with the Section 28 Ministerial Guidelines *Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DoECLG, 2012), development on lands adjacent to the existing national road network, which would adversely affect the safety, current and future capacity and function of national roads and having regard to reservation corridors, to cater for possible future upgrades of the national roads and junctions;
b) Avoid the creation of any new direct access points from development, or the generation of increased traffic from existing direct access/egress points to the national road network, to which speed limits greater than 60km/h apply;
c) Facilitate a limited level of new accesses, or the intensified use of existing accesses, to the national road network on the approaches to, or exit from, urban centres that are subject to a speed limit of between 50km/h and 60km/h. Such accesses will be considered where they facilitate orderly urban development and would not result in a proliferation of such entrances;

The primary purpose of the national road network is to provide strategic transport links between main centres of population and employment. The M7 Motorway has been identified as part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). The Council will support the improvement and protection of the EU TEN-T (Trans-European Network for Transport) network to strengthen access routes and connectivity.

The Council will facilitate the protection of all National routes from frontage access and to minimise the number of junctions in accordance with TII's Policy and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government's *Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2012).

Similarly, the Council will seek to safeguard the drainage network associated with the national road network.

**Objective TR O40**
**National Road Network Drainage Regimes**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure all developments protect and safeguard the capacity and efficiency of the drainage regimes of the national road network.

### 7.9.2 Regional Road Network

The regional road network provides important links between the towns and villages across Limerick. They supplement the national road network. The regional road network in Limerick is subdivided into strategic regional roads and regional roads. In the case of strategic regional roads and regional roads, especially those which have a high carrying capacity, the Council shall adopt a restrictive policy in relation to new development in the interests of traffic safety.

**Policy TR P13**
**Strategic Regional Road Network**
It is a policy of the Council to protect the investment in the strategic regional road network and maintain and improve road safety and capacity.

**Objective TR O41**
**Strategic Regional Roads**
It is an objective of the Council to:

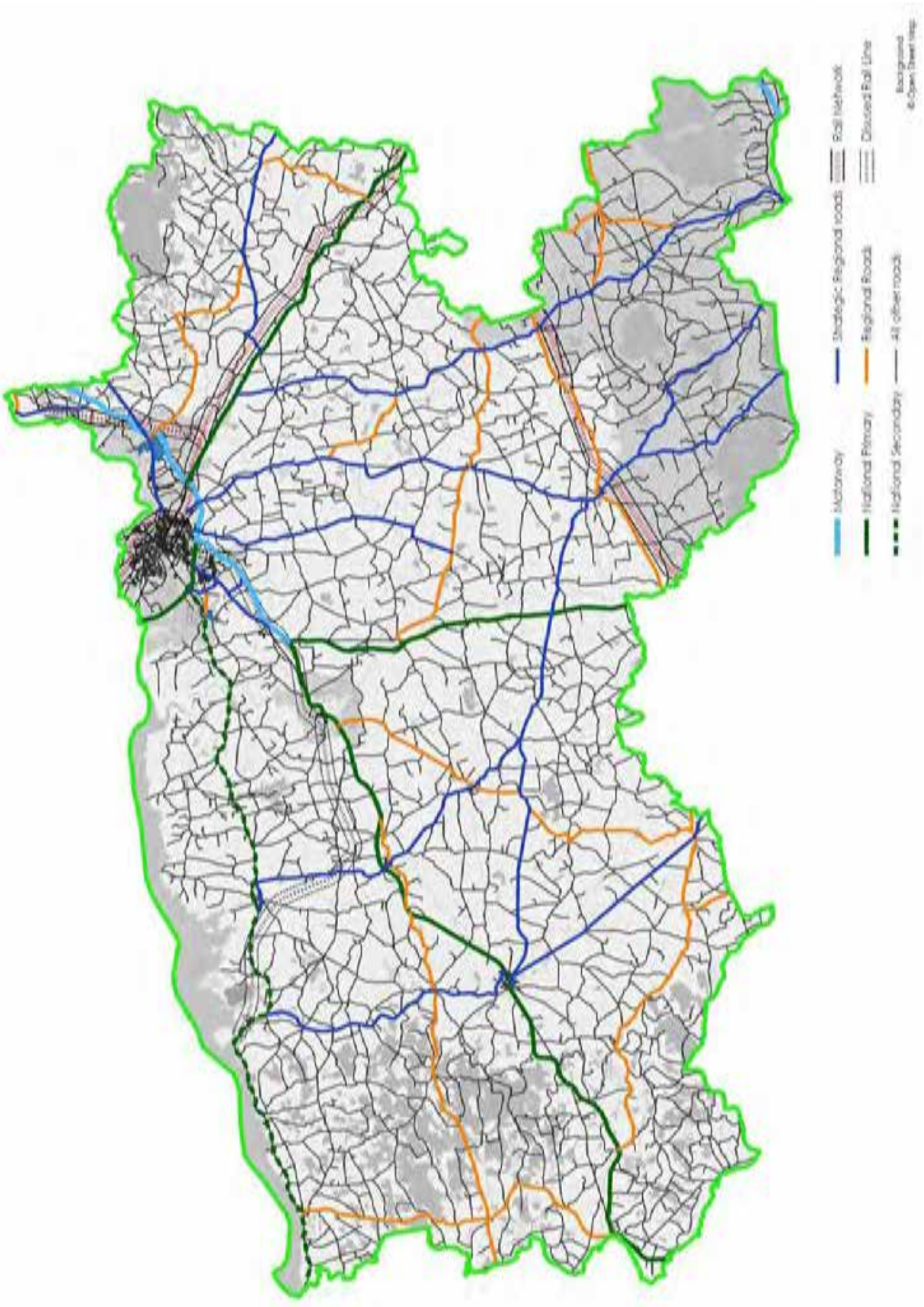
a) Improve, manage and maintain the strategic regional road network in Limerick, in a manner which safeguards the strategic function of the road network;
b) Prohibit development generating additional traffic and requiring direct access onto a strategic regional road in areas where speed limits in excess of 50km/h apply;
c) Consider permitting access onto a strategic regional road where members of the farming community wish to build houses for their own occupation, on their own land where the house is required for occupation by a member of the farming community in connection with the working of the farm and where no reasonable alternative access is available to them and where that access is safe and the traffic levels generated are reasonably low. Such developments shall be subject to a Road Safety Audit and all relevant planning criteria;
d) The above applies to the following strategic regional roads:
   - R521 Foynes/Newcastle West;
   - R522 – Newcastle West/ Dromcolliher/County Boundary;
   - R518-Askeaton/Rathkeale/ Ballingarry/Bruree/Kilmallock;
   - R520-Newcastle West/Junction with R518 (towards Kilmallock);
   - R511-Limerick/Fedamore/Junction with R516;
   - R512/R517-Limerick/Bruff/Kilmallock/ Kilfinnane/County Boundary;
   - R513-Junction with N24/ Caherconlish/ Herbertstown/ Hospital/ Knocklong/ Ballylanders/ County Boundary;
   - R503 – Junction with N7 to County Boundary (towards Newport);
   - R525- Castleconnell to O'Briens Bridge;
   - R505-Junction N24/Cappamore/ Doon;
   - R510-Junction with Raheen roundabout (R526)/ Quins' cross roundabout/ Mungret roundabout (N69);
   - R526-City boundary to Colopys Cross-Patrickswell;
   - R445 from the Mackey Roundabout to Annacotty Roundabout.

### 7.9.3 Local Roads

Local roads form the bulk of the road network in Limerick and serve an important economic role, because of the dispersed nature of the population in the County. Urban roads and streets are located in towns and villages and provide essential access from residential areas to retail streets, commercial lands and amenity areas. Limerick City and County Council is responsible for the maintenance and improvement works on these roads, financed from their own resources and supplemented by state grants.

**Objective TR O42**
**Roads and Streets**
It is an objective of the Council to secure improvements to the road network in Limerick, including improved pedestrian and cycle facilities, in conjunction and co-operation with relevant stakeholders, subject to resources becoming available.

Map 7.2 – Road Network



### 7.9.4 Proposed Upgrade Works/New Schemes

Within the lifetime of the Plan and as resources become available, Limerick City and County Council will seek to deliver a number of new road schemes within Limerick.

**Objective TR O43**
**Upgrade works/New Road Schemes**

It is an objective of the Council to provide for and carry out sustainable improvements to sections of the national, regional and local road network, to address deficiencies in respect of safety, alignment, structural condition or capacity where resources permit. The following schemes shall be included:

- Southside Link connecting Southill to Rosbrien Road;
- Rear of the Crescent Shopping Centre to Rosbrien Road;
- School House Road to Kilbane Roundabout, Groody Link Road;
- N20 O'Rourke's Cross Improvements;
- N69 Hegarty's Cross to Askeaton – Phase 1;
- N69 Hegarty's Cross to Askeaton – Phase 2;
- N21 Adare Western Approach Improvements Scheme;
- N69 Court Cross;
- N69 Mungret and Boland's Cross Road Improvements;
- N21 Devon Cross;
- N21 Ward's Cross.

**Objective TR O44**
**Link Roads**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support and complete delivery of new and improved link roads and junctions accommodating public transport, cycle and pedestrian connections, including new road links as outlined in LSMATS. The layout and design of such works shall have cognisance of the context and interface with surrounding land uses in compliance with the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets* (DoECLG 2019) *2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid -19 Pandemic Response* and TII Publication DN-GEO-03084 *The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads*;

b) Ensure proposals make provision for the accommodation of bus services along the most significant link routes, which shall include identification of bus stopping and turning areas, as well as carriageway capacity and through routes. It should be noted that the alignment of the new roads in the Plan is indicative only. These roads shall definitely be aligned as part of the detailed design and development process. Similarly, the location of junctions is indicative and the exact position for construction purposes will be dependent on detailed design;

c) With respect to the indicative Link Road from Dooradoyle Road to Rosbrien Road, a Flood Risk Assessment and Hydraulic Modelling is required. Development of this road shall be in accordance with the requirements of Section 50 of the Arterial Drainage Act, 1945 in respect of the construction of bridge structures.

**Objective TR 045**
**Industrial and Enterprise and Employment lands adjacent to Junction 2, Dock Road**

It is an objective of the Council to ensure Industrial and Enterprise and Employment lands adjacent to Junction 2, Dock Road as outlined on the Land Use Zoning Map for Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty:

a) Shall be developed for uses with low levels of traffic movements such as warehousing, logistics, data centres etc. only;
b) Car parking shall be provided at a rate below that provided for in the Plan and provided on an area wide basis, rather than according to the requirements of individual developments;
c) Cycle parking shall be provided in all developments at an appropriate level to encourage modal shift;
d) All developments shall include end-of-trip cycling facilities for employees such as showers and lockers;
e) All new roads shall incorporate segregated cycle tracks designed in accordance with the National Cycle Manual;
f) All new roads shall seek, in the first instance, to provide filtered permeability, in order to avoid creating additional capacity for car traffic;
g) All development proposals shall include Mobility Management Plans, with clear targets and commitments to implementing measures to promote sustainable transport.
h) All development proposals shall undertake all relevant Transport Assessments, including the cumulative impact of development, to ensure planned development can be accommodated complementary to safeguarding the strategic function of the national road network and associated junctions.

## 7.10 Traffic Management

### 7.10.1 Limerick City Centre Traffic Management Plan

The Council have commenced work with the National Transport Authority in the preparation of the Limerick City Centre Traffic Management Plan. The key principles for the plan are to rebalance the City's street network towards sustainable modes of transport and the management of Heavy Goods Vehicles. Traffic management measures in the City Centre will be underpinned by public realm improvements that support walkability and active travel, that promote a high standard of urban design and provide a clear sense of place that respects the existing character of Limerick's Georgian heritage.

**Objective TR 046**
**Limerick City Centre Traffic Management Plan**

It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the completion and implementation of the Limerick City Centre Traffic Management Plan, for the rebalancing of the City's street network towards sustainable modes of transport and management of all transportation modes, in compliance with the principles of LSMATS. This will include a review of the traffic system and the quantum, location and layout of on-street parking, with the aim of providing for safe and convenient movement by walking and cycling.

**Objective TR 047**
**HGV Restrictions**

It is an objective of the Council to identify specific lorry routes and/or time restrictions, to reduce peak-time HGV movements through Limerick City and neighbourhoods.

### 7.10.2 Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA)

Developers will be required to undertake Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) for development proposals, which may generate significant additional trips/travel, including road traffic, with potentially significant implications for national and non-national roads. TTAs are used to assess the transport impacts of a proposed development, incorporating any subsequent measures necessary to ensure roads and junctions and other transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the development, remain fit for purpose and encourage a shift towards sustainable travel modes. Thresholds for TTAs are contained within the *Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines* (2014). The TTA

should also address urban design impacts of proposed public and private transport proposals and also deal with delivery and monitoring regimes for various aspects.

**Objective TR O48**
**Traffic Management**
It is an objective of the Council to require the submission of Mobility Management Plans and Traffic and Transport Assessments in accordance with the requirements of *Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines* (2014), for developments with the potential to create significant additional demands on the traffic network by virtue of the nature of their activity, the number of employees, their location or a combination of these factors and for significant developments affecting the national and non-national road network.

### 7.10.3 Road Safety

The design of development proposals must address the functionality and safety of road needs. Road Safety Audits and Road Safety Impact Assessments improve the safety performance of new roads and existing roads that require modifications due to projects or proposals. Road Safety Audits examine the safety aspects within a scheme and are generally required when a development requires a new access to a national road or significant changes to an existing access. Road Safety Impact Assessments consider the safety impact of a scheme on the surrounding road network.

Guidance for the preparation of Road Safety Audits and Road Safety Impact Assessments is included in TII Publications (Standards). Objectives in relation to Road Safety Audits and Road Safety Impact Assessments can be found in Chapter 11: Development Management Standards.

### 7.10.4 Car Parking

Car parking and cycle parking should be provided in accordance with the Council's car parking standards, taking into account public transport accessibility levels, existing publicly available parking provision and the need to deter unnecessary car use. A proportion of all parking spaces should be provided for parking for disabled people and the charging of electric vehicles. Cycle parking should also be provided.

The Plan sets out a comprehensive schedule of car parking standards. Table DM 9 (a1) addresses Car Parking and Bicycle Parking Standards for Residential Development in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, Newcastle West and all other settlements according to the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024).* Table DM 9 (a2) addresses Car Parking and Bicycle Parking Standards for all other classes of development in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty.

The accompanying Map 11.1 in Chapter 11: Development Management Standards identifies the city centre, accessible and intermediate & peripheral zones on which the parking requirements are based. Table DM 9 (b) addresses car parking and bicycle parking requirements for all other classes of development for all other settlements in the County.

Maximum car parking standards have been applied in all areas, to support the shift away from car dependency and to support the modal shift to alternative modes of transport, particularly in the City Centre.

**Objective TR O49**
**Car and Cycle Parking**
It is an objective of the Council to support the provision of parking and cycle standards in accordance with Section 11.8.3, DM Table 9 (a1), DM Table 9 (a2) and DM Table 9(b) of Chapter 11: Development Management Standards.

The Council will seek to implement a programme of traffic and parking management measures in towns and villages throughout Limerick, as resources permit.

### 7.10.5 Taxi/Hackney Services

Taxi/hackney services provide door-to door transport for those without access to a car, or a scheduled public transport service. They also provide a means of travel for the mobility impaired or those carrying heavy or bulky luggage that precludes them from using scheduled public transport. Designated taxi ranks should be part of the transport network in the City Centre, Town Centres and other locations, where there is a busy late-night economy.

**Objective TR O50**
**Taxi/Hackney Transport**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of taxi/hackney transport, as a feeder service to major public transport corridors and to encourage the provision of taxi ranks at transport interchanges and at other appropriate locations.

## 7.11 Roadside Signage

In accordance with Council guidelines and subject to Council approval, directional signage will be permitted at appropriate locations for amenities, tourist attractions and local attractions. In order to avoid a proliferation of signs leading to street clutter, existing signposts or poles should be used, where possible, in favour of the installation of new ones. Fingerpost signage is the preferred type of directional signage. Signage must be erected such that it does not result in a traffic hazard.

**Objective TR O51**
**Roadside Signage**
It is an objective of the Council to regulate, control and improve signage throughout Limerick and avoid a proliferation of roadside signage, in accordance with the *Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DoECLG, 2012) and the National Roads Authority's policy statement on the *Provision of Tourist and Leisure Signage on National Roads* (March 2011) and any updated versions of these documents.

**Objective TR O52**
**Directional Signage**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the provision of directional signage for amenities, tourist attractions and local attractions and along cycle and pedestrian routes, at appropriate locations throughout Limerick, in accordance with planning and traffic regulations.

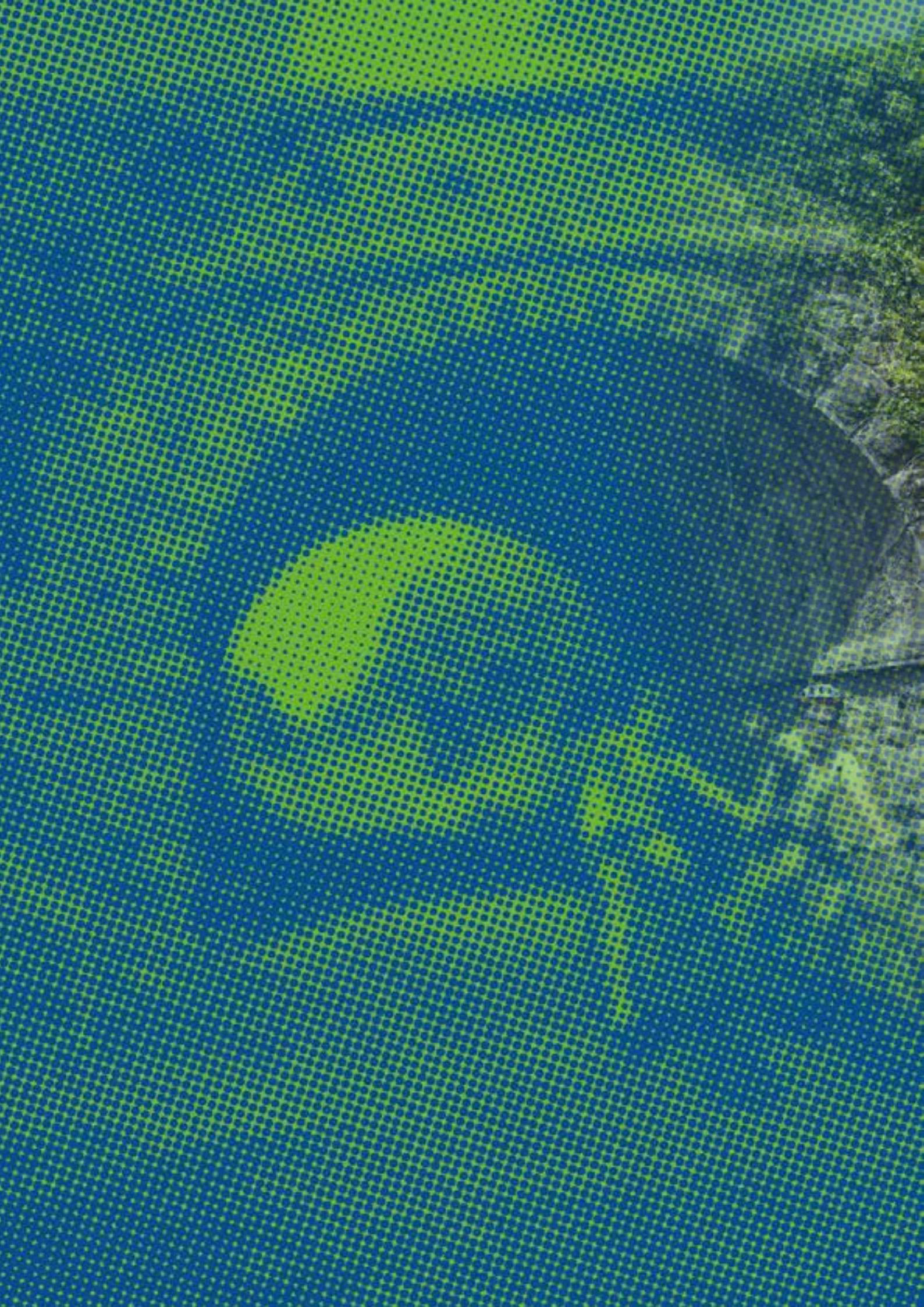
## 7.12 Noise Sensitive Development

### 7.12.1 Traffic-Related Noise

Traffic-related noise is the main source of environmental noise effecting communities in Limerick. The World Health Organization (WHO) and European Environment Agency, indicate that health outcomes from long-term exposure to traffic-related noise are sleep disturbance, annoyance, cognitive impairment for children, tinnitus and cardiovascular disease. The WHO strongly recommends policy-makers to reduce population exposure to traffic-related environmental noise to below 53 dB *Lden* (a 24-hour noise indicator) and 45 dB*Lnight* in accordance with the *Environmental Noise Guidelines* (2018). There is a significant proportion of the Limerick population (in the city and county) that is exposed to noise levels above these values. Careful consideration of traffic-related noise shall be given to major transport infrastructure projects at the design stage.

**Objective TR O53**
**Noise and Transportation**
It is an objective of the Council to identify appropriate mitigation measures to reduce noise levels from traffic where they are potentially harmful, in accordance with *Limerick's Noise Action Plan*.

**Objective TR O54**
**Noise Sensitive Development**
It is an objective of the Council to require noise sensitive developments in close proximity to heavily trafficked roads to be designed and constructed to minimise noise disturbance, follow a good acoustic design process and clearly demonstrate that significant adverse noise impacts will be avoided in accordance with *Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise* (2017) and based on the guidance and recommendations of the World Health Organisation.



# 8
# Infrastructure

## 8.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to advance the Strategic Vision of the Plan established in Chapter 1: Introduction, Vision and Strategic Overview as informed by the NPF and RSES, through the provision of the necessary infrastructure. The Plan recognises the potential of Limerick in terms of sustainable economic prosperity, improving quality of life and well-being for Limerick's citizens. However, Limerick's infrastructure must keep pace with modern demands. In this regard, the provision of high-quality infrastructure, energy networks and environmental services is fundamental to ensuring the long-term physical, environmental, social and economic prosperity for Limerick City and County.

The location of future development, including the zoning of land and the associated objectives of the Plan and the Council's assessment of planning applications, is informed by the capacity and availability of infrastructure. The Planning Authority will require the timely provision of infrastructure for the sustainable development of all lands.

**Policy IN P1**
**Strategic Infrastructure**
It is a policy of the Council to:

a) Secure investment in the necessary infrastructure (including digital technology, ICT, telecommunications networks, water services, surface water management, waste management, energy networks), which will allow Limerick to grow and realise its full potential.
b) Fulfil Limerick's ambition as a contemporary City and County in which to live, work, invest and visit, with supporting infrastructure, whilst complying with the relevant EU Directives and national legislation, including the protection of the environment.

## 8.2 National and Regional Policy Context

### 8.2.1 National Planning Framework

The National Planning Framework has identified Limerick for significant additional growth by 2040. This additional population will have a significant demand on existing and proposed infrastructure and will require the coordination of growth and place-making with investment in world-class infrastructure. This will include telecommunications infrastructure, water services, energy networks and waste management infrastructure. Alongside the NPF there are a number of European and National Strategic Plans, directives and guidelines that will inform the provision and development of these infrastructure networks, across the City and County over the lifetime of the Plan. These include:

- *Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (2012) Government Policy Statement on the Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure A New Circular Economy Action Plan for a Cleaner More Competitive Europe 2020;*
- *Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (2015) White Paper on Energy;*
- *Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (2019) Climate Action Plan;*
- *Department of Environment, Climate and Communications National Policy Framework: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030;*
- *Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (2019) Draft National Marine Planning Framework;*
- *Directive on the disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls and polychlorinated terpheyls known as the PCB/PCT Directive (96/59/EC);*
- *Directive on the incineration of waste (Directive 2000/76/EC);*
- *Draft Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities DHPLG 2018;*
- *Eirgrid Grid Development Strategy – Your Grid, Your Tomorrow (2017);*
- *Electrical and Electronic Waste (WEEE) Directive (2012/19/EU);*
- *End-of-Life Vehicles Directive (Directive 2000/53/EC);*

- *EPA Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems 2021;*
- *EPA National Hazardous Waste Management Plan 2014-2020;*
- *EPA Waste Management (Certification of Historic Waste Disposal and Recovery Activity) Regulations 2008;*
- *EPA Wastewater Treatment Manual (Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels);*
- *EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy – Closing the Loop 2015;*
- *Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive (1996/61/EC);*
- *Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030;*
- *Irish Waters Capital Investment Plan 2020-2024;*
- *Landfill Directive (1999/31/EC);*
- *National Hazardous Waste Plan (NHWMP) 2014-2020;*
- *National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021(DHPLG);*
- *National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan;*
- *National Water Resources Plan;*
- *Nitrates Directive, Good Agricultural Practise for the Protection of Waters;*
- *Packaging Waste Directive (Directive 94/62/EC);*
- *Realising Our Rural Potential – Action Plan for Rural Development, 2017;*
- *Resource Opportunity – Waste Management Policy (DECLG) 2012;*
- *Sewage Sludge Directive (86/278/EEC);*
- *The National Broadband Plan;*
- *The National Digital Strategy 2018-2027;*
- *Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy – Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020-2025 (DECC) 2020;*
- *Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC).*

### 8.2.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy

The Regional Planning Objectives (RPOs) of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region supports the growth of Limerick, in line with existing and proposed capacity within the infrastructural networks. Through the RPOs, support is given to develop Limerick as a Smart City, incorporating smart infrastructures, to act as an engine for a Smart Region - both urban and rural. It also seeks investment in broadband, fibre technologies, wireless networks and integrated digital infrastructures. Recognition of the importance of the implementation of Irish Water's *Investment Plan* and the alignment of the supply of water services with the settlement strategy of the Plan, is clearly set out and supported. The RSES also seeks the targeting of measures for the prevention and management of waste and policy support is provided for in the objectives of the *Southern Regional Waste Management Plan*. The significance of protecting and developing the energy grid across the region is also identified as critical to meeting infrastructural demands over the lifetime of the Plan.

### 8.2.3 Limerick's Digital Strategy - Building Ireland's First Digital City – Smart Limerick

*Building Ireland's First Digital City – Smart Limerick Roadmap 2017 – 2020* aims to ensure that Limerick can better respond to economic, social and environmental needs, through the use of innovative smart technology. The Strategy focuses on six Smart Limerick Domains. These domains represent areas where innovative solutions, ICT enabled and digital services will have a positive impact on Limerick's economic, social and physical environment, benefitting all citizens across the Smart Limerick Region.

### 8.3 Climate Action in Infrastructure Planning

The provision of high-quality infrastructure has been identified as fundamental to ensuring the long-term physical, environmental, social and economic prosperity of Limerick. Climate Action has to form a key consideration in the development of any such infrastructure for Limerick City and County. To this end, the Council will apply the following objectives when considering future development proposals concerning infrastructure:

**Objective IN O1**
**Climate Action in Infrastructure Planning**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Require all infrastructure development, whether above ground or subterranean, to avoid flood risk areas and areas at risk of coastal erosion.
b) Require site selection, location, design and materials to have regard to and be resilient to the changing climate (high winds, temperature fluctuations, increased storm intensity and changes in rainfall).
c) Collaborate with utility and service providers to ensure their networks are resilient to the impacts of climate change, both in terms of design and ongoing maintenance.

### 8.4 Digital Connectivity and Limerick's Digital Strategy

Limerick City and County Council is aware of the need for high quality digital and mobile information communication systems. Digital infrastructure supports the regeneration of urban centres and the diversification of the rural economy, thereby, sustaining urban and rural communities. Advancements in information and communication technologies (ICT) continually evolve and access to quality digital systems is a prerequisite for successful e-commerce, remote working opportunities, distance education, lifelong learning opportunities, digital health services and other opportunities, including cultural experiences offered through digital means and engagement.

Limerick has been to the forefront in terms of digitalisation initiatives by a Local Authority, having published the first Local Authority digital strategy - *Building Ireland's First Digital City – Smart Limerick Roadmap* in 2017. The existing digital strategy will be reviewed in 2022. The First Digital Strategy sets out Limerick's ambition to respond efficiently to economic, social and environmental issues, using innovative smart technology. Smart cities respond to challenges such as climate change, population growth, political or economic instability, by engaging with society, applying collaborative leadership methods, working across disciplines and city systems and using data information and modern technologies. Part of Limerick City Centre is designated a Digital District - a smart City digital test bed, located in the Georgian Innovation District. Features of the Quarter include smart living spaces, smart offices and smart transport.

The strategy supports both national and EU digital programs and the rollout of the *National Broadband Plan*. As part of the Strategy, Smart Homes and Smart Buildings will have high-speed connections to the internet, while sensors and data will be used for a better, more sustainable use of energy and improved use of clean, renewable energy and more sustainable forms of movement. Examples of initiatives under the strategy include Smart Parking,

Smart Transport Patterns for Rural Transport, Open Data for Autonomous Vehicles and the Municipal Data Network. Collecting real-time data by Internet of Things (IoT) technologies, including over 100 air, noise, water and soil quality sensors will also take place throughout the City and County, with footfall counters in the City Centre and Smart CCTV in the settlements. These datasets will be used to foster innovation and support start-up ecosystems such as the Georgian Innovation District.

Key digital growth enablers for Limerick and for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area were identified by the RSES as necessary for the future sustainable development of the Southern Region. The objectives of the Plan in relation to digital connectivity will advance the vision of the RSES for the Southern Region and the role of Limerick therein.

**Objective IN O2**
**Digital Connectivity**

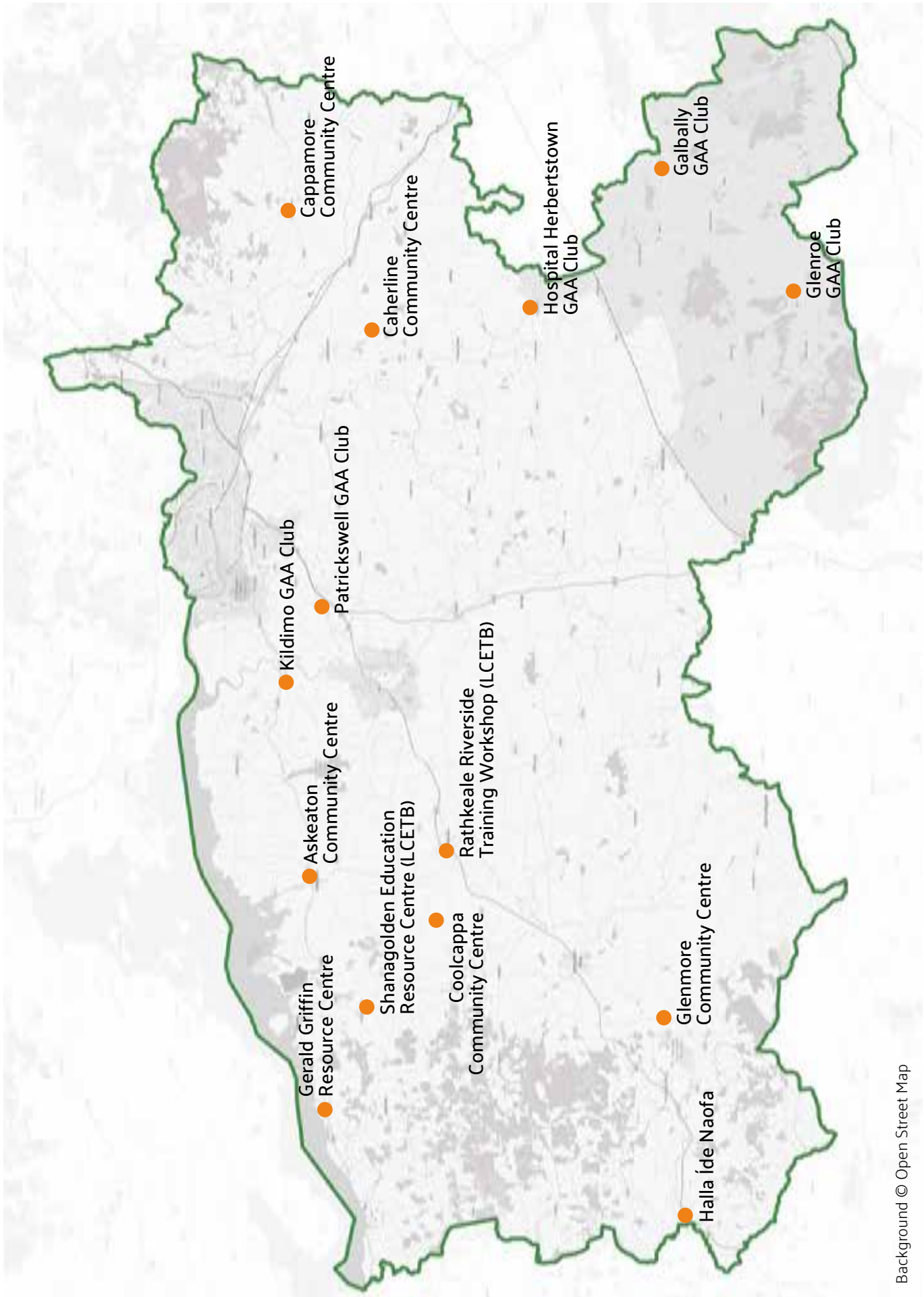
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Develop Limerick's digital infrastructure, as guided by the settlement strategy as engines for a Smart City and County and drivers of a wider Smart Region including the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, the Limerick Digital District and to progress Limerick's ambition to be Ireland's first Digital City.
b) Seek opportunities under the All Ireland Smart Cities Forum including funding and partnership opportunities with stakeholders, to implement the programmes of the *Limerick Digital Strategy* and EU Digital Single Market.
c) Encourage the use of good practices, nationally and internationally, through living labs, test beds, innovative research, disruptive technologies and collaborations with other agencies, including third level institutions and the private sector.
d) Capitalise on opportunities in partnership with other agencies to deploy innovative, disruptive technologies and smart infrastructure across Limerick City and County, including more peripheral locations to eliminate any disparities on digital connection and reliability of service.
e) Explore opportunities to ensure all communities can transition to digitalisation for a better quality of life and eliminate digital inequalities, in terms of access to digital networks for the purposes of business, access to public services including education and contemporary cultural and entertainment experiences.
f) Support the development of Smart Homes and Smart Buildings and facilitate the Smart Limerick concept in accordance with the *Limerick Digital Strategy 2017 – 2020* and any subsequent plans.
g) Support investment in incubation and ICT infrastructure to capitalise on remote working opportunities, enterprise start-ups, e-commerce and up-scaling for businesses across all settlements in the County.
h) Support emerging innovations in the digital transformation of transportation, E-Mobility and sustainable mobility in line with Regional Policy Objective 160 Smart Mobility, including those identified in LSMATS.

**Objective IN O3**
**Digital Innovations Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area**

It is an objective of the Council to continue to develop digital services and work with relevant stakeholders to enhance digital innovations and digital transformation throughout Limerick and the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area, as opportunities arise.

Map 8.1: Broadband Connection Points under the National Broadband Programme



### 8.4.1 Broadband

High speed, cost-competitive and reliable broadband underpins economic development and contributes to a good quality of life for Limerick's communities. The absence of such infrastructure makes it significantly more difficult to retain employment, attract new jobs and limits educational and entrepreneurial opportunities. High-speed, readily available and consistent broadband is crucial for Foreign Direct Investment, indigenous entrepreneurial opportunities and provides better access to global markets, as a means to address the impacts of Brexit and other global events such as the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The implementation of high-speed broadband connectivity falls within the remit of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. In 2012, the Department published *Delivering a Connected Society – A National Broadband Plan for Ireland* (NBP), to guide the rollout of broadband across Ireland. This national policy document establishes the Government's ambition to deliver high speed, reliable and cost-effective broadband services, via fibre optic based networks, to all premises in the Country. This policy aims to eliminate disparities between rural and urban areas in terms of access to high-speed broadband. Broadband infrastructure is provided by private investment and State intervention, in areas where private companies have no plans to invest, as it is not economically viable for them to do so. This approach guarantees that rural communities have the same digital opportunities as urban communities.

In Limerick, fourteen public locations in rural communities will benefit from the Broadband Connection Points (BCPs) scheme under the *National Broadband Plan (NBP)*. These locations will receive early (150Mb) high-speed broadband connectivity and public Wi-Fi, through the roll out of the *National Broadband Plan*.

Newcastle West, as the Key Town in the County, has been identified in the RSES (RPO 22) as requiring support for investment in incubation and ICT infrastructure, to capitalise on remote working opportunities, enterprise start-ups and up-scaling for businesses.

The Council will require that open access is available to all ducting networks provided within the Plan area, to facilitate competitive telecommunications services and to safeguard roads and footpaths from excavation retrospectively in new developments. The networks will remain in the ownership of the developer until taken in charge by the Council. Thereafter, the service provider will be responsible for the telecommunications infrastructure.

**Objective IN 04**
**Broadband**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the delivery and implementation of the *National Broadband Plan* and any subsequent plans.
b) Encourage the provision of WiFi zones in public buildings and advance Limerick's participation in the WiFi4EU programme (a European-wide initiative promoting free access to WiFi connectivity for citizens in public spaces) and facilitate a network of 40-50 free public WiFi access points (APs) in Limerick City.
c) Require carrier neutral, open access, multi-duct infrastructure serving new residential, commercial/business units, community hubs/centres, communal residential services and other appropriate new development (e.g. rail and road development), to be incorporated into the design and layout of new developments in Limerick.
d) Require ducting for broadband fibre connections to be provided underground during the installation of services and during the carrying out of any work to roads or rail lines.

e) Ensure broadband installation shall comply with the *Guidelines for NBI End Users when laying ducting to facilitate the installation of Fibre Networks on Private Property* and the requirements of the *National Broadband Plan 2020* and any subsequent plans.
f) New development (commercial, community, leisure) or housing development exceeding four units will be required to demonstrate, in a written statement, how fibre-enabled internet is made available to users when assessing planning applications.

### 8.4.2 Telecommunications Support Structures, Antennae and Domestic Satellite Dishes

The Council recognises the importance of high-quality telecommunication infrastructure as a prerequisite for a modern society and economy. While the advantages of a high-quality ICT infrastructure is acknowledged, these must be balanced with the need to safeguard both the urban and rural landscape, which can be significantly impacted due to the physical nature of telecommunication structures. Visual impact should be kept to a minimum, with detailed consideration of design, siting and the scope for utilising landscaping measures effectively. In considering planning applications, regard shall be had to *Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, DECLG, 1996, Circular Letter PI07/12 and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). These guidelines and regulations encourage the sharing or clustering of sites, as reflected in this chapter.

Domestic satellite dishes can materially damage historic buildings, or deplete historic townscapes, particularly if there is a proliferation of dishes in an area, on a building or on the street frontage. While satellite dishes do not require planning permission, subject to specified conditions under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), these exemptions are not applicable where the building is a Protected Structure, or located in an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), of which there are a number designated in Limerick. There is a presumption against erecting satellite dishes where they would materially affect the character and appearance of a Protected Structure, an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), or in any other area where they could cause unacceptable affects to visual amenity.

**Objective IN O5**
**Telecommunication Support**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Promote shared telecommunications infrastructure in all new developments to facilitate multiple network providers. Shared infrastructure should be made available to all broadband service providers on a non-exclusive basis to both suppliers and users of the new infrastructure.
b) Work closely with the telecommunications industry during the development and deployment phase of telecommunications infrastructure to carefully manage Limerick's road networks and minimise future road infrastructure works.
c) Require co-location of antennae support structures and sites where feasible. Operators shall be required to submit documentary evidence as to the non-feasibility of this option in planning applications for new structures.
d) Facilitate the public and private sector in making available where feasible and suitable, strategically located structures or sites, including those in the ownership of Limerick City and County Council, to facilitate improved telecommunications coverage if the need is sufficiently demonstrated.

e) Require best practice in both siting and design in relation to the erection of communication antennae and support infrastructure, in the interests of visual amenity and the protection of sensitive landscapes. There is a presumption against the location of antennae support structures where they would have a serious negative impact on the visual amenity of sensitive sites and locations.
f) Require the de-commissioning of a telecommunications structure and its removal off-site at the operator's expense when it is no longer required.
g) Apply a presumption against erecting satellite dishes where they would materially affect the character and appearance of a Protected Structure, an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) or in any other area where they could cause unacceptable effects on visual amenity.
h) Ensure the orderly development of telecommunications throughout the County in accordance with the requirements of the *Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, DECLG, 1996, except where they conflict with Circular Letter PI07/12 which takes precedence and any subsequent guidelines.

## 8.5 Water Services and Surface Water

For the purposes of the Plan, water services infrastructure refers to the provision of a potable water supply and the disposal of wastewater. The quality and extent of water services are a determinant of quality of life and a precursor to a strong economy/ business environment. These services are identified by the RSES[1] as a priority for infrastructural investment as part of a holistic approach to delivering infrastructure across the Southern Region (RPO 109).

As guided by the RSES, water services is one element of the selection criteria for planning to accommodate future population growth and strategic employment growth at metropolitan, regional and local levels in Limerick. In the Plan, water services is a key consideration in the settlement hierarchy and is pertinent to the zoning of lands across the city and the settlements across the County. Water infrastructure is a Strategic Investment Priority (SIP) of the NDP 2021-2030 and is aligned to implement the NPF over 10 years to provide for the anticipated population growth of the State, including Limerick City and County.

One of the National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) of the NPF is the Sustainable Management of Water and Other Environmental Resources. The NPF sees this as critical to our environment and well-being. Conserving and enhancing these resources is important for future planning, including national water planning, regional wastewater management, river basement and flood risk management. Collaborating with national, regional and local bodies is crucial according to the NPF, to ensure water and environmental resources are managed properly for the future and the circular approach be applied to consumption and disposal of water. The objectives of the Limerick Development Plan must reflect the Government spatial planning policy and its investment priorities.

1 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for Southern Region, Southern Regional Assembly 2019, page 111

At a European level, the European Commission sets environmental policy and compliance standards for water and wastewater management across the EU, to safeguard quality and to ensure the sustainability of water and environmental resources. The Commission achieves this via the following policy Directives:

- The Drinking Water Directive – 98/83/EC;
- The Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive - 91/271/EEC; and,
- The Water Framework Directive – 2000/60/EC.

These Directives are transposed into Irish Law through the Drinking Water Regulations SI.122 of 2014 and the Waste Water Treatment Regulations SI.254 of 2001), which set out the standards to be met for compliance with the Directives. It is the role of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as the environmental regulator for water and wastewater services, under the EU Directives to monitor and enforce the regulations, to protect consumers and ensure the implementation of the Directives. The Health Service Executive (HSE) has a key role in assessing and advising on potential risks to public health.

Access to a good quality uninterrupted water supply and wastewater disposal system is essential for public health. Irish Water are responsible for providing a safe and reliable supply of drinking water and for the collection and treatment of wastewater to their customers.

### 8.5.1 Water Services Act 2013

The Water Services Act 2013 established Irish Water (IW) as Ireland's national water utility body and transferred responsibilities for public water services, delivery and operation from Local Authorities to Irish Water in January 2014. Limerick City and County Council currently acts as an agent to deliver water supply and wastewater treatment operations and provide support for Irish Water's *Capital Investment Programme* in Limerick. In addition, the Council maintains and monitors a register of Group Water Schemes in the County and administer the following grant assistance programmes on behalf of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government:

i) Group Water and Wastewater Schemes through the Rural Water Multi Annual Programme and the Operational Funding Programme;
ii) Private Well Grants;
iii) Septic Tanks Grants;
iv) Lead Replacement Grants.

Irish Water is responsible for the operation of public water services including management of national water assets, maintenance of the water and wastewater system, investment and planning, managing capital projects together with customer care and billing. IW is responsible for all capital investment decisions and the implementation of the capital investment programme.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the national environmental regulator with responsibility for supervising the supply of drinking water by Irish Water and the authorisation of discharges from Irish Water's wastewater treatment plants.

The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) is the economic regulator of public water services. The CRU's role is to protect the interests of water consumers, ensure water services are delivered in a safe, secure and sustainable manner and that Irish Water operates in an economic and efficient manner.

**Objective IN O6**
**Water Services**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support Irish Water in the provision of water and wastewater infrastructure and services in accordance with the Service Level Agreement, until such time as the Agreement is terminated.
b) Collaborate with Irish Water in the protection of water supply sources to avoid water quality deterioration and reduce the level of treatment required in the production of drinking

water, in accordance with Article 7(2) of the WFD. Protection and restoration of drinking water at the source can have co-benefits for biodiversity and climate change.

c) Liaise with Irish Water during the lifetime of the Plan to secure investment in the pro-vision, extension and upgrading of the piped water distribution network and wastewater pipe network across Limerick City and County, to serve existing population and future population growth and sustain economic growth, in accordance with the requirements of the Core and Settlement Strategies.

d) Collaborate with Irish Water to resolve the existing water services infrastructural constraints in Newcastle West – a Key Town designated by the RSES.

e) Ensure that development proposals connecting to the public water and/or wastewater networks, now or in the future comply with Irish Water Standard Details and Codes of Practice. Where relevant, ensure developments comply with the *EPA Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems* 2021.

f) Require future developments to connect to public water services and wastewater if available to the site. Combined water and wastewater systems will not be permitted. Consent to connect to Irish Water assets will be requested as part of the planning application process.

g) Have regard to Section 28 Guidelines – *Draft Water Services Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, DHPLG, 2018 and any subsequent guidelines when carrying out the forward planning and development management functions of the Planning Authority.

**Objective IN 07**
**Drinking Water Source Protection**

It is an objective of the Council to protect both ground and surface water sources, to avoid water quality deterioration and reduce the level of treatment required in the production of drinking water, in accordance with Article 7(2) of the Water Framework Directive.

i) New developments which could pose an unacceptable risk to drinking water sources will not be permitted.

ii) New development should not conflict with the protection guidelines set out in the Limerick Groundwater Protection Scheme and/ or Groundwater Source Protection Zone reports.

### 8.5.2 Group Water Schemes and Private Water Supplies/Wells

Private wells have the potential to be compromised by contamination from wastewater treatments systems/septic tanks, soakpits, agricultural land spreading, fuel storage, fertiliser storage or run-off due to extreme weather events. Private wells are not regulated under the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations 2014 and Irish Water has no regulatory function in this regard. Recommended separation distances between on-site wastewater treatment systems (specifically the percolation area or polishing filter) and wells or boreholes are contained in the *EPA's Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems* 2021. A private well should be sufficiently constructed and sealed to prevent contamination.

The Rural Water Programme facilitates the development of water services in the rural areas, to improve deficiencies in group water schemes and private supplies, where no public water scheme is available. Investment under the programme is prioritised to deliver measures such as upgrades identified in the *National River Basin Management Plan*, satisfying the Water Framework Directive and to meet the requirements of the Drinking Water Directive. Grants are available under the

Rural Water Programme for the carrying out of improvement works to a private water supply (a water supply providing water intended for human consumption and domestic purposes that serves only one house). The relevant Regulations are Housing (Private Water Supply Financial Assistance) Regulations 2020 (SI No. 192 of 2020).

**Objective IN O8**
**Private Water Supply**
It is an objective of the Council to require that in locations where a connection to an existing public water supply is not possible, or the existing supply system does not have sufficient capacity, the provision of a private water supply may be considered. The development must demonstrate that the proposed water supply meets the standards set out in EU and national legislation and guidance, would not be prejudicial to public health, or would not affect the source of an existing supply, particularly a public supply/well. Such information will be required as part of the planning application process.

### 8.5.3 Public Waste Water Treatment

According to the 2016 Census, 61% of private households in Limerick City and County are connected directly to the public sewerage network, which is below the State average of 65.9%.

Irish Water's current wastewater treatment capacity register for County Limerick dated March 2022, states that there is capacity available in 41 no. of the 53 no. waste water treatment plants (WWTPs). These include Bunlicky and Castletroy WWTPs, which serve the Limerick City Metropolitan Municipal District. These WWTPs require some upgrading and it is envisaged by Irish Water that with the completion of these upgrades, there will be sufficient spare capacity to accommodate the projected growth in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, as set out in the RSES and the Core Strategy, over the lifetime of the Plan, subject to planning and other approvals. It is noted that currently there is no spare WWTP capacity available in the Key Town of Newcastle West. However, the upgrade of the plant to provide capacity is included in Irish Water's 2020- 2024 Investment Plan.

WWTP upgrades are also planned for Abbeyfeale, Adare and Dromcollogher. Other capital investment projects by Irish Water are ongoing to provide WWTPs in the previously untreated agglomerations of Foynes and Glin. Minor WWTP upgrades and improvements are also continually carried out on a nationally prioritised basis through Irish Water's programmes. Further upgrade(s) may also be progressed under the *Small Towns and Villages Growth Programme*, intended to provide capacity in Irish Water's treatment plants in smaller settlements, which would not otherwise be provided for in the current Investment Plan.

Irish Water is preparing a *Drainage Area Plan* (DAP) to be completed in 2024 for the Limerick City and Castletroy agglomerations. Limerick City and County Council will collaborate with Irish Water to ensure planned growth in the strategic growth areas and elsewhere in the city is taken account of in this study.

*Wastewater Network Development Plans* are currently being prepared by IW for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area (in Limerick) and Newcastle West. As part of the Mungret Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund project (LIHAF), Irish Water is working with the Council to provide wastewater network infrastructure in the Mungret area.

**Objective IN O9**
**Public Waste Water**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Ensure adequate and appropriate wastewater infrastructure is available to cater for existing and proposed development, in collaboration with Irish Water, to avoid any deterioration in the quality of receiving waters and to ensure that discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

b) Require all new developments to connect to public wastewater infrastructure, where available and to encourage existing developments that are in close proximity to a public sewer to connect to that sewer. These will be subject to a connection agreement with Irish Water and evidence of this agreement will be required as part of any planning application.
c) Require all new development to provide separate foul and surface water drainage systems, to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water.
d) Consider the provision of developer-led and bridging infrastructure at appropriate locations having regard to Circular NSP 01-2026 Developer *Led Infrastructure (DLI) Initiative for Wastewater Services to support Housing Delivery* and any subsequent revisions where the proposed development is subject to appropriate environmental assessment. Such a solution will only be considered where it is environmentally sustainable and would not affect the quality status of receiving waters.
e) Support Uisce Éireann in the upgrade of Limerick Wastewater Treatment Plant, Corcanree pumpstation and the development of the Regional Bioresource Centre, in line with the appropriate and necessary environmental and ecological assessments, as required, to support both the existing and future growth and development of Limerick City into the future and to comply with the National Wastewater Sludge Management Plan.

**Objective IN O10**
**Trade Discharge**
It is an objective of the Council to support Irish Water in the promotion of effective management of trade discharges to sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing sewer networks and minimise detrimental impacts on sewage treatment works.

### 8.5.4 Private Waste Water Treatment Systems, Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (DWWTS) including Septic Tanks

According to the 2016 Census, 30.8% of private households rely on septic tank systems to dispose of their wastewater in Limerick. Limerick City and County Council is the designated Water Authority for the assessment and approval of individual private domestic on-site wastewater treatment systems in Limerick. The main method of sewage disposal in rural areas is by means of individual septic tanks and proprietary wastewater treatment systems. The requirements for these systems are set out in the *EPA Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems 2021*. All planning applications for rural dwellings on un-serviced sites are required to demonstrate compliance with the Code of Practice. For larger developments, the requirements are contained in the EPA *Wastewater Treatment Manual – Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels* (1999) and EPA *Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater* (EPA 2011).

The provision of developer-led and bridging infrastructure for new residential developments will be considered in line with Circular NSP 01-2026 Developer Led Infrastructure (DLI) Initiative for Wastewater Services to support Housing Delivery. The provision of such facilities will be considered where the solution is environmentally sustainable and would not affect the quality status of receiving waters. .

**Objective IN O11**
**Private Waste Water Treatment**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Promote the changeover from septic tanks to the public foul water collection networks where feasible and to strongly discourage the provision of individual septic tanks and domestic wastewater treatment systems, in order to minimise the risk of groundwater pollution.
b) Ensure single house wastewater treatment systems in those areas not served by a public foul sewerage system comply with the *EPA Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems 2021* as may be amended or updated.
c) Require non-domestic wastewater treatment systems in those areas not served by a public foul sewerage system to demonstrate full compliance with EPA *Wastewater Treatment Manuals* (*Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels*) as maybe amended or updated.
d) Ensure all private wastewater treatment systems shall be located entirely within the site boundary. Under no circumstances shall single domestic treatments units or septic tanks be shared between dwellings.
e) Ensure that private wastewater treatment facilities, where permitted, are operated in compliance with their wastewater discharge license, in order to protect water quality.

### 8.5.5 Storm Water and Surface Water

Sustainable management of water, waste and other environmental resources is supported in both National Strategic Outcome 9 of the NPF and the RSES. National Policy Objectives 5 of the NPF also advocates enhanced water quality and resource management, by way of flood risk management, consideration of *River Basin Management Plan* objectives and use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) (Further information on definition of SuDS below). Storm water flows can have a significant detrimental impact on the available capacity of combined sewer networks and at treatment plants. Inadequate treatment of surface waters from carparks and hardstands can result in pollution of the receiving watercourses.

There are many approaches to management of surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution), biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity and these are collectively referred to as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). The use of SuDS to address surface water and its diversion from combined sewers is encouraged, in particular, in infill/brownfield sites and higher density areas as appropriate. Green roofs are recognised as a mechanism to attenuate storm water run-off from sites. They are made up of layers of vegetation, which create areas for growth and water storage and reduces the amount of surface water running off a roof.

Development will only be permitted where the Council is satisfied that suitable measures have been proposed that mitigate the impact of drainage, through the achievement of control of run-off quantity and quality, while enhancing amenity and habitat. In particular, the requirements of the *SuDS Manual* by the UK's Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) shall be followed unless specifically exempted by the Council (see also Section 11.3.11 SuDS).

Any site-specific solutions to surface water drainage systems shall meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the *River Basin Management Plan 2018 – 2021* and *Water Quality in Ireland 2013 - 2018* (2019), or any updated version of these documents.

**Objective IN O12**
**Surface Water and SuDS**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Ensure the separation of foul and surface water discharges in new developments through the provision of separate networks within application site boundaries.
b) Work in conjunction with other public bodies towards a sustainable programme of improvement for riverbanks, back drains, etc.
c) Maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of surface waters and groundwater, including reducing the discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters, in accordance with the *National River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018-2021* (DHPLG) and the associated Programme of Measures and any subsequent *River Basin Management Plan*.
d) Ensure adequate storm water infrastructure to accommodate the planned levels of growth within the Plan area and to ensure that appropriate flood management measures are implemented to protect property and infrastructure.
e) Cater for the future developments through public and private driven initiatives where discharge capacity permits.
f) Address the issue of disposal of surface water generated by existing development in the area, through improvements to surface water infrastructure, including for example attenuation ponds, the application of sustainable urban drainage techniques, or by minimising the amount of hard surfaced areas, or providing porous surfaces as the opportunity arises.
g) 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.
h) Require all planning applications to include surface-water design calculations to establish the suitability of drainage between the site and the outfall point and require all new developments to include SuDS, to control surface water outfall and protect water quality in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 11: Development Management Standards of the Plan.
i) Promote SuDS and grey water recycling in developments and responsible use of water by the wider community, to reduce the demand for water supply.
j) Require SuDS schemes to be designed to incorporate the four pillars of water quality, water quantity, biodiversity and amenity to the greatest extent possible within the constraints of a given site.
k) Allow sufficient land take for SuDS when planning the site and consider the region as a whole, in association with adjoining lands and their requirements in designing SuDS. Developers may be required to set aside lands to cater for not only their own SuDS but also regional SuDS.
l) Promote the provision of suitable blue and green infrastructure and Nature Based Solutions to the surface water disposal in new development, as a means to provide urban flood resilience. This approach capitalises on the potential of urban green spaces and natural water flows, subject to the other planning considerations such as amenity, maintenance, traffic safety, proper planning and sustainable development and environmental requirements.
m) To prohibit the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water. In areas where street scape enhancement or resurfacing is planned, seek to introduce NbSUDS to cater for rainfall run-off at source in order to maximize the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water.
n) Encourage green roofs for the following types of development:
   - Apartment developments;
   - Employment developments;
   - Retail developments;
   - Leisure facilities;
   - Education facilities.

### 8.6 Energy Networks – Resource Efficiency, Electricity and Gas Networks

Energy supply depends on the demand for energy services (heating, transportation and electricity) and is driven primarily by economic activity and population growth. The two main energy sources currently serving Ireland are electricity and gas, generated by processing fossil fuels (oil, gas and coal) and increasingly renewable sources such as wind, hydro- electricity, biomass and solar energy. The current energy network licence holders in Ireland are ESB Networks (electricity distribution network operator and owner), EirGrid (electricity transmission network operator) and Gas Networks Ireland (gas network owner and operator). As Ireland transitions to a low carbon society, significant investment and research is being directed towards innovative renewable energy sources, such as bio-energies generated through anaerobic digestion, solar power and the potential of tidal energy and wind energy (refer to Chapter 9: Climate Action, Flood Risk & Transition to Low Carbon Economy).

EirGrid and Gas Networks Ireland produce Network Development Plans, Generation Capacity Statements and All-Island Transmission Forecast Statements, to progress the development of the networks to cater for the energy demands of a growing population and economic development, whilst transitioning to a low carbon society. The Plan supports the future development of energy networks though objectives that protect existing infrastructure, but also facilitates future developments or upgrades, to provide the necessary power for population growth and a progressive strong economy.

The RSES highlights the importance of reducing energy consumption from fossil fuel sources and promotes the use of more sustainable sources such as wind, wave, solar and biomass to generate energy. The use of smart technology systems and the recognition that buildings can act as both generators and consumers of energy and the promotion of electric vehicles, will all place greater pressure on the national electricity grid. Thus, the strengthening of the national grid is important for a number of reasons, including improving security of supply for the domestic, residential and enterprise market, adapting the infrastructure and network to transition to the smart, low carbon systems and to attract high-end enterprise, which often require significant energy capacity and reliability.

The Council is also informed by the NPF and the objectives of the RSES in terms of the development of resilient, adaptive energy networks, which will provide the necessary infrastructure for a progressive Limerick.

The Council will be guided by national policy requirements and guidelines under planning and environmental legislation when assessing planning applications.

**Objective IN O13**
**Energy and Gas Networks**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the sustainable reinforcement and provision of new energy infrastructure by infrastructure providers (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process), ensuring the energy needs of future population and economic expansion across Limerick and the wider Southern Region can be delivered in a sustainable and timely manner.

b) Protect existing infrastructure and strategic route corridors for energy networks from encroachment by development that might compromise the performance of the networks.

c) Require energy transmission infrastructure to comply with best practice with regard to siting, design and least environmental impact, in the interest of landscape protection.

d) Require that, in all new developments, multiple services are accommodated in shared strips underground and that access covers are shared, whenever possible. The location of services shall be subterranean, where appropriate. Where existing and proposed high voltage lines traverse new residential, commercial or civic developments,

these should be relocated underground where technically feasible. The Council will require written consent to this relocation as part of the planning application process.

e) Support the transition of the gas network to a carbon neutral network by 2050, thereby supporting Limerick to become carbon neutral.

f) Support Community Energy Companies to create positive energy districts.

g) Ensure that in the delivery of energy infrastructure, the strategic function of the national road network is safeguarded in accordance with national policy by utilising available alternatives.

### 8.6.1 Energy Interconnection

Ireland's energy import dependence has grown since 1995 according to the SEAI, with energy import dependency at 67% in 2018. Consequently, Ireland is one of the most import dependent countries in the EU.[2] To ensure the security, stability and reliability of the energy supply, Ireland's energy networks are currently connected to the British systems (which in turn imports from wider European systems) via interconnectors. The Celtic Interconnector is currently progressing as a sub-sea link for energy with mainland Europe off the south coast of Ireland. Given the context of Brexit, building the resilience of Ireland's energy networks is pertinent as a means to reduce Ireland's import dependency.

**Objective IN O14**
**Energy Interconnection**
It is an objective of the Council to support the sustainable development of international energy interconnection infrastructure and support the sustainable development (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) of the Celtic Interconnector project between Ireland and France, from a location in the Southern Region.

2 Energy Security in Ireland Report 2020, SEAI, page 3

### 8.6.2 Electricity

EirGrid is responsible for the safe, secure and reliable transmission of electricity through operating the electricity transmission grid. It also is responsible for interconnections to import electricity. Transmission networks comprise the high voltage and high-pressure power lines traversing the country, transmitting electricity to stations where electricity is processed to lower voltages, suitable for transmission by ESB Networks along the local distribution network to premises. The National Grid is a term that refers to the high voltage transmission network and local distribution network, transmitting electricity in unison across the State. Eirgrid sets outs its vision to deliver safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity for Ireland's future needs in *Grid Development Strategy - Your Grid, Your Tomorrow* (2017) (ENCL1). This document informs the objectives of the Plan to sustain a high-quality energy network. EirGrid has a number of important projects in Limerick identified in the *Transmission Development Plan 2020 – 2029*, including the following:

- Ballinknockane 110 kV New Station - Solar farm connection;
- Athea 110 kV Station – Wind farm connection; and
- Killonan 220/110 kV Station Redevelopment.

The driver for these projects is the integration of renewable energy with the necessary infrastructure to connect new energy generators, such as wind and solar farms to the network, thereby sustaining security of supply. The Killonan station forms the main bulk supply point for the Mid-West Region and is an important node on the network for Limerick City and its region.

**Objective IN O15**
**Electricity Grid Development**
It is an objective of the Council to support the Eirgrid Grid *Development Strategy - Your Grid, Your Tomorrow* (2017) (ENCL1), to serve the future electricity needs of Limerick. This includes the delivery, integration and connection of renewable energy proposals to the grid in a sustainable and timely manner, subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.

### 8.6.3 Gas

Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) is responsible for the development, operation, maintenance and delivery of gas safely to businesses, the community and to power stations for the generation of electricity. GNI's Network Development Plan 2018 – *Assessing Future Demand and Supply Position* outlines how the gas network will develop over a ten-year period, based on existing supply and demand, as well as projections for growth in gas infrastructure and consumption. The document also examines system operation and consequent capital investment requirements by GNI to deliver the objectives of the NDP. In working towards securing a low carbon economy and meeting carbon emission targets, GNI are progressing ideas around the development of renewable gas injection infrastructure and Compressed Natural Gas Infrastructure, which could be used in the transport and agricultural sectors in particular.

**Objective IN O16**
**Gas Development**
It is an objective of the Council to support GNI's Network Development Plan 2018 – *Assessing Future Demand and Supply Position* to serve the future needs of Limerick. This includes the delivery, integration and connection of renewable energy proposals to the grid in a sustainable and timely manner, subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process.

## 8.7 Waste Management

Policy support for waste management at EU level is set out in the EU *Action Plan for the Circular Economy – Closing the Loop, 2015* and European Commission's *Circular Economy Action Plan: A New Circular Economy Action Plan for a Cleaner More Competitive Europe, 2020*. Building a circular economy is central to these Plans.

A number of EU Directives deal with waste management and these are transposed into Irish law through The Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, The Waste Management Act 1996, The Waste Management (Amendment) Act 2001 and the Protection of the Environment Act 2003. The Environmental Protection Agency and Local Authorities implement waste policy and legislation.

The current national waste policy document is the *Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy – Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020 - 2025*, DECC, 2020, which contains over 200 measures across various waste areas. The NPF deals with waste management infrastructure as part of National Strategic Outcome 9 – Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources. Waste management is considered critical by the Government for Ireland's environmental and economic wellbeing. Government policy encourages improving our capacity to create beneficial uses from products previously considered as waste, creating circular economic benefits.

The NPF identifies that planning for waste treatment to 2040 will require:

- Additional sewage sludge treatment capacity and a standardised approach to managing waste water sludge and including options for the extraction of energy and other resources;
- Biological treatment and increased uptake in anaerobic digestion with safe outlets for bio-stabilised residual waste; and
- Waste to energy facilities, which treat the residual waste that cannot be recycled in a sustainable way, delivering benefits such as electricity and heat production.

Support for waste infrastructure investment is provided under RPO 109 in the RSES.

Limerick City and County Council is part of the Southern Waste Region and is the joint lead authority with Tipperary County Council for waste management planning for the Southern Region. The Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 establishes regional policy in relation to the management of non-hazardous waste across the Southern Region.

The strategic vision of the Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 and its forthcoming replacement, is to rethink our approach to managing waste, by considering waste streams as valuable material resources, leading to a healthier environment and creating sustainable commercial opportunities for our economy. The Waste Management Plan, provides the framework for the prevention and management of waste in a safe and sustainable manner and includes the promotion of resource efficiency and the concept of the circular economy as one of its strategic objectives.

### 8.7.1 Waste Management and the Circular Economy

A circular economy is based on the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use and regenerating natural systems.

The circular economy aims to maintain the value of products, materials and resources for as long as possible, rather than the 'take-make-waste' linear model. The circular economy process begins from the design phase through production and operation and final reuse or recovery back into the loop. This circular approach saves finite natural resources and presents new business and social opportunities.

Circular economy policy is now adopted at European and national level. Under the European Green Deal, a new *Circular Economy Action Plan: 'For a cleaner more competitive Europe'* was launched in March 2020. Circular economy actions tie in with other European targets, such as the ambition of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, boosting the economy through increased jobs and growth, climate and energy, the social agenda, industrial innovation and international sustainable development goals. Linked with the Circular Economy Action Plan, the *European Plastic Strategy* has also been agreed, which includes increased plastic recycling targets. Furthermore, the Single Use Plastics (SUPs) Directive targets ten categories of SUPs that will not be permitted on the Market from July 2021. Ireland's policy *Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy, Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020-2025* seeks to have a circular economy that reduces our carbon impact and protects our natural resources, environment and health. Such a circular economy also supports viable and sustainable enterprise opportunities, jobs and training[3].

#### 8.7.1.1 What are the benefits of the Circular Economy?

As well as saving on scarce resources and protecting our environment, the circular economy also provides cost savings and job opportunities along the supply chain, from production through to reprocessing of materials, as well as facilitating community and social enterprise initiatives around reuse, repair and recycling. Consumers too can benefit from a cost savings viewpoint, through increased durability and reparability of the products that they purchase.

#### 8.7.1.2 Economic Opportunities around the Circular Economy

By embedding sustainability into the economy, the circular economy provides potential for economic and financial gains, through employment in green activities to replace employment in traditional industry that is either being ceased or upgraded with newer more automated technologies. Current examples include organisations involved in designing out waste and those

3 Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy (Sept 2020, Dept of Environment, Climate and Communications)

in equipment lease, reuse and repair sectors and materials recycling, or energy retrofitting of homes. Jobs in the circular economy can open up in areas such as repair, upcycling and green technologies for reprocessing of secondary materials for recycling and recovery. This includes significant potential in establishing or expanding social enterprises, which have a significant role to play in society, as highlighted in *National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland*.

There is an urgency to transition to a low carbon future (RPO56 of the RSES). The concept of the circular economy goes in tandem with moving to a low carbon economy, which is now seen as an essential core to development planning.

#### 8.7.1.3 Bioeconomy

The circular bioeconomy is a manifestation of the circular economy and covers potential for recovery of materials and by-products to create new products of high value, or alternatively recovery of biomass as energy. The principles of the circular economy can be applied to increasing the benefits from agricultural and forestry practices.

#### 8.7.1.4 Applying the Principles of the Circular Economy to Effective Waste Management

While designing for waste prevention is the most desirable and effective option, waste that is generated can be accommodated in the circular economy reuse loop, through preparation for reuse, recycling and recovery.

Applying the circular economy to waste management can be accommodated through provision of adequate facilities and infrastructure – from designing for waste segregation and access within residential and commercial development projects, through to adequate infrastructure for handling and reprocessing of waste. The principles of the circular economy will form a fundamental part of the forthcoming *National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy*. This national plan will also incorporate new guidance *Waste Management Infrastructure – Guidance for Siting Waste Management Facilities* which will come into effect during the lifetime of the Plan.

**Objective IN O17**
**Waste Management and the Circular Economy**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support innovative, smart solutions and processes, based on the principles of the circular economy to implement the *Regional Waste Management Plan for the Southern Region 2015 – 2021* and any subsequent plan, including any targets contained therein.
b) Collaborate with the Regional Waste Management Office and other agencies to implement the *EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy – Closing the Loop, 2015*, its successor the *Circular Economy Action Plan: A New Circular Economy Action Plan for a Cleaner More Competitive Europe, 2020* and the *Resource Opportunity-Waste Management Policy*, DECLG, 2012 and any subsequent plans.
c) Promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production in the areas of product design, production processes and waste management.
d) Implement the provisions of the *Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy – Ireland's National Waste Policy 2020 - 2025*, DECC, 2020 in the assessment of planning applications.
e) Protect existing civic amenity sites and bring sites throughout Limerick and support the development of additional sites in accordance with the *Southern Regional Waste Management Plan 2015 – 2021* and any subsequent plans.

### 8.7.2 Waste Infrastructure

Waste infrastructure includes reference to waste transfer stations, material/ waste recovery facilities, waste to energy businesses, waste disposal to landfill and authorised treatment facilities for End-of-Life Vehicles. The collection and processing of waste is generally privatised in Ireland, but Local Authorities have a key role in the provision and management of civic amenity and bring bank infrastructure. The Council is responsible for the aftercare of a significant number of closed and historic landfill sites across Limerick City and County, including the Long Pavement former landfill site in the City and Gortnadroma Landfill Site which closed in 2014, but remains operational as the Gortnadroma Waste and Recycling Centre.

As a Planning Authority, the Council's role is limited to guiding the location of new waste management facilities to appropriate zoned lands, setting the relevant development management standards and ensuring these developments comply with the relevant EU and national legislation and guidelines. The Council provides a number of Civic Amenity Sites and Bring Banks throughout a number of settlements in Limerick. Through the planning application process, the Council occasionally requires the provision of bring banks or other appropriate recycling facilities, as part of the overall development in the case of new or extended retail centre developments and commercial local/ neighbourhood centres, educational, sports and recreational facilities.

Limerick City and County Council issues authorisations for various waste related activities. These activities vary from importation of waste soils and rubble to raising land levels, to vehicle dismantling. The activity must have planning permission or be planning exempt, before a permit or certificate of registration is issued. The Council maintains the Waste Facilities Register which includes all waste facility permits and certificates of registration issued by Local Authorities under the Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration) Regulations, S.I. No. 821 of 2007, as amended. Waste facilities may operate under an EPA Licence. Any person who proposes to collect waste for the purposes of reward, with a view to profit or otherwise in the course of business, is required to hold a Waste Collection Permit (Section 34, Waste Management Act, 1996).

Waste infrastructure shall have regard to new guidance *Waste Infrastructure – Guidance for Siting Waste Management Facilities*.

End-of-life vehicles facilities (Authorised Treatment Facilities (ATFs)) must meet stringent environmental standards for the collection, storage and treatment of such vehicles.

The Council will only consider the location of waste infrastructure outside of appropriately zoned lands in the following circumstances:

- Where extensive lands are required, that are related to existing or planned Irish Water sites;
- Where the characteristics of the facility are such that a rural location is necessary to achieve separation distances from residential properties; or
- Where the development is necessary for the proper implementation of the *Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021* and any subsequent Statutory Waste Management Plan.

**Objective IN O18**
**Waste Infrastructure**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Direct waste management facilities to appropriately zoned lands, subject to normal planning and environmental criteria and the relevant Development Management Standards as set out in Chapter 11 of this Plan.
b) Maintain recycling facilities and require the provision of bring banks or other appropriate recycling facilities as part of the overall development in the case of new or extended retail centre development and commercial local/ neighbourhood centres, educational, sports and recreational facilities.

These facilities shall be provided and maintained by the developers, operational management companies and occupiers.

c) Use the regulatory enforcement powers available to the Council under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and under the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended), to address unauthorised waste facilities and the illegal disposal of waste in Limerick.

### 8.7.3 Sludge Management

Wastewater sludge is semi-solid remains in a wastewater treatment plant, after the treated water is discharged to either ground or surface waters. It comprises mainly of energy rich organic matter removed during treatment and is a valuable by-product of the wastewater treatment process. Further treatment is required to ensure the safe and efficient re-use or disposal of the sludge. The proliferation of single rural dwellings with on-site treatment units and septic tanks requires de-sludging services on a regular basis. Similarly, public treatment plants also require de-sludging.

In the *National Waste Water Sludge Management Plan*, Irish Water proposes to expand on the provision of 'sludge centres' and satellite facilities in Limerick. These proposals include upgrading the existing sludge centre at Bunlicky and the construction of dewatering satellite facilities in Newcastle West, Rathkeale, Foynes-Shanagolden and Cappamore. In the case of sludge management facilities, these facilities are best suited to sites of existing public wastewater treatment facilities, due to the nature and characteristics of existing operations on these sites and the need to strictly control the treatment of sludge.

Sludge from wastewater treatment plants and septic tanks can only be used in agriculture in accordance with the Waste Management (Use of Sewage Sludge in Agriculture) Regulations, 1998 and 2001 and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government *Codes of Good Practice for the Use of Bio-solids in Agriculture*.

**Objective IN O19**
**Sludge Management**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the provision of sludge management infrastructure at suitable locations in accordance with Irish Water's *National Waste Water Sludge Management Plan*, whilst not compromising environmental obligations.

b) Restrict the provision of sludge management facilities to the sites of existing public wastewater treatment facilities due to the nature and characteristics of existing operations on these sites and the need to strictly control the treatment of sludge.

c) Require that the treatment and management of sludge waste is carried out in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner, having regard to the protection of the environment and public health and in compliance with the Waste Framework Directive, the Nitrates Directive, the Waste Management Act and all relevant statutory instruments.

### 8.7.4 Agricultural Waste and Farm Plastics

When assessing planning applications for development associated with waste from livestock, the Council will require adherence to the requirements of the Waste Management (Use of Sewage Sludge in Agriculture) Regulations 1998 and 2001 and the *Code of Good Practice for the Use of Bio-solids in Agriculture*, DPLG. These regulations and codes of practice require that sludge is only used in accordance with a Nutrient Management Plan, which the Council is responsible for assessing, when processing planning applications for agricultural developments involving livestock waste disposal. Applicants will be required to submit a Nutrient Management Plan prepared by a suitable qualified professional to the Council, as part of a planning application for agricultural developments.

Farming has become one of the largest regular users of plastic film in this country, particularly for silage cover sheets and

bale wrapping. Irish legislation places an obligation on manufacturers and importers of farm plastics to arrange for suitable collection and disposal of used plastic film. The Waste Management (Farm Plastics) Regulations 2001 (as amended) promote recycling of farm plastic waste and place an obligation on farmers to recover farm plastic waste generated. The regulations place a legal responsibility on producers of farm film products to support recycling. Enforcement of the regulations is the responsibility of Local Authorities and the Planning and Environmental Services section of the Council have responsibility for this.

The Irish Farm Film Producers Group (IFFPG) is a national farm plastics recycling compliance scheme, providing a recycling service for farmers for farm plastics (silage plastics for pits and bales, fertiliser bags, feed-bags, chemical containers, netting and twines). Private waste collectors may also provide a collection service to farmers subject to securing the necessary permit. Prosecutions under the Air Pollution Act, 1987 or the Waste Management Act, 1996, as amended may issue for the burning or burying of farm plastics.

**Objective IN O20**
**Agricultural Waste**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Encourage the development of new alternatives and technological advances in relation to waste management on the farm and waste infrastructure such as Organic Waste to Energy/Combined Heat and Power schemes, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

b) Require that the disposal of agricultural waste is carried out in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner, having regard to protection of the environment and public health and in compliance with the Nitrates Directive, Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters) Regulations 2017 (SI 605 of 2017), the Habitats Directives and any other relevant statutory provisions.

### 8.7.5 Construction and Demolition Waste

Construction related waste accounts for a significant proportion of total landfill waste in Ireland. During construction, measures should be implemented to minimise soil removal (as part of the scheme design process), properly manage construction waste, design with and use smart materials on the principles of the circular economy and encourage off-site prefabrication where feasible. All future developments should seek to minimise waste through reduction, re-use and recycling. Waste management and disposal should be carefully considered as part of the construction process and in the operation of the development when completed.

Under waste legislation construction and demolition waste is defined as 'all waste that arises from construction, renovation and demolition activities'. It includes soil and stone, surplus and damaged products/ materials arising from construction works, or used temporarily during construction and dredge spoil. These materials can be hazardous. Those responsible for carrying out a construction and/or demolition project must ensure that they have a Waste Management Plan for all waste generated and ensure the segregation of waste for re-use, recycling or disposal appropriately. Developers shall submit, as part of a planning application, a Waste Management Plan. Where construction or demolition waste cannot be reused or recycled, the waste must be transported to authorised waste facilities using the services of authorised waste collectors. In the case of demolition, the developers will be required to submit a Refurbishment/Demolition Asbestos Survey (RDAS) with full details of disposal of the asbestos. 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.

At the design stage, consideration should be given to the use of renewable building materials, such as wood, from sustainably managed forests and locally sourced building materials for development projects. Other aspects should be considered, including offsite construction and prefabrication to minimise the impact of building on the site, reductions in levels of onsite waste and also minimising the cost of waste disposal. The reuse of construction waste such as excavated material and topsoil onsite is welcomed, subject to the appropriate assessment of the presence of invasive species onsite. Any materials used in the construction of new buildings should comply with the minimum standards as set out in the Building Regulations (1997-2019).

**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.

### 8.7.6 Closed Landfills or Historical Landfill Sites

A closed landfill is a landfill site operated by a Local Authority for the recovery or disposal of waste without a waste licence on any date between 15/07/1977 and 27/03/1997 (i.e. prior to the Waste Management (Licensing) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 133 of 1997)). The Waste Management (Certification of Historic Unlicensed Waste Disposal and Recovery Activity) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No. 524 of 2008) provide for the certification by the EPA of historic unlicensed landfill sites. There are a number of historical sites known to the Council. The EPA is obliged to process applications from Local Authorities in relation to 'closed landfills', in accordance with the Waste Management (Certification of Historic Unlicensed Waste Disposal and Recovery Activity) Regulations, 2008.

**Objective IN O22**
**Closed Landfills or Historical Landfill Sites**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Continue to restore the Long Pavement landfill site into a positive landscape feature that provides a recreational, amenity and biodiversity resource for the community, as guided by best practice in environmental protection, public amenity, proper planning and sustainable development.
b) Co-operate with the EPA regarding historical landfills. Risk assessments by the Council shall be carried out in accordance with the *Code of Practice - Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites* and to the requirements of the EPA. When zoning lands for development and/or considering future developments on, or in the vicinity of, identified historic landfill sites, the Council will have regard to this Code.

### 8.7.7 Hazardous Waste and Contaminated sites

A waste is hazardous when it can harm human health or the environment, because it is explosive, oxidising, flammable, toxic, carcinogenic, corrosive, infectious, mutagenic, sensitising, or eco-toxic. Industry is the largest generator of hazardous wastes such as industrial solvents, sludges, oils and chemicals. Other sectors such as businesses, construction, healthcare, farms and households also produce hazardous wastes. Civic Amenity Centres collect a range of hazardous waste from households for safe disposal. In Ireland, hazardous waste is treated either on-site at the industrial facility where the waste was generated (under conditions of EPA licence), or offsite at hazardous waste treatment facilities in Ireland, or at facilities in other countries.

The EPA's *National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (NHWMP) 2014-2020* sets out the priorities to improve the management of hazardous waste. There is no commercial hazardous waste landfill in the State and there are limited hazardous waste treatment operations (these are mainly used for oil recovery, healthcare waste treatment and solvent reclamation), meaning that Ireland is dependent on export for treatment of many hazardous waste streams. The Council will continue to require that hazardous waste is disposed of in a safe manner, in accordance with the NHWMP and any subsequent amendments or revisions of the Plan.

Contaminated lands are sites where there are contaminated substances above or below ground, either directly disposed of, or due to by-products (particulate or fluid residue) of historical land use and activities on site (such as materials, processing or storage). Such contaminants could cause significant harm and endanger human health. Examples of land uses that may have caused such contamination include gas works, landfill sites, creameries, tanneries etc. The Docklands area of Limerick City, given its industrial use since the turn of the century and to the present day, may have a legacy of contaminants in the soil and groundwater. Similarly, there are many historical industrial sites scattered with contamination legacies across Limerick City and County. Any redevelopment of former industrial sites must consider potential environmental impacts arising from past activities, including contaminating construction materials such as asbestos. Applications for suitable re-development of contaminated lands will generally be encouraged.
The Council will require that a detailed investigation is carried out by developers, demonstrating that appropriate mitigation strategies can be implemented before any development may take place.

**Objective IN O23**
**Hazardous Waste and Contaminated Sites**

It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Implement the EPA's *National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (NHWMP) 2014-2020* and any subsequent plans.
b) Collaborate and seek guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Health and Safety Authority (HAS), Health Service Executive (HSE) and Southern Region Waste Management Office, on the technical requirements for clearance and redevelopment of any contaminated lands when dealing with planning applications at these locations.

### 8.7.8 SEVESO Sites

The Seveso II Directive (96/82 EC) and the EC (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2000 (S.I. No. 476 of 2000) seek to prevent major accidents, involving dangerous substances and chemicals, through controls on the location of new establishments, modifications to existing establishments and development in the vicinity of an establishment which, by virtue of its type or location, is likely to increase the risk or consequences of a major accident. The Directive defines major accident hazard sites as those that store or can generate quantities of dangerous substances in excess of specified thresholds. Dangerous substances are classified as toxic, flammable/explosive or dangerous for the environment. Threshold quantities are specified in the legislation for named substances, categories of substances and groups of categories. Sites are classified as Lower Tier or Upper Tier, depending on whether the lower or upper threshold is exceeded.

The Health and Safety Authority provides advice where appropriate, in respect of planning applications within a certain distance of the perimeter of these sites. Seveso Site Consultation Distances are specified in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) (SI No 600 of 2001). Distances vary depending on the nature of activity at the site. Such technical advice will be taken into account when considering applications for planning permission, on and within the vicinity of Seveso sites.

**Objective IN O24**
**SEVESO Sites Objectives**

It is an objective of the Council to:

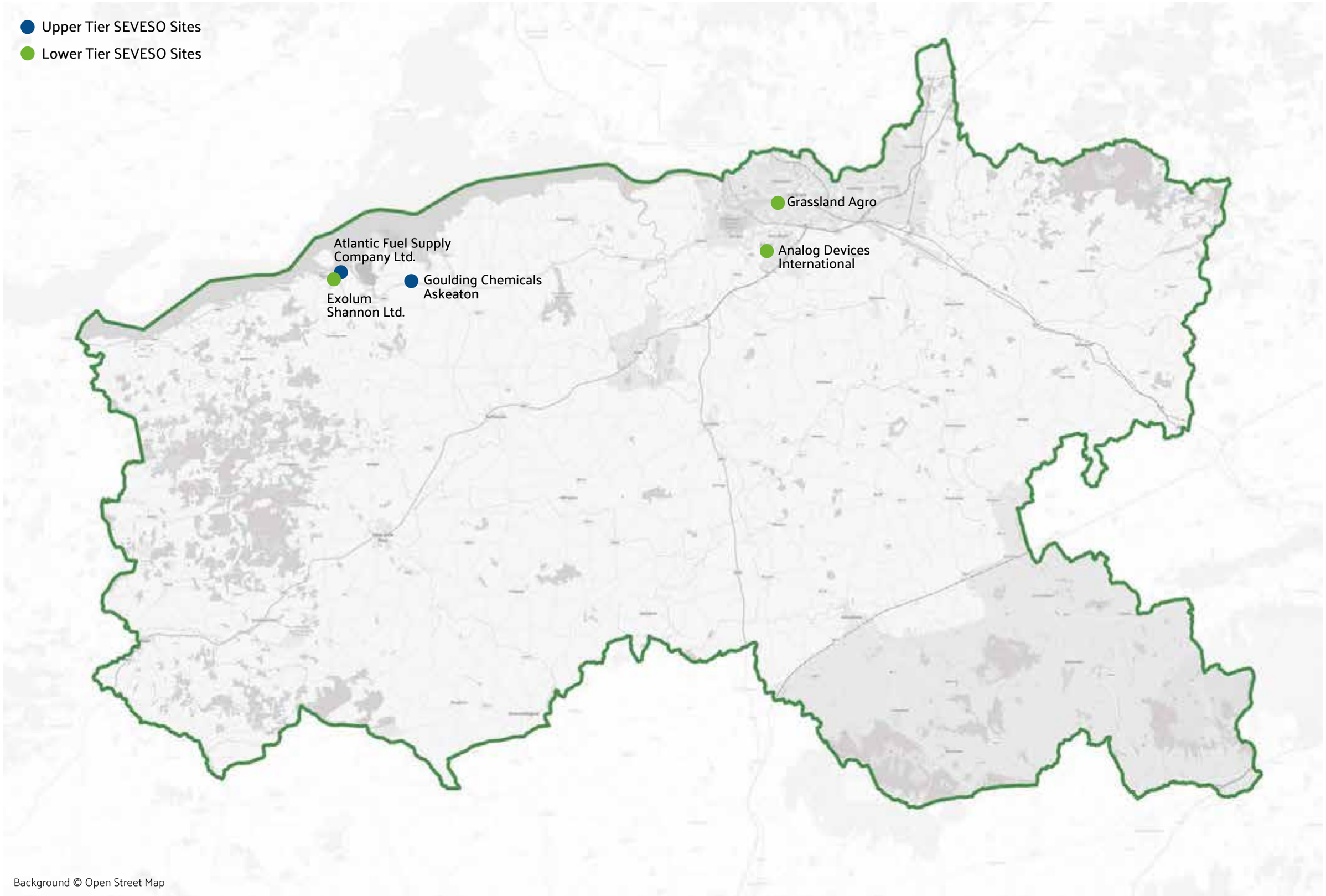
a) Inform the Health and Safety Authority of any development proposals within the thresholds of the Seveso II Directive (96/82 EC) and the EC (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2000 (S.I. No. 476 of 2000), including modifications to existing Seveso establishments.
b) Have regard to potential adverse impacts on public health and safety, including maintaining appropriate safe distances between Seveso sites and residential areas, areas of public use and areas of environmental sensitivity.
c) Ensure in addition to normal planning criteria, that new developments such as transport links, locations frequented by the public and residential areas in the vicinity of existing Seveso sites, comply with the requirement of the Seveso Directive, including the consultation distances surrounding establishments designated as containing hazardous substances.

Table 8.1 Seveso Sites in Limerick

| Tier | Name | Location |
|---|---|---|
| **Lower Tier** | Grassland Agro | Dock Road, Co. Limerick |
| | Exolum Shannon Ltd. (formerly Inter Terminals Shannon Ltd.) | Foynes Harbour, Foynes, Co. Limerick |
| | Analog Devices International | Bay F1, Raheen Business Park, Co. Limerick |
| **Upper Tier** | Atlantic Fuel Supply Company Ltd. | Foynes Harbour, Co. Limerick |
| | Goulding Chemical Ltd. | Morgan's South, Durnish, Askeaton, Co. Limerick |

*Source: www.hsa.ie (2021)*

Map 8.2: SEVESO Sites



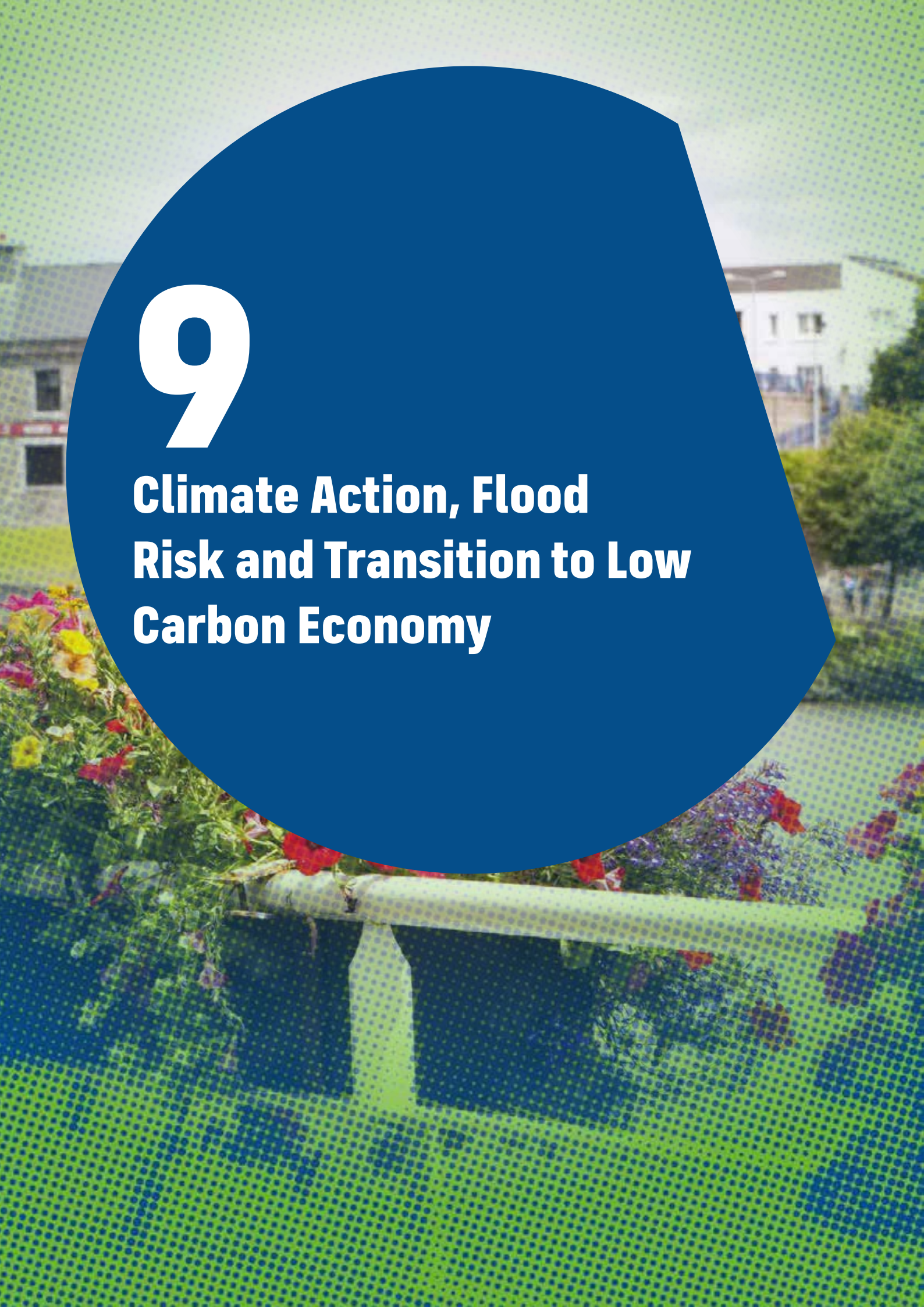

Background © Open Street Map

### 8.7.9 Waste Tyres

While waste tyres are not classified as hazardous, they can cause environmental pollution if disposed of incorrectly or irresponsibly. In 2017, Waste Management (Tyres and Waste Tyres) Regulations introduced new regulatory structures for the tyre sector, requiring disposal of tyres to comply with the Repak ELT scheme for recycling and recovery of tyres. The scheme is based on the Producer Responsibility model that has worked successfully in this country for other waste streams, such as packaging, batteries and waste electrical electronic goods (WEEE). Future development activity with significant tyre use/generation will be required to submit details of safe disposal during the planning application process.

### 8.7.10 Litter Management

Litter continues to be a challenge locally and nationally and the emphasis will continue to be on reducing and managing litter effectively. The Council acknowledges that the primary enforcement responses must come from the Council. However, the co-operation of all members of the community is required, to raise awareness of the harmful effects of litter. The Council recognises that the participation and support of all sectors of society is required if littering is to be successfully eradicated. Limerick City and County Council's *Litter Management Plan 2019-2022* affirms the Council's commitment to litter prevention in Limerick. This Plan outlines the objectives and actions in relation to awareness and prevention, control and enforcement of littering for the period 2019 to 2022. The *Litter Management Plan* will be reviewed annually in accordance with Section 10(3) of the Litter Pollution Act 1997 as amended.



# 9

# Climate Action, Flood Risk and Transition to Low Carbon Economy

## 9.1 Introduction

Our climate is changing rapidly and the effects on the country and on our lives is becoming more evident. The response to the effects are wide ranging and have economic, environmental and social costs associated with them. The business as usual model, cannot continue and there is a need to reconsider the approach to the way we live our daily lives, in terms of reducing environmental impacts and our carbon footprint. Human activities are increasingly influencing climate change, spurred on by both the need for climate action and energy security. In addition, the question of renewable energy production has assumed greater importance over the last decade.

This chapter will set out the Plan's position in relation to these key issues, in terms of a policy approach to the transition to a low carbon economy and to Limerick becoming climate resilient, with a strong emphasis on reduction in energy demand and emissions, through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change. The Plan sets out the future growth for Limerick in the core strategy, which will be concentrated in the built-up footprint of Limerick's City, towns and villages, in order to achieve compact growth. Developing the 10-minute city/town concept is a key focus for development within Limerick, with reduced travel distances between home, work, education and services and enhanced active modal share, with an overall reduction in emissions. The integration of land use and transport planning and aligning policies are a key element of the Plan.

There has been much commentary on climate change in Ireland over the last twenty years or so and in the last few years the effects have become clearer. One of the most obvious is increased temperature, with reductions in cold days and longer growing seasons. Temperatures have risen by 0.70C between 1890 and 2008 and most significantly by 0.40C between 1980 and 2008. There has been an increase in the intensity of rainfall and storm events and this has resulted in increased flooding in some areas. Coastal defences have also come under increased pressure during these events and ongoing sea level rise will contribute to this problem.

Continued production of greenhouse gases has contributed to these issues and Ireland needs to commence the transition to a low carbon economy, with a reduction on reliance on fossil fuels and unsustainable use of resources. Limerick City and County Council recognises the need for a shift away from the traditional methods and play its role as a key stakeholder in making the transition to a low carbon economy. In July 2019, the Council adopted the *Limerick City and County Council Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024*. The Climate Adaptation Strategy concentrates on dealing with the effects of climate change, such as flooding, storms or increased temperatures. Climate mitigation on the other hand, refers to efforts to reduce or prevent emission of greenhouse gases. Mitigation can mean using new technologies and renewable energies, making older equipment more energy efficient, or changing practices and behaviours.

Limerick is one of two EU 'lighthouse' cities that have been selected for a major climate-change pilot programme, which will give a lead to the rest of Europe on how to dramatically reduce the carbon footprint of urban areas. The EU +CityxChange Programme (Positive City Exchange) has selected Limerick, along with Trondheim in Norway, to roll out a project that has the potential to revolutionise how we produce and use energy in cities and towns. The programme is funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme in the call for 'Smart Cities and Communities' and is led by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), together with the Lighthouse Cities Trondheim and Limerick.

Limerick's selection for the project will see the Georgian Neighbourhood in the heart of the City Centre, become a testbed for data collection and a range of new technologies, that will transform it into a positive energy City Centre where it creates more electricity than it uses.

Limerick is committed to becoming a more climate resilient place and it is at the core of the Plan. While this particular chapter deals with the issue, the theme permeates the entire Plan with a selection of policies and objectives throughout, which will contribute to the transition to a climate resilient and low carbon society.

### 9.1.1 Integrating Climate Action into the Plan

The Plan has been prepared with climate action and transition to a low carbon economy, as key considerations throughout formulation of all policies and objectives. Table 9.1 below demonstrates how climate action provisions have been incorporated into elements of the Plan and highlights the important and significant role it has to play, in the formulation of policies and objectives for the overall development of Limerick.

Table 9.1 Incorporation of climate consideration into each chapter of the Plan

| Chapter | How Chapters contribute to Climate Change Adaptation or Mitigation |
|---|---|
| **Chapter 1: Introduction** | • Identifies the creation of a climate resilient place as an overarching strategic outcome of the Plan. |
| **Chapter 2: Core Strategy** | • Supports the compact urban development approach with development focused on accessible locations and minimisation of travel.<br>• Supports the development of brownfield sites and regeneration. |
| **Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy** | • Supports the compact urban development approach with development focused on accessible locations and minimisation of travel.<br>• Supports the development of brownfield sites and regeneration and the tackling of dereliction and vacancy.<br>• Places an emphasis on the multi-functional role of village/Town Centres to provide a wide range of services to reduce the need to travel.<br>• Increased emphasis on place-making - enhanced public realm, including improved accessibility for sustainable transport modes. |
| **Chapter 4: Housing** | • Supports compact growth.<br>• Sets out that housing must demonstrate that climate change adaptation has been considered in siting, layout and design.<br>• Climate action measures to be included as part of rural housing applications, to ensure a transition to a low carbon economy.<br>• Establishes that consideration must be given to the impact of the pattern of development associated with one off housing on the climate and environment. |
| **Chapter 5: A Strong Economy** | • Supports the transition to a low carbon economy.<br>• Supports employment concentrated on public transport corridors and the proposed intensification and redevelopment of existing strategic employment areas.<br>• Supports new employment which is aligned with climate action and the circular economy.<br>• Supports casual trading, organic foods, local produce, seasonal and craft markets.<br>• Supports home and e-working. |
| **Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure** | • Emphasis on the need to preserve and protect our Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure (Natural Heritage<br>• Supports the National Bio-diversity Action Plan.<br>• Supports the All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2020-2025.<br>• Protection of our Water Quality<br>• Emphasises protection and reuse of building stock where appropriate. |
| **Chapter 7: Sustainable Mobility and Transport** | • Emphasis on the pedestrian and cyclist and access to public transport and services.<br>• Supports car and bike sharing.<br>• Integrates land use and transport policies.<br>• Supports green infrastructure and blue ways ecosystems services approach.<br>• Supports the decarbonising of motorised transport including public EV charging network. |

| Chapter | How Chapters contribute to Climate Change Adaptation or Mitigation |
|---|---|
| **Chapter 8: Infrastructure** | • Establishes requirement to address climate change in Strategic Planning Infrastructure.<br>• Emphasises the benefits of a 'Smart City' and climate change.<br>• Supports the circular economy with respect to waste.<br>• Supports the matching of enabling water and waste water infrastructure with provision of development.<br>• Supports Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS). |
| **Chapter 9: Climate Action, Flood Risk and Transition to Low Carbon Economy** | • Supports the implementation of the Limerick City and County Climate Adaptation Strategy which was adopted in July 2019.<br>• Supports Government and sectoral plans.<br>• Supports renewable energy.<br>• Supports Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Management.<br>• Supports the transition to a low carbon economy.<br>• Supports district heating and the development of County wide policy.<br>• Supports the decarbonising zones initiative.<br>• Supports the incorporation of climate proofing measures into the design, planning layout and orientation and construction of all developments, including the use of sustainable materials, selection of suitable locations and the use of renewable energy sources.<br>• Supports renewable energy.<br>• Supports Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Management. |
| **Chapter 10: Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure** | • Supports the provision of residential development in tandem with public transport, sustainable neighbourhood infrastructure, quality open space, recreation and employment opportunities.<br>• Supports the 10-minute settlement approach and sustainable urban villages.<br>• Supports healthy place-making.<br>• Places an emphasis on adaptability of social and community facilities.<br>• Supports Nature Based Play.<br>• Supports locally grown foods – community gardens and allotments. |

**This chapter will focus on 3 key areas outlined below. The 3 key areas are interlinked and have a bearing on policy formulation throughout the Plan as follows:**

1. **Climate Action and Transition to a Low Carbon Economy;**
2. **Flooding;**
3. **Renewable Energy.**

## 9.2 Climate Change

### 9.2.1 International, National and Regional Policy

The European Climate Law established in 2020 sets out the commitment of the European Union in the European Green Deal to be climate neutral by 2050. This will have implications for Ireland's energy and emission targets and other national targets set out in the Government's *Climate Action Plan 2021 Securing Our Future*. This plan provides an update to the *Climate Action Plan 2019 To Tackle Climate Breakdown,* which introduced the requirement to produce and revise annually the Climate Action Plan. The Climate Action Plan will incorporate both mitigation and adaptation measures.

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 supports Ireland's transition to Net Zero and achieve a climate neutral economy by no later than 2050. It has established a legally binding framework with clear targets and commitments, including Carbon Budgets and ensures the necessary structures and processes are embedded on a statutory basis, to ensure we achieve our national, EU and international climate goals and obligations in the near and long term.

Other important legalisation at a national level includes:

- *National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development* (2014) - sets out the national objective of achieving a transition to a low carbon economy.
- *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act* (2015) – provided for the development of a National Adaptation Framework (NAF).
- *National Adaptation Framework* (2018) - developed under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, Ireland's first statutory national adaptation strategy builds on the work carried out under NCCAF 2012, outlining a whole of Government and society approach to climate change adaptation in Ireland. The sectoral and local adaptation strategies, were prepared in 2019.
- *Climate Action Plan (2019) Tackle Climate Breakdown* and the *National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030* identifies how Ireland will achieve its 2030 targets for carbon emissions and puts Ireland on a trajectory to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and also reiterates Ireland's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- *National Mitigation Plan* (2017) - prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 is a whole of Government plan, is Ireland's first Plan in setting out a pathway to achieve the required level of decarbonisation.
- *The White Paper on Energy Policy (2015) - Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030* - sets out a framework to guide energy policy in the period to 2030, in order to meet national, EU and international targets.
- *National Climate Change Adaptation Framework* (2012) - This non-statutory framework was Ireland's first climate change adaptation framework, providing a strategic policy focus aimed at reducing Ireland's vulnerability to climate change, by ensuring adaptation actions were taken across key sectors at national and at a local level.

The National Planning Framework supports commitments to achieve the transition to a low carbon economy and a climate resilient society. National Strategic Outcome 08 sets outs the policy position in this regard. Furthermore, the NPF sets out the principles of sustainable, compact growth coupled with sustainable transport choices, as a means of reducing emissions, delivering more sustainable communities and futureproofing the development of the Country. In Section 9.2 of the NPF's Resource Efficiency and Transition to a Low Carbon Economy, the policy objectives for achieving resource efficiency and the transition to a low carbon economy are outlined. National Policy Objective 54 aims to 'reduce our carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system in support of national targets for climate policy mitigation and

adaptation objectives, as well as targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions'. The NPF goes onto emphasise the need to increase renewable sources of energy, sustainably manage waste streams and to ensure better water quality. The role of waste streams should be examined in order to determine which of these could contribute to energy generation through processes such as anaerobic digestion or perhaps combustion.

All of these are echoed in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES), where a similar commitment to a more sustainable approach to development is evident. The RSES sets out its commitment to climate action and transition to a low carbon economy and to support measures to build resilience to climate change throughout the region, to address impact reduction, adaptive capacity, awareness raising, providing for nature-based solutions and emergency planning. It also supports the development of a regional decarbonisation plan and measures such as carbon sequestration and carbon capture and storage.

Many established planning principles such as compact growth, integration of land use and transport planning, would also have an effect on helping the transition to a low carbon future and help with the adoption of renewable energy.

**Policy CAF P1**
**Climate Action Policy**
It is a policy of the Council to implement international and national objectives, to support Limerick's transition to a low carbon economy and support the climate action policies included in the Plan.

**Objective CAF O1**
**Compliance with Higher Tier Climate Legislation and Guidance**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the *National Adaptation Framework* 2018 and the *National Climate Change Strategy*, 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 resources and the re-use of existing resources.
b) Support the implementation of the *Limerick Climate Change Adaptation Strategy* (2019) while cognisance shall be had of any revised or forthcoming adaptation, mitigation or climate action strategies or plans at local, regional and national level in the formulation of any plans or policies.

The Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment has made €10 million available over 5 years to establish four Climate Action Regional Offices (CAROs). The establishment of the offices is a key action under Ireland's National Adaptation Framework and National Mitigation Plan and will have an important role in coordinating climate action at local government level in Ireland. The Climate Action Regional Offices, which were established since 2018, are being operated by a lead Local Authority in four different regions that have been grouped together, based on climate risk assessment with a focus on the predominant risk(s) in each geographical area. Cork County Council is the lead authority for the Southern Region, in which Limerick is located. The establishment of these offices will enable a more coordinated response to climate issues across the whole of local government and will help build on the experience and expertise which exists across the sector.

At a local level, Limerick City and County Council's *Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (CCAS) 2019 – 2024* has been developed in line with the Department for Communities *Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines* and was adopted by Elected Members in July 2019. It is a high-level document designed to mainstream the issue of climate change in Local Authority plans, policies and operations, in order to prepare for the challenges of climate change and adapting to its effects.

**Objective CAF O2**
**Partnership with Service Providers**
It is an objective of the Council to work in partnership with existing service providers to facilitate required enhancement and upgrading of existing infrastructure and networks (subject to appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process) and support the safeguarding of strategic energy corridors from encroachment by other developments, that could compromise the delivery of energy networks.

**Objective CAF O3**
**Sustainable Development**
It is an objective of the Council to support sustainable travel, energy efficient projects, provision of green spaces and open space and sustainable residential development projects, as a means of addressing climate change.

**Objective CAF O4**
**Climate Proofing**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure climate proofing measures are incorporated into the design, planning, layout and orientation and construction of all developments, including the use of sustainable materials, selection of suitable locations and the use of renewable energy sources.

**Objective CAF O5**
**Energy Efficiency in Existing Development**
It is an objective of the Council to support the retrofitting of existing buildings over their demolition and the integration of renewables into existing buildings, thereby ensuring a fabric first approach is taken.

**Objective CAF O6**
**Energy Efficiency in New Developments**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that all developments are designed to take account of the impacts of climate change. This will include the installation of rainwater harvesting systems, sustainable urban drainage systems and nature-based solutions for water management. Energy efficiency and renewable energy measures should be incorporated, in the cases of large industrial, commercial or newly constructed public buildings. The incorporation of renewable technologies, such as solar energy in the design will be encouraged, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria.

**Objective CAF O7**
**Near Zero Energy Buildings**
It is an objective of the Council to support and promote climate smart and the Near Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standard of building, or equivalent, for all new developments.

**Objective CAF O8**
**Renewable Energy Objective**
It is an objective of the Council to promote and support development of renewable energy sources, which will achieve low carbon outputs including on-land and offshore renewable energy production, which support tidal turbine, PV, community energy companies and battery technology, subject to adequate environmental and ecological protection.

### 9.2.2 Climate Adaptation and Mitigation and Land Use Planning

Land use planning is one of the most effective processes to facilitate local adaptation to climate change. Tools such as land use zoning, policies in relation to compact growth, sustainable transport and the 10-minute city/town concept all can assist in minimising the development risks in Limerick from increasing greenhouse gas emissions, development in inappropriate locations, such as flood risk or other natural hazards, or risk due to the changing climate.

The land use planning framework set out in the Plan provides opportunities that can assist climate resilience and achieving the long-term goal of low carbon communities. However, it requires a shift from business as usual, towards more sustainable ways of living and working. Key measures include:

- Managing population and employment growth to deliver compact growth in appropriate locations
- Reduced car dependency and a transition to more sustainable modes of transport, including increased walking and cycling.
- Enhanced energy efficiency through developments in renewable energy and electric vehicles is essential.
- Protection of our natural resources, including water supply and utilising blue and green infrastructure measures and nature based solutions to minimise the risk of flooding and address surface water disposal.
- Maintain, restore and enhance the natural heritage of Limerick and seek to improve connectivity of blue and green networks throughout Limerick as a means of improving biodiversity and the health and well being of the citizens of Limerick.

### 9.2.3 Climate Adaptation

Adaptation is dealing with actions identified to manage and reduce the negative effect of climate change and taking appropriate action to prevent or minimise the damage. Climate adaptation also seeks to take advantage of opportunities that may arise, such as flood alleviation, water conservation, emergency response planning and requiring development to occur in a compact and sustainable manner, or planting crops that may benefit from climate change. One of the main aims of adaptation is to reduce the vulnerability of Limerick's environment and economy to these effects. Adaptation needs to take into account the need to ensure critical infrastructure is protected and will be able to function in this climate altered future, infrastructure such as the provision of necessities such as water, energy and transportation. It is necessary that the following is considered, in terms of addressing climate adaptation:

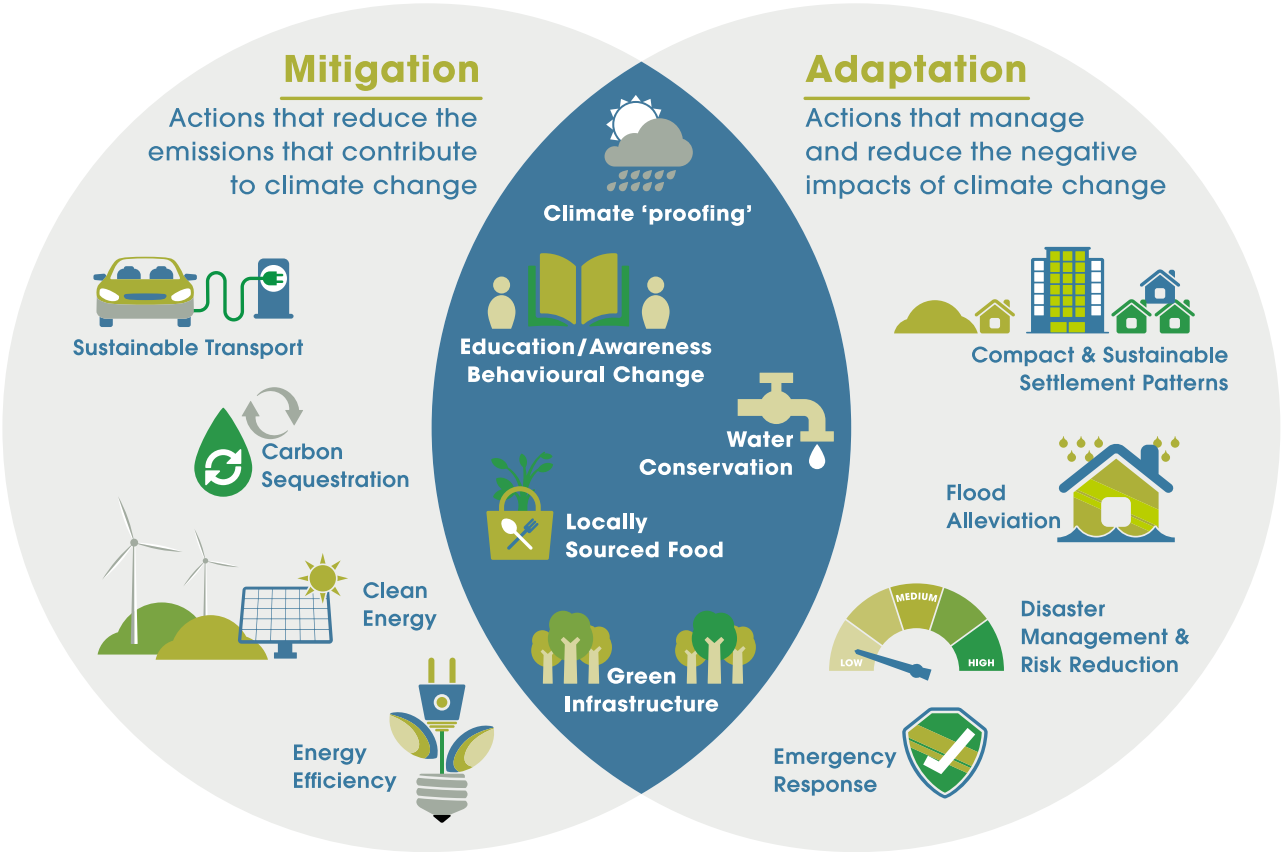
- Ensure new critical infrastructure such as transport, communications, waste and water facilities and energy supply are designed and managed to minimise effects of future climate events, such as severe storms, droughts and coastal or river flooding and/or coastal erosion. Infrastructure in areas such as close to the Shannon Estuary in particular, needs to be designed or modified with future risks in mind.
- Ensure that vulnerable developments are directed away from areas at risk, in particular areas at risk of flooding from rivers or coastal flooding or erosion.
- Encourage the adoption of nature-based solutions and the provision of blue and green infrastructure in all situations, where possible, as it provides many benefits, including the regulation of rainfall, reduction in storm flows and provides clean water and air.
- Consider the conversion or maintenance of land at risk of flooding to less vulnerable uses e.g. for natural habitats, or parks, where such land does not form part of the riparian zone or riparian buffer and where it would not interfere with the flood regulation functions of the floodplain.

- Continue to work with the Office of Public Works in the development of flood relief schemes and the maintenance of existing flood defences.
- Require new developments to demonstrate that climate risk and energy efficiency has been considered in the design of buildings and the site layout and ensure that the location, layout and design of new development accommodate predicted future climate change impacts. This approach will require innovative building design, new materials and standards (to accommodate hotter summers, while withstanding changes in precipitation patterns and more intense storms for example). When assessing applications, the Planning Authority will be cognisant of the requirements of adaptation.
- Include the retention and integration of existing natural landscape features such as trees and hedgerows into the design of all new development where possible.

### 9.2.4 Climate Mitigation

Climate mitigation is the management of resources and activities that contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases. To date, no mitigation plan has been produced for Limerick, unlike the adaptation plan which was adopted in July 2019. Many core planning functions, such as regulation of development, use of brown field sites or reuse of old buildings are climate mitigation measures in their own right, as they ensure maximum use of existing resources. Mitigation also considers sustainable transport, carbon sequestration, clean energy and energy efficiency, which are tools in addressing climate mitigation. The goal of mitigation is to avoid significant human interference with the climate system and attempt to stabilise greenhouse gas levels in a timeframe sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change. The implementation of a number of measures, including delivery of a modal shift in terms of sustainable transport, implementation of blue and green infrastructure and nature-based solutions and further development of clean energy sources are critical to the delivery of mitigation.

Figure 9.1 Climate Adaptation and Mitigation (Source RSES Southern Region)



Planning policies outlined in this chapter set out the Council's position in ensuring the delivery of renewable energy sources and require a balanced approach to be taken to the development of renewable energy technologies, so it can play a role in climate mitigation. Additional measures such as the creation of new woodlands, conservation of bogs and forested areas, all play a role in carbon sequestration and are also key mitigation measures.

**Objective CAF O9**
**Achieving Climate Resilience**
It is an objective of the Council to promote climate resilience in development and economic activities that are regulated by planning. It is important to ensure that any developments are climate resilient as they will need to function in a climate altered environment. This means that they will be able to withstand increased intensity of storm events and rainfall and through adequate design, location and drainage elements, would not contribute to problems elsewhere, such as increased run off.

**Objective CAF O10**
**Woodland Creation, Forestry and Preservation of Bogs**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate the creation, maintenance and preservation of woodlands, forestry and bogs in response to climate mitigation and in the interest of biodiversity.

**Objective CAF O11**
**Nature Based Solutions**
It is an objective of the Council to promote integration and delivery of nature-based solutions and infrastructure in new developments, including surface water management, public realm and community projects as a means of managing flood risk and enhancing the natural environment.

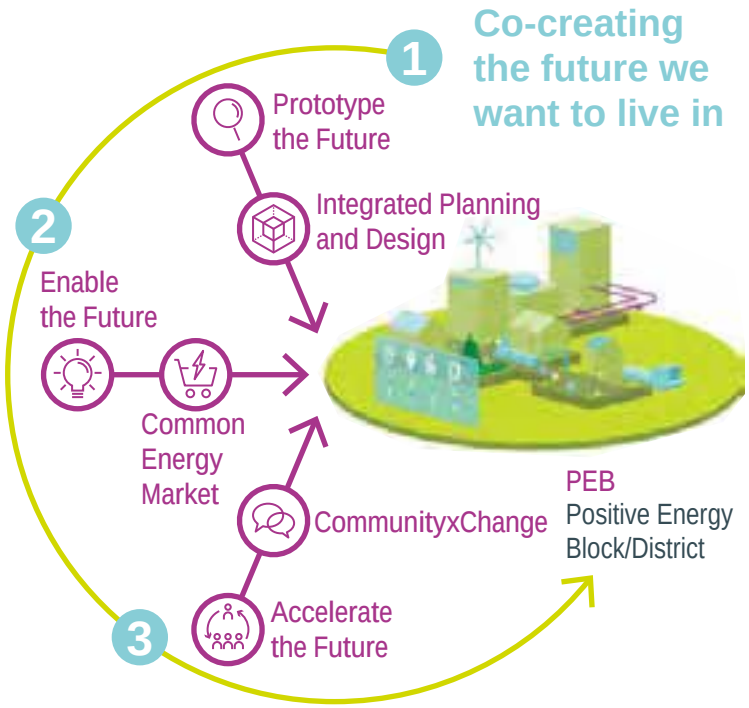
**Objective CAF O12**
**Urban Greening**
It is an objective of the Council to support urban greening and planting initiatives across the city, towns and villages.

### 9.2.5 +CityXChange Project

The +CityxChange project seeks to enable the co-creation of the future we want to live in. This includes the development of a framework and supporting tools to enable a common energy supply market, supported by a connected community, which leads to recommendations for new policy intervention, market (de) regulation and business models that will deliver positive energy communities and integrating e-Mobility as a service (eMaaS). The +CityxChange project is developing and deploying Positive Energy Blocks and Districts (PEB/PED) and scaling these out as part of the European Clean Energy Transition in cities. Some of the key goals and objectives of the project include:

- Increased energy efficiency to become a low carbon city;
- Development of Positive Energy Block (PEB), which is a designated zone of more than 3 buildings that has the capacity to annually produce more energy than it consumes. The block may benefit from a renewable energy resource(s) located adjacent to the block, producing renewable energy dedicated for the PEB;
- Develop Smart Energy Grid Smart Metering and Smart Energy Grids as part of the energy infrastructure in a low carbon city. The smart energy grid will enable local citizens to take more control over their energy use, to participate in how energy is generated, stored and distributed at a local level;
- Electric Mobility as a service (EMaaS) - the use of fossil fuels for transport is a significant contributor to climate change and poor air quality in cities. Electrification of various modes of transport will make a significant contribution to addressing the quality of life for city dwellers and help businesses to reduce their carbon footprints. Electric Mobility as a service, together with a range of low carbon transport initiatives, will be piloted in Limerick to support the city's low carbon transport.

Figure 9.2 +CityXChange Project




**Prototype the Future**
Test solutions before we implement them. Hard modelling and with citizents through beta projects.

**Integrated Planning and Design**
3D modelling and Decision Support Tools (DST).

**Enable the Future**
Create new innovations, tools, technologies, services etc. to enable the creation of positive energy blocks and districts.

**Common Energy Market**
Include RES, storage, energy management, blockchain, P2P energy trading, community grid, electric-vehicles, energy grid infrastructure.

**CommunityxChange**
Innovation Playground, Platfor (4)ms, Next Generation of Smart Citizen, PEB Champions etc.

**Accelerate the Future**
Create new top-down approaches from urban authorities and bottom up approaches through citizen engagement which, accelerates the adoption of positive energy blocks and districts.

**Objective CAF O13**
**+CityXChange Project**
It is an objective of the Council to promote Limerick City to become the First Lighthouse City in Ireland and support the outcomes of the +CityXChange project and the use of digital technologies, in empowering communities and citizens to become more climate resilient.

### 9.2.6 Transition to a Low Carbon Economy

The transition to a low carbon economy is a complex subject with implications for the whole of society and its entire range of economic activities. Many different sectors will approach it from their own view point and many, like agriculture and forestry, largely lie outside the scope of planning regulation.

**Policy CAF P2**
**Transition to a Low Carbon Economy**
It is a policy of the Council to support the transition to a low carbon climate resilient economy, by way of reducing greenhouse gases, increasing renewable energy and improving energy efficiency and will future proof policies and objectives to deliver on this approach, in so far as possible.

A climate altered future has implications for all aspects of activity that is regulated and informed by land use planning and a wide-ranging approach to the topic is required. One of the most important considerations in the transition to low carbon economy is the idea of a just transition. Some traditional sectors of the economy that are heavily dependent on fossil fuels, or carbon intensive raw materials, will be at a disadvantage as a result of the transition. It is important that the burden of change is shared equally and that certain sectors of the economy and society are adequately supported through the transition process.

Managing a successful low carbon transition means investing more in clean energy transition-related technologies, as well as moving towards more sustainable and perhaps localised modes of production and consumption. One of the key challenges for the climate-neutral transition is to reallocate resources from carbon-intensive to climate-neutral developments and infrastructure. Successful economic modernisation requires stimulating local economic diversification towards clean industries through decarbonisation, innovation and digitalisation.

**Policy CAF P3**
**Promote Awareness and Behavioural Change**
It is a policy of the Council to promote awareness and support behavioural change in relation to climate change and transition to a low carbon economy.

**Policy CAF P4**
**Co-operation with Relevant Stakeholders**
It is a policy of the Council to cooperate with the Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) and other relevant stakeholders, in respect of adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and future climate change adaptation strategies.

**Objective CAF O14**
**Energy Generation**
It is an objective of the Council to support the local production of renewable energy and connection to the gas network. Where electricity is being generated locally, the Council will support the provision of infrastructure for its transmission to the grid, subject to it fulfilling technical and environmental requirements.

**Objective CAF O15**
**Local Energy Production**
It is an objective of the Council to support localised renewable and carbon friendly means of heating and energy provision, including district heating systems. New technologies such as air to water and geo thermal may have a role to play in this regard.

**Objective CAF O16**
**Circular Economy**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage the adoption of the circular economy through promotion of the reuse, recycling and reduction of the use of raw materials and resources.

**Objective CAF O17**
**Low Energy Building Materials**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage the use of low energy building materials and design in all developments.

### 9.2.7 Energy and Emissions Balance

Limerick City and County Council are aware of the importance of managing our energy consumption and emissions outputs, in terms of addressing climate change and the transition to a low carbon economy. The Council have commissioned the preparation of an *Energy and Emissions Balance Report for Limerick*, which considers energy consumption, carbon emissions and fuel costs. The report focussed on energy and emissions generated between 2000 and 2020 and the projected energy demands and emissions from 2021 up to year 2030.

A top-down approach for all sectors is being adopted, in order to proportion the energy consumption data and associated carbon emissions and fuel cost estimates to a Limerick level. This allows for an indicative representation of energy consumption, carbon emissions and fuel costs, within Limerick for each of the reporting years, by sector and by fuel. It has identified an increase in energy consumption between 2000 and 2020 and has predicted a gradual decrease in carbon emissions, as the need to take climate action into account is recognised. One of the most important points raised in the document, is the need for the preparation of a Local Authority Climate Action Plan, following on from the *Climate Action Plan 2021* and as required under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Amendment Act 2021. This will be produced within the lifetime of the Plan. Where necessary the contents of the Plan will align with the contents of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan, which will contain both adaptation and mitigation measures, which are also a feature of the Plan.

**Objective CAF O18**
**Energy and Emissions Balance**
It is an objective of the Council to support the *Energy and Emissions Balance Report* and updates of the report as they are prepared. The Council will also support the preparation of a Local Authority Climate Action Plan as outlined in the report.

### 9.2.8 Decarbonising Zone

Action 165 of the *Climate Action Plan 2021* requires each Local Authority to identify a Decarbonisation Zone (DZ). A Decarbonising Zone is an area spatially identified by the Local Authority, in which a range of climate mitigation measures can co-exist to address local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate needs. The range of policies and projects developed are specific to the energy and climate characteristics of the spatial area covered by the DZ.

A Decarbonising Zone should also address the wider co-benefits of air quality, improved health, biodiversity, embodied carbon, agricultural practices, sustainable land management, lower noise levels, waste, water, circular economy etc. and should integrate with smart data and 'smart cities' initiatives. A Decarbonising Zone can also explore the co-benefits of climate adaptation and examine a range of local measures, such as climate proofing, afforestation, blue and green infrastructure, reducing heat island effects, citizen awareness and behavioural change.

**Objective CAF O19**
**Decarbonising Zones**
It is an objective of the Council to support the identification of a Decarbonising Zone by designating a spatial area, in which a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures and action owners are identified, to address local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate needs, to contribute to national climate action targets and work with statutory agencies and stakeholders as appropriate.

## 9.3 Flooding, Flood Risk Management and Water Management

The Section 28 Planning Guidelines *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management* (DHPLG/OPW, 2009) and associated Technical Appendices and Circulars, are the basis of the Council's policy in relation to development and flood risk management. It plays a key part in informing zoning decisions and decisions on individual planning applications, where flood risk is identified as a factor. The guidelines ensure that the key principles of flood risk management and sustainable planning are adopted. The sequential approach to managing flood risk within the planning system is one of the first aspects to consider and where uncertainty exists, the precautionary approach is taken. The stages of appraisal and assessment are set out in the 2009 Guidelines.

In the preparation of the Plan, in accordance with *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared to assess flood risk within the plan area. The SFRA is set out in Volume 4 of this Plan. The precautionary approach has largely been employed to land use zoning to avoid directing development towards areas at risk of flooding. Areas identified as being at risk of flooding, which are being put forward for land use zoning, have been subject to assessment through a justification test, to determine its suitability for inclusion and have only been considered, where they are determined to be within or adjoining the core of the City Centre. Where particular areas identified as being liable to flood were examined as being strategically important for the consolidated and coherent growth of Limerick's settlements and zoned accordingly, a site-specific flood risk assessment will be required to accompany development proposals for these areas and mitigation measures for site and building works will be required to be integrated.

**Policy CAF P5**
**Managing Flood Risk**
It is a policy of the Council to protect Flood Zone A and Flood Zone B from inappropriate development and direct developments/land uses into the appropriate lands, in accordance with *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* 2009 (or any subsequent document) and the guidance contained in Development Management Standards and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). Where a development/land use is proposed that is inappropriate within the Flood Zone, but that has passed the Plan Making Justification Test, then the development proposal will need to be accompanied by a Development Management Justification Test and Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the criteria set out under *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* 2009 and Circular PL2/2014 (and any subsequent updates). This will need to demonstrate inclusion of measures to mitigate flood and climate change risk, including those recommended under Part 3 (Specific Flood Risk Assessment) of the Site-Specific Plan Making Justification Tests detailed in the SFRA. In Flood Zone C, the developer should satisfy themselves that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed and should consider other sources of flooding, residual risks and the implications of climate change.

**Objective CAF O20**
**Flood Risk Assessments**
It is an objective of the Council to require a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for all planning applications in Flood Zones A and B and consider all sources of flooding (for example coastal/tidal, fluvial, pluvial or groundwater), where deemed necessary. The detail of these Site-Specific FRAs (or commensurate assessments of flood risk for minor developments) will depend on the level of risk and scale of development. The FRA will be prepared taking into account the requirements laid out in the SFRA, and in particular in the Plan Making Justification Tests as appropriate to the particular development site. A detailed Site-Specific FRA should quantify the risks, the effects of selected mitigation and the management of any residual risks. The assessments shall consider and provide information on the implications of climate change with regard to flood risk in relevant locations.

**Objective CAF O21**
**Identified Flood Risk**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Ensure that no development shall commence on the lands identified as being at flood risk adjacent to the Raheen Business Park in the townlands of Ballycummin/ Rootiagh, zoned for High Tech/ Manufacturing, until a Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment, including hydraulic model has been prepared for the lands, which demonstrates that the flood risk for the lands can be mitigated or that a less vulnerable use can be accommodated on site.
b) Ensure that on the Enterprise and Employment lands located to the northwest of the M20/M7/N18 junction to the south of Toppin's field, that no encroachment onto, or loss of the flood plain occurs at this location and that only water compatible development should be permitted for the lands that are identified as being at risk of flooding.

c) Ensure any planning application, including proposals for water compatible uses, on the lands in Flood Zones A and B adjacent to the Coonagh TUS campus, zoned for Education and Community, shall include a comprehensive Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment, incorporating a drainage assessment for the lands, which demonstrates that the flood risk can be mitigated and that water compatible uses can be accommodated without adversely impacting on the flood risk of neighbouring residential properties.

d) No works including the undertaking of ground level changes shall commence on the lands in the National Technology Park subject to flood risk, until all flood mitigation measures proposed on the site to facilitate future development of the IDA lands have been put in place. These measures shall form part of a project-specific flood risk assessment being completed as part of any planning application.

e) Implement the flood mitigation measures included under the Justification Test including to ensure that vulnerable uses, including that of a residential nature, shall not be permitted at ground floor level on the District Centre zoned lands at Jetland/ Ennis Road/ Ennis Road Retail Park, at Caherdavin/Moyross.

f) New or more intensive permissible uses not covered by part (g) below on Variation No. 3 lands including Sites Z10 and Z11 that overlap with Flood Zones A or B or with Future Climate Scenario Flood Risk Areas (as identified in Appendix I of the accompanying SFRA Addendum) shall be limited to water compatible uses. This limitation shall take primacy over any other related land use zoning provision including the City Centre zoning applicable to Sites Z10 and Z11. Proposals for developments within these areas shall be accompanied by a Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessment.

g) Extensions of existing uses or minor development on Variation No. 3 lands including Sites Z10 and Z11 that overlap with Flood Zones A or B or with Future Climate Scenario Flood Risk Areas (as identified in Appendix I of the accompanying SFRA Addendum) shall comply with requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Assessment Guidelines, and associated circular, including providing detailed design specifications as may be required to facilitate the impact of development. Extensions of existing uses or minor development within flood risk areas shall not: obstruct important flow paths; introduce a number of people into flood risk areas; entail the storage of hazardous substances; have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities; or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

**Objective CAF O22**
**Cooperation with Other Agencies**
It is an objective of the Council to work with other bodies and organisations, as appropriate, to help protect critical infrastructure, including water and wastewater, within Limerick, from risk of flooding. Any subsequent plans shall consider, as appropriate any new and/or emerging data, including, when available, any relevant information contained in the CFRAM Flood Risk Management Plans and as recommended in the SFRA for the Plan.

**Objective CAF O23**
**Flood Relief Schemes**
It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the development of Flood Relief Schemes as identified in the CFRAM 10 Year Investment Programme and ensure development proposals do not impede or prevent the progression of these measures.

**Objective CAF O24**
**Minor Flood and Mitigation Works and Coastal Protection Schemes**
It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the Office of Public Works Minor Flood and Mitigation Works and Coastal Protection Schemes and ensure development proposals do not impede or prevent the progression of these measures.

**Objective CAF O25**
**Strategic Flood Risk Assessment**
It is an objective of the Council to have regard to the recommendations set out in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment prepared to support the Plan.

### 9.3.1 Water Management

Closely related to the idea of adaptation to flooding and management of water for flooding purposes is the wider idea of water management in a broader sense. Climate projections mention that summers are likely to be hotter and drier and this raises the possibility of drought, such as that in the summer of 2018. It is important that suitable allowance is made for climate change in flood risk responses. In this regard, consideration should also be given to water management in its wider context, not just in relation to flooding but also in relation to water storage and rain water harvesting to provide a reserve of water for possible drought periods.

## 9.4 Renewable Energy

Renewable energy continues to play an important role in terms of energy production nationally and within Limerick. As technologies emerge and alter, Limerick needs to position itself, to ensure that it has a safe, secure, sustainable and affordable supply of energy, which is central in securing sustainable development. Renewable energy is defined as renewable non – fossil energy sources such as, but not limited to wind, solar, geothermal, wave, tidal, hydropower, bioenergy, landfill gas, sewerage treatment plant gas, bio gases and bio – char, in the EU Renewable Energy Directive.

The *Climate Action Plan* 2021 includes targets to increase the capacity of renewable energy in Ireland. Ireland has a target of 80% of electricity sourced from renewables by 2030. The development of the updated *Wind Energy Guidelines* and the *Renewable Electricity Development Plan* will also facilitate informed decision making in relation to onshore renewable energy infrastructure.

Local Authorities must also be consistent with the following national plans, policies and strategies when considering proposals for renewable energy:

- *The National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010;*
- *The Government's Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012 – 2020;*
- *The Government's White Paper on Energy Policy - Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030;*
- *Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change (July 2017);*
- *Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Planning Guidelines (2006), as amended or replaced;*
- *National Mitigation Plans (compliant with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act, 2015).*

From a renewable energy production perspective, Limerick has many attributes to support the development of renewable energy sources, sitting on the banks of the River Shannon, there is significant potential to harness the clean energy that could be generated, subject to an appropriate level of environmental and ecological assessment. The emerging concept of the Atlantic Green Digital Basin (GDB) can provide both a mechanism for achieving a green and digitally diversified region. The GDB can support a business cluster leveraging digital technologies powered 100% by our own generated green energy, becoming the centre point for Europe's digital traffic and a global exporter of clean energy.

The project identifies a number of key building blocks to enable the project to be realised and all will need to be considered in an environmentally sustainable manner. This includes the potential for the development of hydro and wind energy, utilising emerging ocean and wind technology, utilising the water to support economic development such as data centres and harnessing the knowledge and experience in the region in terms of bio economy. See Chapter 5: A Strong Economy for further details.

The contribution of both large and small scale renewables, including domestic and agricultural is likely to grow, over the lifetime of the Plan. This has proven to be the case in many European countries, where micro renewables in the form of photo-voltaic installations on houses and other structures make a significant contribution to energy generation.

**Policy CAF P6**
**Renewable Energy**
It is a policy of the Council to support renewable energy commitments outlined in national and regional policy, by facilitating the development and exploitation of a range of renewable energy sources at suitable locations throughout Limerick, where such development does not have a negative impact on the surrounding environment landscape, biodiversity, water quality or local amenities, to ensure the long-term sustainable growth of Limerick.

**Policy CAF P7**
**Atlantic Green Digital Basin (GDB)**
It is a policy of the Council to support the development of Atlantic Green Digital Basin (GDB) proposals within Limerick and the wider region, subject to appropriate levels of environmental assessment and planning considerations and to work with relevant stakeholders to realise its potential.

**Policy CAF P8**
**Community Based Renewable Energy**
It is a policy of the Council to support the development of community based renewable energy projects, subject to appropriate levels of environmental assessment and planning considerations.

Table 9.2 Renewable Energy allocations for differing technologies

| Output Current and Projected | Wind | Anaerobic Digestion | Solar | Hydro | Geothermal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Current capacity MW** | 234.35 | 2.0 | 113.49 | 0.1 MW | 0 |
| **Target Capacity MW (2030)** | 386.45 (+65%) | 20 (+1,000%) | 227.0 (+100%) | 0.3MW (+300%) | 0.5MW |

Note: Baseline figures drawn from LCCC sources June 2020

**Policy CAF P9**
**Renewable Energy Technologies**
It is a policy of the Council to consider all emerging renewable energy technologies, such as hydrogen electrolysis, pumped storage and small-scale anaerobic digestion and any other source of renewable energy technologies that are viable as a means of energy security, subject to the relevant level of necessary environmental and ecological assessments.

### 9.4.1 Bio-energy Production

This aspect of renewable energy can lend itself well to collective community or district combined heat and power plants. Sources of bio-mass in Limerick can vary from products specifically grown for use as bio-mass fuels, such as Miscanthus or Short Rotation Coppice, to animal waste and by products of the food industry. The Council acknowledges the predominant nature of agriculture, within the rural area, including beef and dairy production and the importance of maintaining sustainable agriculture in line with the European Green Deal. Therefore, the opportunities associated with specifically grown products as sources of bio-mass may be limited. The forestry sector can also make a contribution to the bio-mass sector through the use of by-products from the forestry sector as fuel. Forestry thinnings and waste timber can be localised fuel sources.

**Objective CAF O26**
**Bio Energy**
It is an objective of the Council to support the development of bio energy and projects in suitable locations and subject to adequate assessment. The development of grid injection, where this is necessary for renewable energy input will also be supported.

Technologies such as anaerobic digestion (AD) and dry digestion can play a role in helping to manage sources of farm waste in particular and can help to provide an outlet for farm waste, municipal solid waste, or by products from the food industry. Anaerobic digestion is the bacterial fermentation of organic waste in oxygen free conditions. The by-product of this is methane and liquid and solid residues, which are high in nutrient values, but are in a more easily handled form than the original wastes. This technology would be particularly appropriate for the treatment of farm wastes.

### 9.4.2 Hydro-power

Traditionally hydro-power provided energy for mills and other enterprises in Limerick and depends on the harnessing of water power flowing from a higher to a lower level. It is usually only possible to exploit hydro-power resources where they occur. It involves the creation of a head pond and weir to provide sufficient depth to draw off water, a headrace –a pipe or channel to carry the water from source to the generation turbine contained within the turbine house and tail race to return the water to its natural course. Creating these structures will have an effect on the course of the river and may have ecological effects. While many of the locations that would have had mills in the past could be expected to provide suitable locations today, ecological and environmental concerns will have to be taken into account, such as fish passes to ensure that fish are not drawn into the turbine. This is of particular importance for salmonids, which during migration may be particularly vulnerable to this. Consultation with both the Fisheries Boards and the National Parks and Wildlife Service are required in order to ensure that fisheries and other ecological issues are taken into account. Many of the rivers and tributaries in Limerick are protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives and this should be a key consideration during the investigation of any development in or in close proximity to the watercourse.

**Objective CAF O27**
**Renewable Energy Production**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage and facilitate the production of energy from renewable sources, such as from bioenergy, solar, hydro, tidal, geothermal and wind energy, subject to appropriate levels of environmental assessment and planning considerations.

### 9.4.3 Solar Energy

Solar energy has been an area which has seen significant development over the last decade. The basic principle is to harness and gain maximum benefit of solar energy, through the following means–passive solar, active solar heating and solar photovoltaic systems. There are a range of technologies available to exploit the benefits of the sun, including solar panels, solar farm and solar energy storage facilities, all of which contribute to a reduction in fossil energy demand.

Limerick has experienced significant interest in the development of solar energy in the form of large scale photovoltaic solar farms, which is an emerging technology in Ireland, with a number of proposed largescale developments granted approval. Normal planning considerations, including impact on landscape, urban design, biodiversity, ecological impact, on-site water management, access to grid, security fencing, decommissioning issues and residential amenity, including potential glint and glare will require assessment.

The Council encourages proposals in relation to solar PV in industrial/commercial settings, where installations can be sited at ground level or on rooftops. The Council encourages, as part of the design and planning process, an evaluation of the potential to incorporate solar PV (or other suitable micro renewable technology) into the design of all new developments, or extensions to existing development, or change of use proposals and to submit this evaluation with any planning application.

Proposals in relation to hybrid installations of large-scale solar PV and wind will be assessed by the Council on a site-by-site basis taking into account ecological, scenic and other normal planning considerations.

The Council will support utility scale solar PV development at suitable locations where it can be demonstrated that there are no significant adverse impacts.

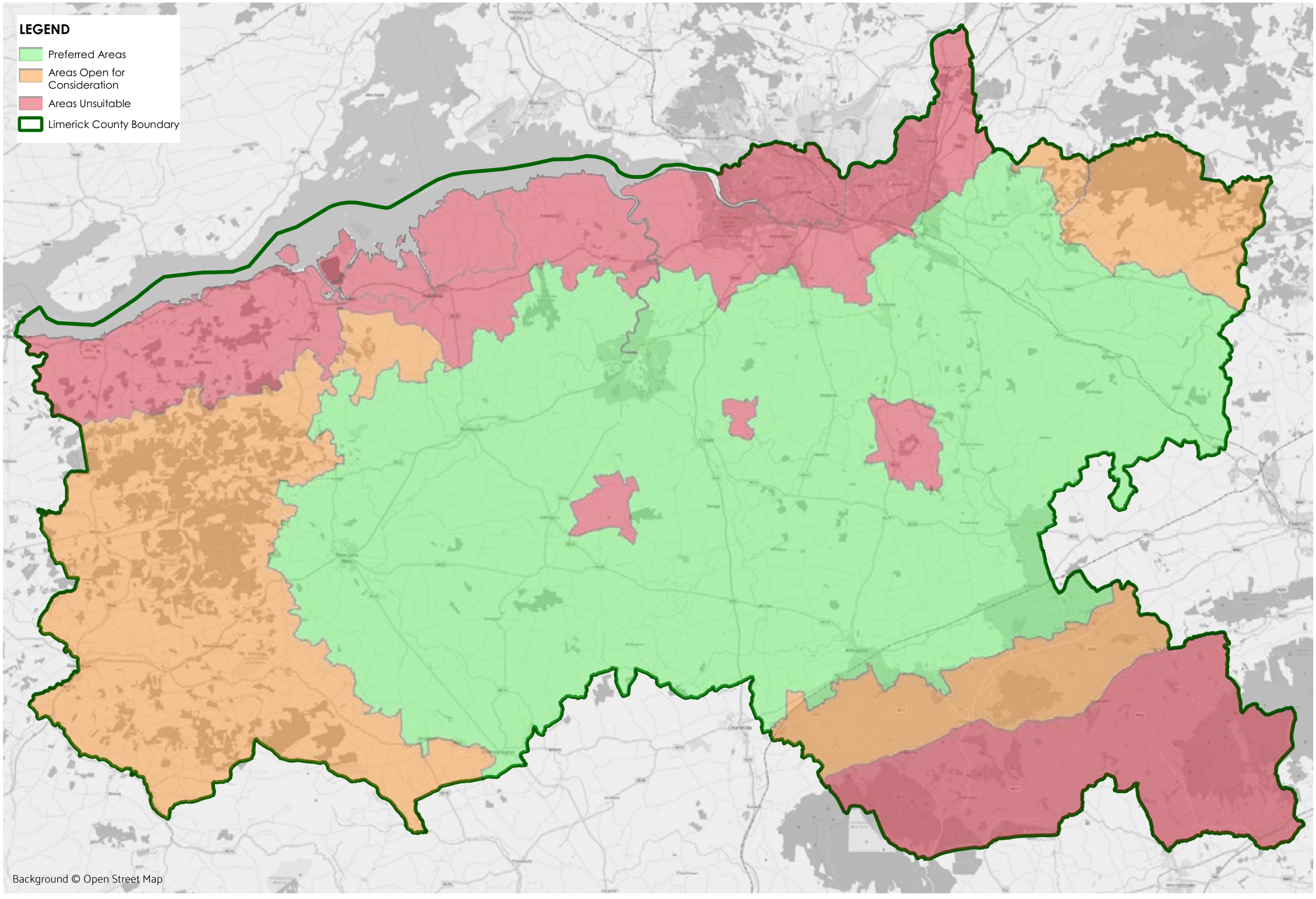
### 9.4.4 Wind Energy

The Council recognises the importance of onshore and offshore wind energy as a renewable energy source and its national energy targets. Improvements are required in the existing transmission network to fully harness the renewable energy potential in Limerick. The Plan supports maximising the potential of accessing new, emerging by-product markets to advance the growth of Limerick and to assist in transition to a low carbon society. The Council recognises the significant contribution that wind energy can make as a clean sustainable solution to energy requirements and the role it can play in helping achieve national targets, in relation to fossil fuel reductions and consequently greenhouse gas emissions.

The Council will continue to support and encourage the principle of wind energy development in accordance with Government policy and having regard to the *Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, or any update made thereto during the lifetime of the Plan, subject to the location and siting of such infrastructure and having regard to the extensive designations throughout Limerick in terms of Natura 2000 sites.

**Objective CAF O28**
**Assessment of Renewable Energy Projects**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage the development of wind energy, in accordance with Government policy and having regard to the principles and planning guidance set out in the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government publications relating to *Wind Energy Development* and the DCCAE *Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland* and any other relevant guidance, which may be issued in relation to sustainable energy provisions during the course of the Plan.

Map 9.1 Wind Energy Locations



In terms of wind generation, the Shannon Estuary has significant opportunities for off shore wind development, which presents potential for economic development in servicing these developments within Limerick. The offshore wind industry is projected to grow significantly over the next decade and offshore wind power is expected to account for a large portion of the Country's energy demands in the future. Recognising the importance of offshore wind energy potential is a key consideration of the Plan. The necessary supporting infrastructure will be enabled on land, to facilitate connection to the network, subject to appropriate levels of environmental and ecological assessments.

The port of Foynes is ideally placed to act as a support base for offshore wind, both during any initial exploration phase and also during the subsequent construction and operational and dismantling phases.

**Objective CAF O29**
**Wind Energy Development and Environmental Considerations**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the development of wind energy in an environmentally sustainable manner, ensuring proposals are consistent with the landscape character objectives of the Plan, the protection of the natural and built environment and the visual and residential amenities of the area.

**Objective CAF O30**
**Location of Wind Energy Developments**
It is an objective of the Council to promote the location of wind farms and wind energy infrastructure in the 'preferred areas' as outlined on Map 9.1, to prohibit such infrastructure in areas identified as 'not open for consideration' and to consider, subject to appropriate assessment, the location of wind generating infrastructure in areas 'open for consideration'.

**Objective CAF O31**
**Wind Energy supporting Infrastructure**
It is an objective of the Council to support the development of appropriate land-based infrastructure and facilities at suitable locations, in order to facilitate the necessary connections for off- shore renewable energy projects.

**Objective CAF O32**
**OffShore Wind**
It is an objective of the Council to support:
a) The development of offshore windfarm developments, subject to normal planning considerations, including in particular the impact on areas of environmental or landscape sensitivity.
b) Terrestrial developments along the coastline to ensure adequate provision for connection to the national grid for offshore wind farms.

**Objective CAF O33**
**Development of Foynes Port**
It is an objective of the Council to support the development of Foynes Port, as a support base for offshore wind, both during any initial exploration phase and also during the subsequent construction and operational and dismantling phases, subject to appropriate levels of environmental and ecological assessments.

**Objective CAF O34**
**Wind Energy Development**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure that wind energy developments on sensitive or sloping sites, or any significant alterations to them, are accompanied by adequate assessment of the effects of the development on soil stability.

**Objective CAF O35**
**Community Based Energy Initiatives**
It is an objective of the Council to support community energy-based initiatives, subject to adequate assessment, to help achieve low carbon communities.

**Objective CAF O36**
**Life Extension and Repowering of Wind Farms**
It is an objective of the Council to support the life-extension and repowering of existing wind farms, where considered appropriate and subject to an appropriate level of environmental and planning assessment.

### 9.4.5 Tidal and Wave Energy

Tidal energy can provide reliable and predictable energy sources, due to the predictability of tidal events. The two main types of tidal energy extraction are tidal barrage systems and tidal stream flow turbines. Barrages are usually located across a tidal inlet and capture the energy of the tidal movement, by creating a barrier and channelling it through the turbines.

Tidal stream flow turbines are located beneath the water surface and can be submerged so they are not seen or heard. Similar to wave devices, there are currently a broad and diverse range of technologies under development for harnessing tidal energy.

The Shannon Estuary has the largest tidal range on the Irish coast and as a result has considerable potential as a tidal energy resource. The *Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary*, prepared in 2012 has identified a number of sites with potential for tidal energy development along the Shannon Estuary. These sites have potential to be developed, with consequential benefits for the delivery of renewable energy. The ecological implications of the development of these sources of energy requires careful examination as they can pose a risk to marine life and fish passage. This is true of barrage type structures in particular.

### 9.4.6 Geothermal Energy

The recent publication by the Geological Survey of Ireland of *An Assessment of Geothermal Energy for District Heating in Ireland* in late 2020, indicates the potential for geothermal energy in Ireland. Such energy is available at different depths, but to date in Ireland, it is only sources of shallow geothermal energy that have been exploited. Geothermal resources are categorised in terms of depth ('shallow' or 'deep') and/or temperature. A more precise way to categorise geothermal resources is by the enthalpy, or total heat content, that is available. Traditional volcanic geothermal systems have been termed high enthalpy and any other systems termed low enthalpy. One of the huge advantages of geothermal energy is that it can provide a consistent supply of energy, unlike wind or photovoltaic, which can be limited by weather conditions or daylight hours.

**Objective CAF O37**
**Geothermal Energy**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate geothermal energy generating developments, both standalone and in conjunction with other renewable energy projects in suitable locations.

Geothermal energy is usually captured using a heat pump. The heat pump operates in a similar fashion to a refrigerator, however the purpose of the heat pump is to harness large quantities of low-grade thermal energy (from water, air or soil) and boost the energy to deliver it at higher temperatures to a building heating system. It is suitable for both single and multiple buildings.

### 9.4.7 Emerging Technologies

One of the technologies that has emerged over the last decade or so is air to water. Similar to geothermal, it works by extracting heat from air transferring it to liquid, which when heated can be pumped through a structure. This technology is often used as underfloor heating and for the provision of hot water.

Further development of existing technologies, such as solar, more efficient geothermal and future development of marine energies are also likely to play a greater role during the lifetime of the Plan. The Council encourages the small-scale generation of heat and electricity by individuals, small businesses and communities to meet their own needs and as an alternative to, or to supplement, grid connected power. Exemptions set out in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) permit small scale generations for residential and commercial operations, subject to certain conditions.

**Objective CAF O38**
**Emerging Technologies**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate and encourage future renewable energy technologies, such as hydrogen electrolysis, pumped storage and small-scale anaerobic digestion and any other source of renewable energy technologies, that are viable as a means of energy security, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria.

### 9.4.8 Carbon Capture and Storage

The closest large scale carbon capture and storage project that has received funding from the EU is Ervia's (Gas Networks Ireland parent company) Cork Carbon Use and Storage project, which will use the depleted Kinsale gas fields to store carbon. In a Limerick context, established means such as afforestation can play a role but should the opportunity arise to support or to use elements of carbon capture and storage in older infrastructural facilities, these options will be considered by the Council.

**Objective CAF O39**
**Carbon Capture**
It is an objective of the Council to support investment in initiatives to develop innovation, advances in technology and pilot projects for the sustainable development of energy storage and carbon capture within the region and to work with key stakeholders in developing sustainable forestry, including initiatives for native tree planting, conservation of peatland and better soil management, subject to suitable ecological assessment, to support carbon sequestration and enhancement of biodiversity.

**Objective CAF O40**
**Energy Storage**
It is an objective of the Council to promote the use of efficient energy storage systems and infrastructure that regulates energy supply and helps even out the variable nature of some renewable energy supply sources.

### 9.4.9 District Heating

District Heating Network (DH) is a means of transporting heat as hot water through a network of highly insulated pipelines, delivering heat (rather than fuel) directly to buildings. This type of system can service multiple buildings on a local network with heat exchangers installed in each structure to distribute the heat internally. DH systems have been mainly powered by fossil fuels in the past, but renewable networks are now common throughout Europe. DH networks have the potential to decarbonise the heat sector where the heat demand is high enough.

### 9.4.10 Combined Heat and Power

Combined Heat and Power (CHP) also known as 'Co-generation', is the simultaneous production of electricity and heat usually in the form of hot water or steam, from a primary fuel such as natural gas. Electricity is generated on site by driving an alternator connected to a turbine or engine. The heat from the combustion is harvested to provide steam or hot water that can be used on site. In a Limerick context, anaerobic digestion is perhaps one of the best examples where heat can be used on the farm, while electricity generated can be exported to the grid.

It must also be recognised that natural gas, particularly renewable and indigenous gas, will continue to have a role to play in the transition to a low carbon economy. As such, renewable energy developments may require support from such sources in times of high energy demand.

### 9.4.11 Community Investment in Renewable Energy

In recent years community supported renewable energy projects have had access to the energy market. There are many benefits to this approach towards renewable energy development, not least local control and local support for these projects. The Council will support such developments, as diversity of ownership and control of energy resources by local communities has a huge role to play in a just transition to low carbon economy.

**Objective CAF O41**
**Community Renewable Energy**
It is an objective of the Council to support and strengthen sustainable local/community renewable energy networks, micro renewable generation, climate smart countryside projects and connections from such initiatives to the grid. The potential for sustainable local/community energy projects and micro-generation to both mitigate climate change and to provide for local fuel need is also supported.





# 10

# Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure

## 10.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on social infrastructure and how it fits into the overall land use planning framework for Limerick to foster healthy, sustainable, inclusive and attractive communities in a manner that both enhances people's quality of life and connection to place, while minimising their carbon footprint. Social infrastructure ranges across the spheres of health, security, education, community assembly and governance, worship, sports, recreation, play, arts and culture.

Planning policies for all types of social infrastructure should be integrated with a corporate policy framework and informed by certain cross-cutting goals or values including:

- Social inclusiveness and community empowerment through supporting communities to become resilient, cohesive, vibrant and inclusive;
- Compact growth and walkable neighbourhoods;
- Healthy place-making; and
- Creativity.

**Policy SCSI P1**
**Sustainable Communities**
It is a policy of the Council to seek to improve the provision of community infrastructure and recreational opportunities for the wider community, in co-operation with relevant bodies, in a sustainable manner in accordance with the settlement strategy of the Plan. This is conducive to ethical principles of healthy communities, inclusivity and accessibility to facilities for all abilities and sustainability to ensure that Limerick is a greener, cleaner, more welcoming place to live, work and attract investment.

**Policy SCSI P2**
**Location of Community Facilities**
It is a policy of the Council to ensure that adequate provision is made in land use zoning, in the layout of developments and residential densities to ensure optimum accessibility to local community facilities and amenities, particularly by sustainable modes of transport. Barriers to pedestrian access to such social infrastructure should be removed.

**Policy SCSI P3**
**Social Infrastructure**
It is a policy of the Council to promote and support targeted policies and measures where these are warranted to assist in renewal, regeneration and retrospective interventions and ensure that local needs for social infrastructure are properly considered and that suitable measures to facilitate or provide social infrastructure are identified and incorporated within those interventions.

## 10.2 National, Regional and Local Policy Context

The National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) both focus on healthy place-making and the creation of attractive, 'inclusive communities and places', 'healthy communities' and accessible neighbourhoods that have good access to appropriate 'enabling' social infrastructure.

A core principle of the NPF is to 'ensure a high standard quality of life to future residents as well as environmentally and socially sustainable housing and place-making through integrated planning and consistently excellent design'.

The position of the RSES for the Southern Region concerning social infrastructure and sustainable communities includes a focus on improving regional quality of life through infrastructure-led planning. The RSES also includes an objective on the '10-minute' city and town concepts, to attain sustainable compact settlements whereby, a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycle timeframes from homes, or accessible by high quality public transport services connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services.

Furthermore, the RSES 'supports the role of Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs), the Public Participation Networks (PPNs) and other community partnerships to ensure regional responses are meaningful and flexible to cater for the needs of local communities'.

The above is further reinforced in the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP). Limerick-Shannon MASP supports a number of key infrastructure and transformative projects within Limerick City of relevance to this chapter. These include the following:

- Public realm improvements in the City Centre including the development of a City-wide interconnected set of public parks, urban renewal within the Georgian Neighbourhood;
- Additional child friendly amenities within the City Centre including playgrounds that will help drive footfall;
- The further development and promotion of cultural, heritage and sporting offerings (such as EVA International/ The Red Mile) to further develop the desirability of the City Centre;
- The growth and development of health care facilities as proposed by the University Hospital Limerick in their Strategic Plan;
- The continued expansion of the City's third level institutions and integration with the wider City and region, including the provision of specific facilities to address educational and social deprivation;
- The RSES also lists key infrastructural projects for the key town of Newcastle West. These include a proposed Regional Athletics Hub and the Limerick Greenway.

The Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 provides a strategy for the promotion of local economic and community development. The Local Government Reform Act 2014, required every Local Authority to make a 'Local Economic and Community Plan' for the promotion of economic and community development in its functional area. In Limerick, the current LECP is the *Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021*. The LECP and the Development Plans for Limerick play a complementary role to each other.

## 10.3 Community Facilities and Amenities

The provision of good quality community facilities in existing and developing areas is a key element in the development of sustainable, healthy communities across Limerick. Facilities such as community centres or halls, churches and places of worship, national schools, parish centres, sports centres, libraries and playgrounds, can serve in their different ways as focal points for communities living around them. The Council recognises the need to provide for an all-purpose facility to support the various Suicide Prevention groups and Emergency Services in the City and County.

The Council is committed to both protection of existing community infrastructure and provision for new and upgraded community infrastructure. Provision for new social infrastructure entails ensuring adequate land is set aside, either as part of new development proposals where appropriate, or in zoned lands for this purpose as part of this Plan or Local Area Plans. Also, as part of the Council's commitment to sustainability and to ensure the provision of social infrastructure in tandem with developments, a Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment will be required for any residential developments of 10 or more dwelling units (refer to Chapter: 11 Development Management Standards).

The location of new community facilities should generally meet the following criteria:

- In line with the '10-minute town and city concept' they should be generally located, 800 m. walking distance of the community it serves;
- Located centrally with respect to the community it serves, taking into account limitations of topography and the road and footpath network;
- By transport infrastructure nodes and on roads or points either serviced or serviceable by public transport;
- Clustered with complementary community facilities, local retail services etc. and integrated with housing; and
- Located in an area in which a substantial proportion of members of the community reside, in particular older members of the community.

Exceptions might be made where the site has attributes that render it suitable for a specific local community use, for instance for a park or playing fields and to which a community use could be attached.

In designing new facilities, it is essential to ensure that they are adaptable over time to meet the changing needs of the population and to provide potential for maximising their dual usage, during evenings/ weekends/school holidays. Where new social and community facilities are being retrofitted into established neighbourhoods, the issue of potential adverse impacts on residential amenity and increased pressures on limited on-street car parking spaces will be considered.

**Objective SCSI O1**
**Community Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to ensure new residential developments incorporate appropriate provision for community and recreational facilities, for the benefit of local residents, or are located within easy access to such facilities.

**Objective SCSI O2**
**Accessibility for All**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Seek the provision of appropriate, inclusive and accessible, safe amenity, recreational open space and community facilities that are available for all sections of the community, both urban and rural at a convenient distance from their homes and places of work.
b) Ensure that community facilities, recreation, play and leisure facilities are fully accessible to all users and are compliant with current legislative requirements.

**Objective SCSI O3**
**Community Hubs**
It is an objective of the Council to promote community hubs i.e. community facilities of a general nature that can benefit from shared services and be adopted for a wide variety of purposes, including local enterprise, health and education services.

**Objective SCSI O4**
**Ten - Minute Neighbourhood**
It is an objective of the Council to implement a strategy based on the sustainable compact settlements concept '*10-minute city and town*', whereby, a range of community facilities and services are accessible in short walking and cycle timeframes from homes, or are accessible by high quality public transport services by connecting people to larger scaled settlements delivering these services.

**Objective SCSI O5**
**Multi-Use of Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to develop, in partnership with other agencies, opportunities for multi and co-use active and passive recreational amenities including sports and recreational facilities, playgrounds and outdoor gym equipment within existing areas of open space. The Council will expect proposals to facilitate multi-purpose uses through their design and layout and to be accessible by multiple users.

### 10.3.1 Community Facilities Audit

In 2020, Limerick City and County Council carried out an audit of community facilities across Limerick with cooperation from Local Development Companies such as Paul Partnership, West Limerick Resources and Ballyhoura Development. The purpose of the audit was to inform a proposed Strategy on Community Facilities for Limerick, identifying current gaps, demand, capacity and identify areas where use could be broadened and where investment is required. The audit findings reported a wide distribution of facilities and some geographic 'gaps' within Limerick. Additional findings included the need for some major and minor improvements across the City and County, opportunities for funding, staffing/volunteer shortages, the impact of Covid-19 and the opportunities for multi-purpose usage.

**Objective SCSI O6**
**Strategy on Community Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to develop a strategy based on the community facilities audit and identify where new and/or improved community infrastructure should be provided throughout Limerick.

### 10.3.2 Rural Communities

The recently published Department of Rural and Community Development's *Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy* 2021-2025 sets out the Government's blueprint for a post Covid-19 recovery and development of rural Ireland over the next four years. Its ambition includes ensuring that people living in rural areas have access to good quality public services that enable them to continue to live sustainably in rural communities and help them to maintain a good quality of life. Policy includes investments in improvements in public transport services, health care within communities, housing provision, early learning and childcare facilities and community safety. Limerick City and County Council will support the Government's commitment to rural and community development in improving health and wellbeing and access to services.

**Policy SCSI P4**
**Rural Community Development**
It is a policy of the Council to support the objectives contained in *Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025* in enhancing public services for rural communities.

#### 10.3.2.1 Smart Towns and Villages

Smart Towns and Villages is a concept included in the Department of Rural and Community Development's *Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy* 2021-2025. It is a concept based on people in rural areas building on and enhancing, their existing strengths and assets, to find practical solutions to deal with both the challenges and opportunities facing their communities. It involves taking stock of all local assets and exploring how local services, such as health, education, social services, retail, renewable energy and transport can be enhanced and sustained through community-led actions and projects. It can also be used to develop responses to creating disability friendly communities and environments.

**Objective SCSI O7**
**Smart Towns and Villages**
It is an objective of the Council to support the development of Smart Towns and Villages which use innovative solutions to improve resilience, build on local strengths and maximise opportunities to create desirable places for people to live and work.

## 10.4 Healthy Place-Making and Communities

The concept of healthy place-making links the way in which spaces become places and how quality places themselves are so important for quality of life, through their facilitation of healthy lifestyles and through generating a sense of belonging and wellbeing. Place-making is a cross cutting theme of the Plan, for example Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy deals with place-making through consideration of urban design principles, universal design and public realm, while Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure promotes a quality environment, including clean water and air. Chapter 6 also recognises the importance of blue and green infrastructure and our heritage as social and cultural assets and thus providing a contribution to healthy place-making.

This section is divided into consideration of the policy framework in respect of healthy environments firstly and then the principles of place-making secondly.

Limerick is part of the Healthy Cities and Counties Network and is actively implementing the *Healthy Ireland Strategy*. The *Healthy Limerick* initiative, which is jointly-funded by Limerick City and County Council and the HSE and accredited to the National Healthy Cities and Counties Network, supports and links actions in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). The objective is to improve health, positive wellbeing and quality of life by ensuring that all sectors are aware of and collaborate to achieve a Healthy Limerick, working with the social determinants approach to health.

A number of policy documents have been issued to further the aims of the Healthy Ireland national policy framework, including *Get Ireland Active: National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland* published in 2018. This document includes recommendations that are specific with reference to the contribution the physical environment can make towards active lifestyles.

These include the following four actions under Action Area 4 'The Environment':

1. Ensure that the planning, development and design of towns and cities promotes the development of local and regional parks and recreational spaces that encourage physical activity;
2. Prioritise the planning and development of walking and cycling and general recreational/physical activity infrastructure;
3. Ensure that the planning, development and design of towns, cities and schools promotes cycling and walking with the aim of creating a network of cycle routes and footpaths; and
4. Explore opportunities to maximise physical activity and recreational amenities in the natural environment.

**Objective SCSI O8**
**Place-making for the Community**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Develop and protect an open space network and hierarchy of quality public and community spaces, to extend close to where people live and which can accommodate a variety of recreational amenities and facilities for the community at large.
b) Incorporate specific facilities and amenities that would promote exercise and movement as well as rest and relaxation in a natural way and in a variety of settings.
c) Protect areas which are considered to be quiet or which offer a sense of tranquillity, through a process of identification and validation followed by formal designation of 'Quiet Areas'.

**Objective SCSI O9**
**Health Place Audits**
It is an objective of the Council to support the creation of attractive, enterprise development, friendly, liveable, well-designed, high-quality places that are home to a diverse enterprise base mix and integrated communities by using tools such as Health Place Audits to audit locations in meeting necessary conditions.

## 10.5 Education Facilities

The Council recognises the need for education facilities for all ages, that are accessible to the communities they serve, designed to appropriate standards and insofar as possible have capacity for expansion in situ and capacity to accommodate a variety of extra-curricular activities of benefit to the public. The DoEHLG and the Department of Education and Science's *Code of Practice on the Provision of Schools and the Planning System* (2008) provides guidelines for the forecasting of future planning for schools nationally. It is essential that Planning Authorities protect existing schools and college facilities and ensure sufficient provision is made for future schools and expansion of existing schools and colleges, commensurate with existing and anticipated need and in line with national guidelines. These facilities should be an integral part of the evolution of compact sustainable development, where the opportunities to walk or cycle to school/ college are maximised. Developments within the City Centre will result in an increase in educational demand in the City Centre. Provision should be made to ensure that there are sufficient educational places to meet this demand.

Currently there are 172 primary and post primary schools in Limerick, see Table 10.1 below.

Since the adoption of the 2010 Limerick City Development Plan and Limerick County Development Plan, there have been a number of significant developments in respect of educational provision:

- 7 large scale projects for post primary schools and 13 projects for primary schools have been completed. These include the building of three new community colleges at post primary level, one each in Doon, Dromcolliher and Abbeyfeale;
- The Gaelcholaiste in Limerick, an Irish language post primary school, which is currently located in the City at Sir Harrys Mall, has planning permission for a new school building nearby in the former Dawn Dairies site on Clare Street;
- A community college has been established in temporary premises in Mungret in Limerick, pending full approval for a permanent building in the area. A site has been earmarked as part of the Mungret Masterplan;
- Planning permission is in place for a new post primary school in the Castletroy area.

In terms of third level education, Limerick has three third level institutes - University of Limerick, Mary Immaculate College and Technological University of the Shannon (TUS). In addition to these, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, which is the state education and training authority for the Limerick and Clare region, deliver further education and training to over 25,000 learners.

Table 10.1 - Primary and post primary schools in Limerick and enrolment for 2019 - 2020

| | Primary | Primary special | Post primary* | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Number of schools** | 134 | 9 | 28 | 171 |
| **Enrolment** | 22,859 | 574 | 15,917 | 23,433 |

*Source: Department of Education and Skills Statistics on Individual Schools.*

* This list is only of schools aided by the Department of Education and Skills and therefore omits Glenstal boarding school, which is a fee-paying boarding school for boys and has 228 pupils.

**Objective SCSI O10**
**Educational Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Ensure that existing and new school sites are protected for educational use and that lands adjacent to existing schools are protected for future educational use in order to allow for expansion of these schools, if required, subject to site suitability.
b) 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.
c) In order to ensure availability of educational provision to meet projected increased requirements arising from the consolidation and densification of development within the City Centre, all existing City Centre schools (and land buffers around them, if available) should be protected so that they can be purposed to meet future educational requirements.
d) Commence work in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills, to identify potential school sites in the City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty that will address the future educational needs of the projected population.

**Objective SCSI O11**
**Location of Schools**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the educational authorities in expanding schools in tandem with residential development. Educational facilities shall be located where possible, in close proximity to other community services, at accessible locations which maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport and have regard to the principles of social integration.

**Objective SCSI O12**
**Multi-Use of School Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to encourage multi-use of school facilities, for other community programmes and initiatives other than mainstream education, in order to maximise resources and support sustainable communities.

**Objective SCSI O13**
**Further and Higher Education Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to support:
a) The continued expansion of the City's third level institutions and integration with the wider City.
b) The development of the University of Limerick's City Centre campus in the heart of the City.
c) The development of third level outreach, vocational and lifelong learning and digital capacity for lifelong learning, including fourth level education, lifelong learning and up skilling generally.

## 10.6 Childcare Facilities

Childcare facilities are a valuable service in meeting the overall development needs of children, whilst supporting parents/ guardians. High-quality childcare keeps children safe and healthy and children develop skills they will need for success in school and in their lives outside of school.

There continues to be a growth in demand for childcare services and the provision of good quality services close to local communities is important. A supply of childcare places is necessary in order to promote participation in the labour force, and increase and sustain economic productivity. The availability of childcare is a significant determinant in enabling citizens to access training and self-development opportunities.

The primary policy basis for the provision of childcare facilities is the *Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2001). In the interest of promoting sustainability the suitable locations for childcare facilities are as follows:

- Town and local/neighbourhood centres;
- Areas of concentrated employment;
- Large scale retail developments;
- In or within close proximity of schools and educational facilities including catchment areas of rural schools;
- In or adjacent to community centres; and
- Adjacent to public transport nodes.

Detailed requirements and standards in respect to childcare provision associated with development projects are set out in the Development Management Standards Chapter of the Plan (see Section 11.5.1 Childcare Facilities).

**Objective SCSI O14**
**Childcare Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Encourage the provision of appropriate childcare facilities as an integral part of proposals for new residential developments and to improve/expand existing childcare facilities.
b) Encourage the provision of childcare facilities in a sustainable manner to encourage local economic development and to assist in addressing disadvantage.

## 10.7 Health and Respite Care

Provision of public health care services for Limerick is the responsibility of the Health Service Executive (HSE). University Hospital Limerick group is made up of six hospital sites in the Mid-West and all function as a single hospital system. Hospitals within Limerick are:

- University Hospital Limerick, Dooradoyle Campus;
- University Maternity Hospital Limerick, Ennis Road;
- Croom Orthopaedic Hospital;
- St. John's Hospital;
- St. Ita's Community Hospital, Newcastle West;
- St. Camillus Hospital.

In addition, the Bon Secours Hospital at Barrington's and a number of nursing homes and residential and day care facilities are distributed throughout Limerick.

The primary care 'model' promoted by the HSE has a stronger emphasis on working with communities and individuals to improve health and well-being, aimed at ensuring everyone has ready access to a broad spectrum of care services through a local Primary Care Team. The 'Sláintecare' strategy published in 2018 promotes a healthcare system with the majority of services being delivered in the community.

The provision of both public and private healthcare facilities, together with community support services, will be encouraged on suitably zoned lands that are accessible to new and existing residential areas and that benefit communities by providing multi-disciplinary health care, mental health and wellbeing services in easily accessible locations.

**Objective SCSI O15**
**Health Care Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Support and facilitate development and expansion of health service infrastructure by the Health Service Executive, other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of healthcare facilities at appropriate locations - including the system of hospital care and the provision of community-based primary care facilities, mental health and wellbeing facilities.
b) Encourage the integration of appropriate healthcare facilities within new and existing communities.

**Objective SCSI O16**
**Emergency Services**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the accommodation for emergency services, rescue services and acute care, in locations that facilitate ease of access and safe functioning with respect to the road network.

## 10.8 Age Friendly Strategy

The Council adopted its first Age Friendly Strategy in 2016. The *Age Friendly Strategy 2016-2020* is committed to improving key areas of infrastructure, services, information and overall social response to older persons issues.

**Objective SCSI O17**
**Age Friendly Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to support and facilitate the implementation of *Age Friendly Limerick Strategy 2016-2020* or any update thereto.

### 10.9 Active Cities

The *Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-2030* (GAPPA) is an action plan and a framework of effective and feasible policy actions to increase physical activity at all levels. The focus of GAPPA is on the need for a whole of society response to achieve a paradigm shift in both supporting and valuing all people being regularly active, according to ability and across the life course. Transposed from this framework is the Active Cities Framework and a targeted initiative across 8 locations in Ireland including Limerick. Coordinated by Sports Ireland and Limerick Sports Partnership, the Active City Initiative is a partnership between GoGreen Routes Research with UL, URBACT, Healthy Limerick and all Local Authority Departments with a remit for Play, Recreation and Physical Activity. The initiative is currently being developed with an Active City Steering Committee underway.

**Objective SCSI O18**
**Active City Initiative**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the *Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-2030* in the development of the 'Active City' Initiative, in partnership with the relevant authorities and stakeholders.

### 10.10 Sports and Recreation

Public open spaces and sports and recreational facilities are key elements in ensuring a good quality of life is achieved for all members of the community. They also enhance the overall attractiveness of a place and provide places for active and passive open space. The network of blue and green infrastructure (the rivers, canals, parks and connecting neighbourhoods) provide an ecological and leisure function that can be both protected and enjoyed.

The benefits from participation in sport and recreational activities are also well documented. Sports facilities and grounds in Limerick City and County include a variety of both indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, which provide for the active recreational needs of the community.

There are a number of exceptional recreational facilities within Limerick, including the open spaces and walkways along the Shannon River (Limerick City and Suburbs, Castleconnell and Foynes), Curragh Chase Forest Park, Ballyhoura Forest, Lough Gur, Limerick Greenway, Clare Glens and also town parks, such as those found in Abbeyfeale, Adare, Croom, Kilmallock and Newcastle West.

The Council will continue to promote the provision and management of high-quality sporting and recreational infrastructure throughout Limerick, in accordance with the *National Sports Policy 2018-2027, Limerick Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, the National Physical Activity Plan (under preparation) and the Limerick Sports and Recreation Facilities Strategy (under preparation).

**Objective SCSI O19**
**Protection of lands zoned for Open Space and Recreation**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Protect existing open space, by not permitting development which encroaches on open space and would result in 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.

**Objective SCSI O20**
**Protection of Sports Grounds/Facilities**
It is an objective of the Council to:
a) Ensure that adequate playing fields for formal active recreation are provided for in new development areas.
b) Protect, retain and enhance existing sports facilities and grounds.

**Objective SCSI O21**
**Improve Open Space Provision**
It is an 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 a 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 play lots in accordance with the Development Management Standards set out in Chapter 11. Open space provision will be proportional to the number of residential units proposed, consider access to existing open space and have regard to the principles of national guidance including accessibility, personal and child safety, linkage, place-making and permeability and the hierarchy of open space.
c) Ensure that proposals for largescale development on land zoned Enterprise and Employment incorporate active and passive recreational opportunities for employees.

**Objective SCSI O22**
**New City Amenity Areas**
It is an objective of the Council to identify suitable sites for the provision of new parks/playgrounds in the vicinity of Caherdavin, Corbally and the Groody Valley.

**Objective SCSI O23**
**Limerick Sports and Recreation Facilities Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the preparation and implementation of a Sports and Recreation Facilities Strategy on completion.

**Objective SCSI O24**
**Limerick Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2018-2021**
It is an objective of the Council to support the implementation of *Limerick Sports Partnership Strategic Plan 2018-2021* and any subsequent updates.

**Objective SCSI O25**
**Limerick City Centre Leisure Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to prepare a Leisure Strategy for Limerick City Centre, within the lifetime of the Plan and seek to deliver the strategy on completion, subject to resources.

### 10.10.1 Local Sports Plan

The *National Sports Policy 2018-2027* includes an action to support Local Authorities in developing Local Sports Plans, to review needs and set out actions to increase participation at a local level. This will require working in partnership with Sport Ireland, Limerick Sports Partnership and National Governing Bodies of Sport, as well as with partners on the Local Community Development Committees (LCDC), the Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC), whilst also consulting and engaging with clubs, schools, leisure facility providers, community groups and other stakeholders locally.

**Objective SCSI O26**
**Local Sports Plan**
It is an objective of the Council to support and assist the *National Sports Policy 2018-2027* in coordinating all essential bodies and facilitating the drive towards greater sports participation at a local level, with the development of a Local Sports Plan.

## 10.11 Play Areas

Play areas for children and teenagers in both urban and suburban areas greatly enhance quality of life and sense of community. Limerick City and County Council have an adopted Play Policy, reflecting the importance that the Council places on the value of play in childhood and the importance of children in our society. Play is not just about the provision of facilities. It is creating the conditions to facilitate play not just in playgrounds, but in the wider environment and in both indoor and outdoor public spaces. Ensuring the retention of the natural environment, such as green spaces and woodlands, including features such as trees and mounds, equally play an important role in the provision of play.

Neighbourhood spaces, estates, parks, streets, community centres, libraries, museums, galleries, gardens and cultural venues, events and artefacts are as important as dedicated playgrounds and allow for the social interaction between different generations. In this regard, play areas should cater for all ages with consideration given for parent/grandparent provision such as seating, enabling intergenerational social interaction.

**Policy SCSI P5**
**Play**
It is a policy of the Council to facilitate opportunities for play and support the implementation of the Limerick City and County Council Play Policy and its objectives.

**Objective SCSI O27**
**Playgrounds**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support play policies to address the play and recreation needs of children and young people, with specific consideration given to the needs of children and young adults with Disabilities.
b) Support local communities in the provision of a range of play facilities in appropriate locations across Limerick, including urban and rural locations.
c) Encourage the use of nature-based play with respect to the provision of play opportunities.
d) Require developers of new residential schemes commensurate with the scale and purpose of the development to provide in situ, natural play areas for children, or as the case may be, small playgrounds, where it is considered necessary and opportune to address local deficits in provision as set out in Table DM2 Open Space Hierarchy within Residential Estates.

## 10.12 Trails and Green Routes

Limerick has a range of hiking and biking trails and the Council is committed to further develop and promote this activity. The Council will co-operate with relevant agencies, groups and landowners as appropriate, with a view to increasing such routes. This will include consultation with adjoining Local Authorities with a view to promoting routes extending beyond the County administrative boundary. Steps to promote such routes may include public transport connectivity, safe cycling routes, secure parking, publication of maps/ apps and the provision of other appropriate facilities for users of such routes.

**Objective SCSI O28**
**New amenity walkways**
It is an objective of the Council to continue to promote and facilitate the development of walkways subject to an appropriate level of environmental and ecological assessment. 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.

**Objective SCSI O29**
**Trails, Hiking and Walking Routes**
It is an objective of the Council to support and promote the development of regional and local networks of mountain biking, hiking and walking routes/trails. These should be waymarked/signposted and listed, where feasible and appropriate.

### 10.13 Water Based Sports

Limerick contains numerous rivers and watercourses, many of which may be suitable for water-based sports.

**Objective SCSI O30**
**Water-Based Sports**
It is an objective of the Council to support and encourage water-based sports and leisure activities at appropriate locations throughout Limerick, subject to Council Bye-Laws and the Habitats and Birds Directives.

### 10.14 Arts and Culture

The existing arts and cultural infrastructure, includes theatres, performance spaces, galleries and production spaces. The Council recognises the value of the arts to the social, cultural and economic development and their impact, direct and indirect, on communities.

The *Limerick Cultural Strategy 2016-2030, Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021* and *Limerick City and County Heritage Plan 2030*, recognise the Council's pivotal role in the promotion and encouragement of the arts and culture, while prioritising direction for future development and investment.

The Council are currently preparing Limerick's *Festival and Events Strategy*. The Strategy will aim to find the most suitable methods for supporting, sustaining and growing the festival and events sector in Limerick.

**Objective SCSI O31**
**Art and Culture**
It is an objective of the Council to:

a) Support the objectives of *Limerick Cultural Strategy 2016-2030, Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021* and *Limerick City and County Heritage Plan 2030*;
b) Ensure the capacity to stage public events is a factor in the provision and design of public spaces;
c) Promote appropriate public art installations, including the 'Per Cent for Arts Scheme', as part of all major infrastructural projects and also renewal;
d) Ensure that the potential for the accommodation of creative hubs and clusters is a key consideration in renewal programmes such as within the City Centre Innovation District; the Colbert Station Quarter; the Docklands and in historic Town Centres.
e) Promote the provision of venues that are flexible spaces that are fit for purpose for theatre, music or dance performance and visual arts in locations that are accessible with respect to public transport, are inclusive in terms of accessibility and would contribute to creative clusters through their location, design and accessibility;
f) Strengthen existing art and cultural infrastructure;
g) Promote the provision of studios and specialised facilities for arts and music production, film and digital media, where they would help revitalise the City Centre, historic towns, areas earmarked for regeneration or renewal and as part of renewal programmes or projects;
h) Consider the protection of spaces and facilities for the arts.

**Objective SCSI O32**
**Public Art Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to develop a *Limerick Public Art Strategy* and Limerick Public Art Policy to facilitate the continued development of public arts within the public realm.

**Objective SCSI O33**
**Limerick City Gallery of Art Strategy**
It is an objective of the Council to support the actions set out in *Limerick City Gallery of Art, Statement of Strategy: 2020-2025*.

**Objective SCSI O34**
**Cultural Audit**
It is an objective of the Council to undertake a cultural audit and create a dynamic database and associated map of existing and future locations and landmarks that incorporates, or has the potential to incorporate cultural/creative arts.

### 10.14.1 Museum Service

Limerick's museums are an integral part of Limerick's community, exhibiting our architectural and historical heritage for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. For Limerick residents and visiting tourists, facilitating the protection and preservation of this heritage and enabling future generations to enjoy the same privilege should be supported and recognised.

**Objective SCSI O35**
**Museum Service**
It is an objective of the Council to develop a Museum Development Strategy to facilitate the continued protection and preservation of Limerick's archaeological and historic heritage.

**Objective SCSI O36**
**Limerick Museum**
It is an objective of the Council to support and promote The Limerick Museum.

## 10.15 The Library Service

The Library Service plays an important role in communities in Limerick with an extensive network of Branch Libraries across the City and County. The adopted *People-Place-Platform: Limerick Libraries Development Plan 2021-2025* includes a key element for the completion of a new 21st Century Central Library for Limerick.

**Objective SCSI O37**
**Library Service**
It is an objective of the Council to promote the expansion of the Library Service across Limerick and support the actions set out in *People-Place-Platform: Limerick Libraries Development Plan 2021-2025*.

## 10.16 Burial Grounds and Crematoria

While Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide for burial facilities, the Council also recognises the importance of the conservation of such facilities as having an important historical, cultural and ecological value.

**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.

### 10.17 Community Gardens and Allotments

Community gardens and allotments make a valuable contribution to society on a number of levels. They contribute to neighbourhood improvement, sense of community, connection to the environment and the overall green infrastructure network in an area. While there are numerous benefits to community gardens and allotments, it is also important to ensure that they are developed and managed appropriately.

**Objective SCSI O39**
**Community Gardens and Allotments**
It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the development of community gardens and allotments in Limerick, subject to normal planning and environmental considerations.

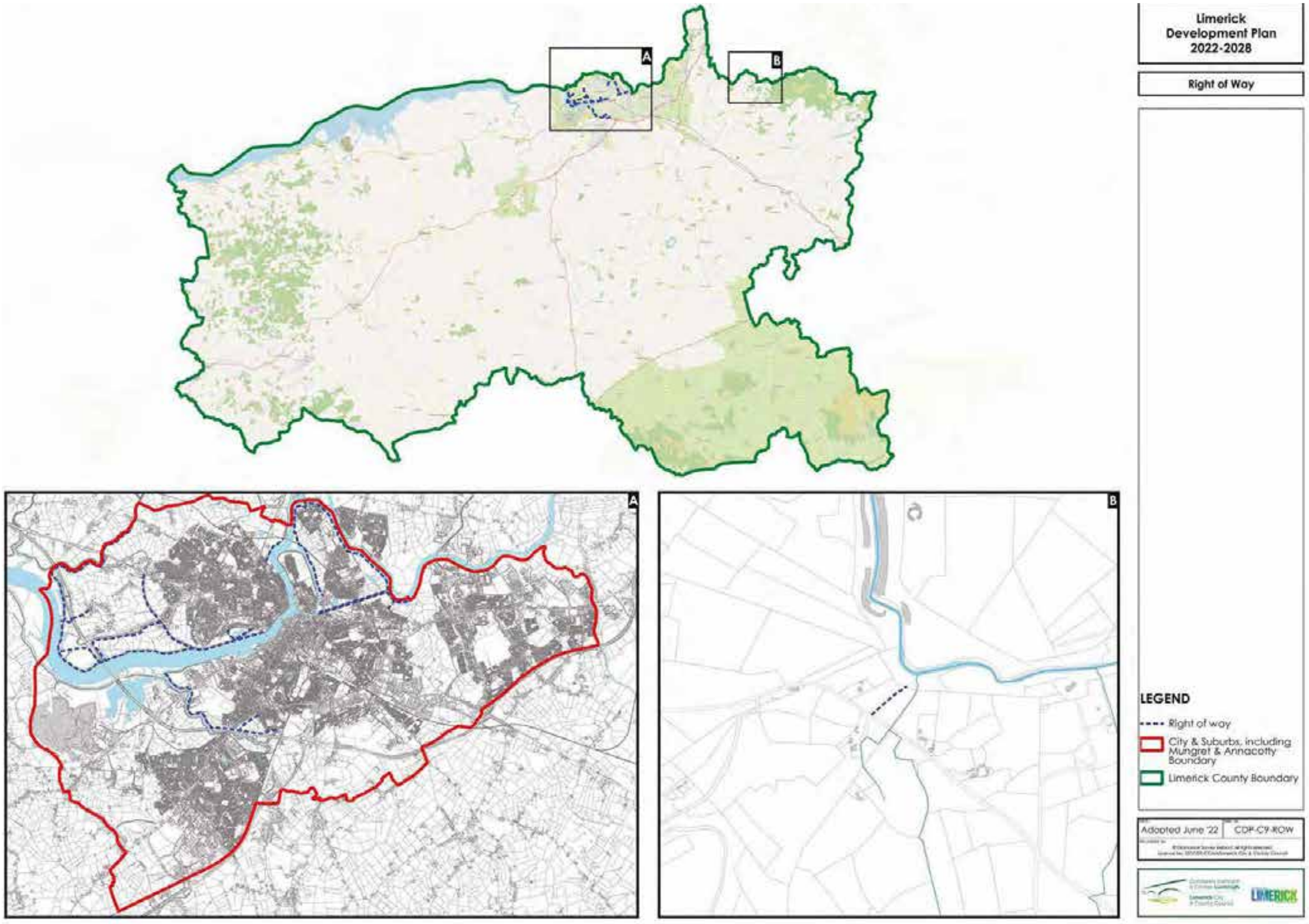
### 10.18 Public Rights of Way

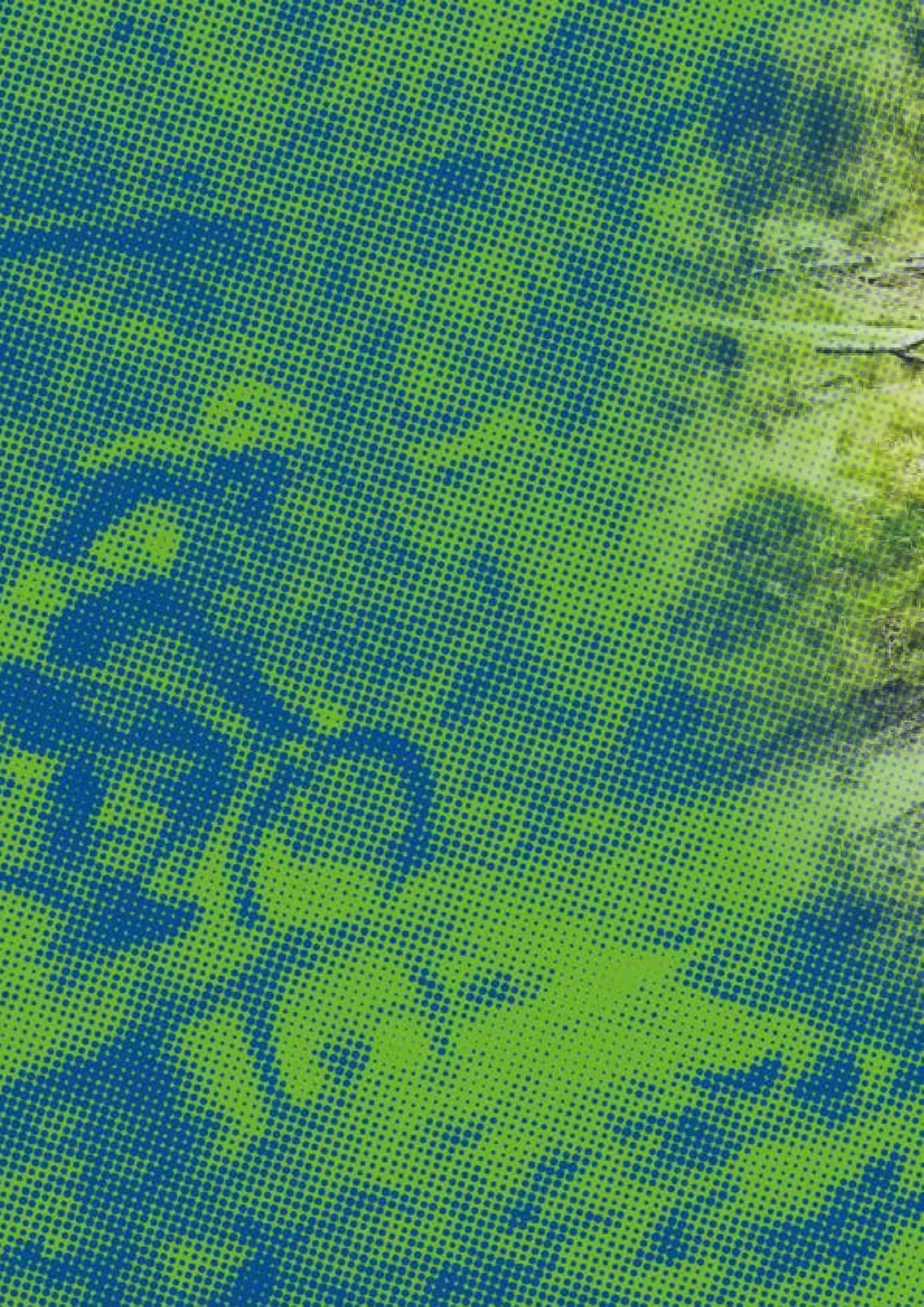
The Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires that Development Plans preserve public rights of way which give access to seashores, mountains, lakeshores, riverbanks or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility. The Act requires that such public rights of way shall be identified both by marking them on at least one of the maps forming part of the Plan and by indicating their location on a list appended to the Plan. The Public Rights of Ways in Limerick are identified on Map 10.1 below and include:

- Westfields, North Circular Road;
- Park Canal;
- Lucas Lough/Shannon Fields (Athlunkard);
- Monabraher/Longpavement;
- King's Island (St Mary's Park);
- Corbally;
- Ballinacurra Creek -Vance Lands;
- Ballinacurra Creek - Baggot Estate;
- Clare Glens;
- Coonagh;
- Condell Road;
- Barrington's Pier.

**Objective SCSI O40**
**Public Rights of Way**
It is an objective of the Council to examine the feasibility of identifying and mapping new public rights of way in the recreational and amenity areas in Limerick, in the context of emerging national guidance, within the lifetime of the Plan.

Map 10.1: Public Rights of Way







# 11

# Development Management Standards

## 11.1 Introduction

In order to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of Limerick, it is important that developments conform to the specific requirements set out in this chapter. This chapter should be read in conjunction with other relevant chapters and volumes in the Plan.

Development management refers to the legal process followed by a Planning Authority to grant or refuse permission for development. Development refers to the carrying out of works (to build, demolish or alter) on, in, over and under land or buildings and making significant changes to the use of land or buildings. Certain types/classes of development are exempt from requiring planning permission under Part II, Schedule 1 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

In all development proposals, particularly high-density residential development, it is the aim of the Planning Authority to promote a high level of amenity and quality design and to protect and complement existing amenities and character, in the interests of sustainable and orderly development. Unless otherwise stated, recommended residential and other development standards included in this chapter, are informed by a series of Section 28 Guideline documents.

### 11.1.1 Planning Process

Part 4 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), sets out the statutory requirements with regard to submitting a planning application. Under the provisions of Article 22A, the Planning Authority may require an applicant to submit further information with any application to ensure that an informed decision can be made. Applicants are advised to consult with the Plan maps together with the policies and guidance provided herein, in order to ascertain if there may be additional reports/details required.

Note the granting of permission by the Planning Authority does not necessarily enable the development to commence. There are other legal and procedural requirements to be satisfied, for example legislation under Building Control Acts, Public Health Acts, Fire Regulations and Environmental Pollution legislation.

The Planning Authority encourages applicants to avail of pre-planning meetings to discuss policy issues regarding their proposal prior to submitting a planning application. Section 247 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) sets out the formal procedure to request such a meeting. It is of particular value to the applicant if specific assessments are required given the scale, sensitivity, type of development and location of the site. Refer to limerick.ie/council/services/pre-planning to avail of a meeting. Applicants are also advised to avail of pre-connection enquiries with Irish Water to ascertain if connection of water services (mains and sewer) is feasible for their proposals, prior to submitting a planning application.

There are many high-level Government strategic policy documents on spatial planning, transport, climate adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency, low carbon society and economy, digital connectivity, enterprise development, health, children's play facilities, schools, heritage etc. that are also considered when assessing planning applications and formulating planning policy by Planning Authorities. Refer to gov.ie and the various sectoral departments.

The Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) together with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) have published 14 leaflets to inform the public on the planning system, the Development Plan, applying for planning permission, appealing planning decisions, planning enforcement and planning applications in relation to agricultural and farm development, business, environmental assessments if required, architectural heritage, archaeology and Strategic Infrastructure Development. The Council strongly advises potential applicants/ developers to avail of this guidance at: opr.ie/planning-leaflets/

### 11.1.2 Sustainability Statements

A Sustainability and Social Infrastructure Statement, which is an outline of the proposal's context and addresses how it responds to Plan objectives and surroundings, should be submitted for:

- 10 or more dwellings; or
- 500m$^2$ gross of retail, commercial/office development in urban areas; or
- Enterprise and employment developments over 1,000m$^2$ gross.

The statement should outline a justification for the development as proposed and any alternative design options considered. The statement should examine the impact of the proposal on social infrastructure. A design statement may be requested for other types of development at the discretion of the Planning Authority considering the sensitivity of the site (e.g. locations in scenic areas, or areas with protected view, elevated sites or in ACAs).

### 11.1.3 Building Heights

The Building Heights Strategy for Limerick City provides guidance for building height at the Character Area level for the City Centre. All new developments in the City shall comply with the guidance set out in the Building Heights Strategy, in particular the criteria set out in Table DM 1

Table DM 1: Limerick City Building Height Objectives, Recommendations and Criteria

| Newtown Pery | |
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| **Character Area** | **Newtown Pery:** This area lies within the Inner-City Core Area as defined in Section 5. The distinct qualities of the area are well established and the need to preserve the Georgian fabric, as well as the complex elements which contribute to the character of the built environment of Newtown Pery, is understood.<br><br>Important vertical landmarks that are of key and local significance which should be protected by future development include:<br>• Tait's Clock;<br>• People's Park,<br>• Rice's Memorial;<br>• St. John's Cathedral. |
| **Area Objectives** | 1. In areas where there is a classical and reasonably consistent parapet /shoulder height, any new interventions to the front of buildings, on street elevation, should respect this height and within reason, match the parapet /shoulder height of the existing street. It is possible that after the parapet /shoulder height, investigations as to roof profiles and set-backs are possible subject to good design, high quality materials and overall townscape considerations.<br>There are opportunities for additional height positioned within the city block where this does not negatively impact on the overall streetscape. The above will preserve and conserve the overall fabric of more classical streets.<br><br>2. Streets where there is a mix of building heights resulting in the variation of the topography of the skyline can incorporate areas of height which accentuates and improves the existing elevation. These locations may also incorporate areas of height located within the inner block. |
| **Tall Building Recommendations** | Through the application of the modifiers (pg.140 BHS), a 'taller or landmark building' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', may be appropriate;<br><br>Additional height may be permitted on streets where there is a mix of building heights provided the building responds to the essential character and general scale of existing buildings and/or it accentuates and improves the existing elevation. This also applies to building within the inner block in such areas; and<br><br>The application of the modifiers to provide a 'landmark building' would be limited to one standout building of exceptional architectural quality. |
| **Criteria for consideration from the Building Heights Guidelines, 2018 and Development Management Guidance** | **Makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood:** Building heights should reinforce the distinct character of the area and the reuse of buildings, specifically historic buildings.<br><br>**Responds to its built environment and streetscape:** Newtown Pery has a very regular street grid and sense of building scale which should be respected. Any minor additions to typical building scale should be appropriately designed and set back on upper floors.<br><br>**Materials / building fabric well considered:** The strong continuity of building materials - stone and stucco ground floors and brick upper storeys - and the characteristic Georgian fenestration patterns should be acknowledged in new development.<br><br>**Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** Newtown Pery's street grid and scale set up a strong sense of scale and enclosure that should be augmented, not challenged by new development. |

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| | **Contribution to legibility and cohesiveness:** The very strength and orientation of the current street grid can inhibit wayfinding through the wider City. New development should relate to the adjacent contextual height, although there may be opportunities to utilise building height, if appropriately set-back and designed, to emphasis particular places or buildings within the area.<br><br>**Positively contributes to the mix of uses in the neighbourhood:** The commercial and residential functions of the area should be strengthened by increasing its desirability. Developments should contribute to streetscaping and deliver building renovation.<br><br>**Contributes to the building/ dwelling typologies in the area:** New development in this area should be designed to emphasise and consolidate the area's existing character. |
| **English Town** | |
| **Character Area** | **English Town:** The urban grain is very diverse in this area. The nature of the streets of English Town is predominantly no more than 2 storeys, the main features of height being the historical buildings, in particular King John's Castle and St. Mary's Cathedral. There are some street corners which rise slightly in height but usually no more than 3/4 storeys.<br><br>Unlike other areas of the City, there are few gaps within the elevation of the streetscape, with the exception of some smaller opportunity sites dotted throughout the area and a couple of larger opportunity sites which are located at the northern point along Island Road.<br><br>Important vertical landmarks of key and local significance which should be protected by future development include:<br>• King John's Castle;<br>• Bishop's Palace;<br>• City Hall; and<br>• St. Mary's Cathedral. |
| **Area Objectives** | 1. New buildings within the English Town Character Area must respect the existing grain of the area and respond closely to the essential character and general scale of the streets, in particular where development potential lies within smaller infill sites;<br><br>2. Building development must not impinge on the overall height markers, existing key and local landmark buildings in order to prevent development which would obstruct views of them;<br><br>3. New buildings should normally be low profile and in the range of 2-4 storeys unless there is a high-quality townscape/placemaking argument; and<br><br>4. New buildings must also respond with care to the width of the streets in the English Town area which are characteristically more narrow than other parts of the City. |
| **Tall Building Recommendations** | Through the application of the modifiers (pg. 148 BHS), which may allow for increased height in certain limited circumstances, a 'taller building' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', may be appropriate. |
| **Criteria for consideration from the Building Heights Guidelines, 2018 and Development Management Guidance** | **Makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood:** Building height should respect the area's character that is strongly established by the medieval King John's Castle and St. Mary's cathedral.<br><br>**Responds to its built environment and streetscape:** The narrow streets and irregular grid should be respected, with typical building heights of 2 - 4 storeys.<br><br>**Materials / building fabric well considered:** Use of traditional materials - stone, stucco, brick - should be acknowledged. |

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| | **Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** The general low scale of the area, with clear prominence of the Castle, its walls, and the Cathedral and the narrow winding street pattern does not encourage larger scale development.<br><br>**Contribution to legibility and cohesiveness:** The area's strong legibility and character provided by historic buildings and street pattern should be respected and reinforced.<br><br>**Positively contributes to the mix of uses in the neighbourhood:** The low-scale mix of shopping and residential use should be reinforced.<br><br>**Contributes to the building/ dwelling typologies in the area:** There is no significant change to the existing building or dwelling typologies required. Positive additions are to be encouraged. |
| **Irish Town** | |
| **Character Area** | **Irish Town:** This area is located within the Inner-City Core. This area has a medieval style system of streets which, along with a lack of permeability, makes it difficult to navigate and orientate oneself within the area.<br><br>The scale of buildings in this area varies from 2/3 storeys up to a 7 storey car park. There are a number of opportunity sites located within the area, which will require a case-by-case assessment due to the varying height and block structure. It is important when considering development in this area to keep in mind that connectivity is necessary for a City, in providing an easily navigable and functional space for people to live and work.<br><br>New buildings or building alterations within this area need to respond carefully to the local area landmarks, namely the Milk Market and St. John's Cathedral.<br><br>The Irish Town area has an unfinished nature to it, as development has had so many different approaches, in terms of a mixture of typologies within the street elevation as well as variation in building height. The lack of finished block structures results in the legibility of the area becoming unclear. The block structure is not readable as many of the corner buildings are missing or not of a large enough scale to impact on the overall formation of the block. Therefore, there is an opportunity in this area to try establish an overall structure of height that responds closely to the general scale of existing buildings and streets.<br><br>Important vertical landmarks of key and local significance which should be protected by future development include:<br>• The Milk Market;<br>• St. John's Cathedral;<br>• St. Michael's Church; and<br>• John's Square. |
| **Area Objectives** | 1. Any buildings of height in this area should aim towards finishing off previously established block structures to make them more legible;<br><br>2. Any development of additional height, be it structure, art or building should seek to contribute to place making;<br><br>3. Due to the mixed nature of the urban fabric within Irish Town, development in this area will have to be thoroughly assessed on a case-by-case basis;<br><br>4. New buildings in Irish Town should respond to the essential character and general scale of existing buildings and streets; |

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| | 5. Where appropriate, an increase in building height to corners and a decrease in building height adjoining or adjacent to key and local landmark buildings will be required; and<br>6. Assessment of any proposed buildings by a verified view analysis and a landscape and visual impact assessment will be required, notwithstanding contemporary buildings of outstanding quality which could provide new landmarks in and of themselves and should be welcomed from a place making point of view. |
| **Tall Building Recommendations** | Through the application of the modifiers (pg. 156 BHS), a 'taller or landmark building' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', may be appropriate. |
| **Criteria for consideration from the Building Heights Guidelines, 2018 and Development Management Guidance** | **Makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood:** Irish Town is an interesting mix of building uses and types, all within a general scale of 2 - 7 storeys that should be augmented with new mixed-use development of a comparable scale.<br>**Responds to its built environment and streetscape:** The current mix of buildings sets no consistent streetscape character, a confusion that adds to its character and this should be respected.<br>**Materials / building fabric well considered:** Existing buildings vary greatly in style and materiality, but are typically characterised by more detailed and articulated facades. This should be acknowledged.<br>**Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** Irish Town has a tight street scale and irregular street pattern that adds to the sense of place and this should be respected by proposals.<br>**Contribution to legibility and cohesiveness:** Building height within properly located new development could add to the legibility and wayfinding of the area.<br>**Positively contributes to the mix of uses in the neighbourhood:** Irish Town has a rich mix of unique destination uses that could be added to by new developments.<br>**Contributes to the building/ dwelling typologies in the area:** The mix of building typologies is already rich and new uses and activities should be encouraged. |
| **Transition Area** | |
| **Character Area** | **Transition Area:** The area south of English Town and west of Irish Town serves as a transitional area between Irish Town and Newtown Pery. This area borders one of the main entrance points to the City and comprises largely of the Opera Square project which has begun construction.<br>A number of more complex sites exist in the Transition Area, where the context provides no clear direction for height and massing. These sites should be the subject of individual urban design studies to provide a framework for development. |
| **Area Objectives** | 1. New high buildings in this area should define a new and changing urban form while also responding closely to the general scale of existing buildings; and<br>2. Continuous high building frontage should be avoided with adequate distances maintained between buildings. |
| **Tall Building Recommendations** | Through the application of the modifiers (pg. 162), a 'taller or landmark building' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', may be appropriate. |

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| **Criteria for consideration from the Building Heights Guidelines, 2018 and Development Management Guidance** | **Makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood:** Given the lack of urban structure in this area, building height, to an appropriate scale in its context, presents an opportunity to define this neighbourhood.<br><br>**Responds to its built environment and streetscape:** The Transition Area is an interesting mix of building types and variety of functions, with a general scale of 2 - 5 storeys that should be augmented with development, generally of a comparable scale.<br><br>**Materials / building fabric well considered:** The design of new buildings should acknowledge the character of the built environment and the variety in style and materiality.<br><br>**Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** Building height should complement the natural features that already give this area a sense of enclosure, e.g. the Abbey River, and enhance this through the reinstatement of the street edge where required.<br><br>**Contribution to legibility and cohesiveness:** Building height within properly located new development could emphasis particular places and add to the legibility and wayfinding of the area.<br><br>**Positively contributes to the mix of uses in the neighbourhood:** New development in this area should seek to deliver a mix of uses. Developments should also contribute to delivering building renovation and reuse.<br><br>**Contributes to the building/ dwelling typologies in the area:** There is already a rich mix of building typologies in this area that should be supported and enhanced by new developments. |
| **The Quay** | |
| **Character Area** | **The Quays:** The existing movement strategy of the City results in a waterfront that is isolated from the rest of the City. Currently areas of height are primarily focused to key junctions and crossing points, which should be maintained. Visibility of the waterfront from the inner-city commercial centre is poor. Creating a visual connection to the Quays may be required in order to activate the waterfront as a public realm.<br><br>A 'World Class Waterfront' is part of the Limerick 2030 Economic and Spatial Plan, which includes a new river walk along the quayside. A fundamental element required, where areas of height are proposed, is accessibility to amenities. The proposed activation of the Quays would act as a starting point in the development of areas of height as more amenities are provided. |
| **Area Objectives** | 1. Modulation in parapet height along the Quays, that responds to its context, its distinctive position on the River Shannon and acknowledges the importance of this area is required;<br><br>2. The development of buildings of height should consider the impact of the overall River Shannon, an assessment of building impact on key views should be conducted by verified views along the River Shannon;<br><br>3. Existing landmark buildings should be protected by controlling the height of buildings adjoining and adjacent buildings while also preventing development which would undermine the quality of views to them; and<br><br>4. Where appropriate, an increase in building scale at bridges may be required to improve the legibility of entrance points, draw people down to the Quays and to enhance the sense of place. |

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| **Tall Building Recommendations** | 'Taller, landmark and gateway buildings' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', are appropriate;<br><br>Height will be encouraged where delivered through excellent design and that achieves a high-quality townscape and placemaking;<br><br>Taller buildings within a cluster of varying height that relate to each other and their surrounding urban context in terms of street layout, massing and design are encouraged; and<br><br>This area should deliver gateway building(s) given its significance as a shopfront to the City. |
| **Criteria for consideration from the Building Heights Guidelines, 2018 and Development Management Guidance** | **Makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood:** The run of taller buildings along the quayside bank of the Shannon has become one of the signature views of the City. New development should strengthen this through appropriate building heights.<br><br>**Responds to its built environment and streetscape:** New development of scale would be appropriate to reinforce the existing viewscape.<br><br>**Materials / building fabric well considered:** Attention should be paid to patterns of roofline, fenestration and street-level design to contribute to the wider street and skyscape.<br><br>**Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** While the existing scale of up to 18 storeys of quayside buildings is appropriate for new additions, consideration should be given to a taller, or potentially uniquely designed, structure at the northern end of the Quay, to mark this significant location.<br><br>**Contribution to legibility and cohesiveness:** The run of taller buildings along the Shannon provides an important legibility to the City's overall urban structure. Attention should be paid to enhancing views of these buildings from the rest of the City to assist in wayfinding.<br><br>**Positively contributes to the mix of uses in the neighbourhood:** The Quays is an important destination for tourists and visitors and can accommodate hotels and other such facilities, as well as providing signature locations for important public buildings.<br><br>**Contributes to the building/ dwelling typologies in the area:** Additions to the existing mix of building typologies should consider the opportunity to deliver a cluster of varying height. |
| **Colbert Quarter** | |
| **Character Area** | **Colbert Quarter:** Colbert Station is an important entrance node of the City. Development of a new neighbourhood at the Colbert Quarter must refer to the Limerick 2030 Plan, whereby the main concept is integrated place making, with compact, dense, sustainable urban design. A clear urban structure is required for this area as it is of key strategic importance for the development of the City. |
| **Area Objectives** | 1. A strong placemaking piece is required within this area, whether it be art or building in order to enhance the legibility of the area and highlight a sense of place; and<br><br>2. Any proposal for this 69-hectare site should include a marker building of height, whereas the rest of the future development should be cognisant of the essential character and general scale of existing buildings and streets. |

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| **Tall Building Recommendations** | Subject to the Framework Plan, 'taller, landmark and gateway buildings' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', are appropriate;<br><br>This site should facilitate a gateway building given its significance and scale;<br><br>The delivery of a 'City Landmark Building' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', subject to the Framework Plan, should be encouraged;<br><br>Height/areas of height will be encouraged, in line with the Framework Plan, where delivered through excellent design and that achieves a high-quality townscape and placemaking; and<br><br>Taller buildings within a cluster of varying height that relate to each other and their surrounding urban context in terms of street layout, massing and design are encouraged. |
| **Criteria for consideration from the Building Heights Guidelines, 2018 and Development Management Guidance** | **Makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood:** The development of the Colbert Quarter lands is a major city-making opportunity that should be used to provide a wide range of building types and heights and cityscape opportunities.<br><br>**Responds to its built environment and streetscape:** Other than the strategically located station building, the existing area and context provide little guidance on street layout, massing and character, providing a great new city building opportunity.<br><br>**Materials / building fabric well considered:** Limited guidance is provided by the area context, other than the need to complete and enhance the station square.<br><br>**Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** A unique opportunity exists, potentially for a site adjacent to the station, to accommodate a taller building visible at the city-scale and that would deliver a sense of scale.<br><br>**Contribution to legibility and cohesiveness:** The station is an important destination in the City and will become the 'front door' of a large new city district on the rail lands. New development should provide city-scale legibility.<br><br>**Positively contributes to the mix of uses in the neighbourhood:** The Colbert Quarter site is large enough to accommodate a wide range of uses. In addition to the residential opportunity, the potential exists to accommodate major educational, cultural or other destination institutions, as well as new shopping activity.<br><br>**Contributes to the building/ dwelling typologies in the area:** Contributing to the building/dwelling typologies in this area is not applicable given the nature of the Colbert Quarter Area. However, consideration should be given to providing for taller buildings within a cluster of varying height. |
| **Cleeves site** | |
| **Character Area** | **Cleeves site:** The Cleeves site is located at a major crossing point on the River Shannon. It is a significant site for increased height due to this position at an important crossing point at the base of the Shannon Bridge.<br><br>Due to its location within the wider City context, on approach to Limerick City from Shannon airport, a building of significant height has the ability to enhance the legibility and sense of place within this area. The site is also large enough to house a coherent cluster of new buildings, given its location and the existing presence of the very prominent chimney stack. |

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| **Area Objectives** | 1. Height should be considered on the impact of the overall River Shannon and height must also be assessed by verified views along the River Shannon;<br>2. New buildings should have appropriate scaling to the existing houses, with a balance of height and economic use taken into account;<br>3. The fabric of the area as well as the complex elements that contribute to the character of the site need to be protected;<br>4. It is recognised that there may be an impact on neighbouring residential buildings as the height is generally lowline in the surrounding area. However, there is a high-quality townscape and placemaking argument which can be deemed appropriate for an area of height due to the nature of the site; and<br>5. The development of this area requires the implementation of a strategic masterplan that allocates areas of height in a careful manner, while responding to existing guidance within the Limerick 2030 Plan. |
| **Tall Building Recommendations** | Subject to a Masterplan, 'taller, landmark, gateway and city landmark buildings' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', are appropriate;<br>Height/areas of height will be encouraged, in line with the Masterplan, where delivered through excellent design and that achieves a high-quality townscape and placemaking;<br>Taller buildings within a cluster of varying height that relate to each other and their surrounding urban context in terms of street layout, massing and design are encouraged;<br>This site should facilitate a gateway building given its significant location; and;<br>This site could facilitate a city landmark that isn't a building, such as a significant art piece. |
| **Criteria for consideration from the Building Heights Guidelines, 2018 and Development Management Guidance** | **Makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood:** The Cleeves site is the only major development opportunity on the right bank of the Shannon. It should take its essential character as a gateway and vista of and from the City.<br>**Responds to its built environment and streetscape:** The existing uses and context provide limited guidance, beyond the significant scale and massing of the industrial buildings and chimney.<br>**Materials / building fabric well considered:** The design of new buildings should acknowledge the industrial heritage of the built environment and traditional materials where appropriate.<br>**Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** The surrounding context provides little guidance as to scale and height, but the unique locational and prominence of existing site buildings suggest a unique opportunity for a taller building, providing views of and from the City.<br>**Contribution to legibility and cohesiveness:** The presence of a taller building in this area could help frame the River and the pattern of taller buildings along the Quays.<br>**Positively contributes to the mix of uses in the neighbourhood:** The site has considerable and attractive mixed-use potential.<br>**Contributes to the building/ dwelling typologies in the area:** Contributing to the building/dwelling typologies in this area is not applicable given the nature of the Cleeves site. However, consideration should be given to providing for taller buildings within a cluster of varying height. |

| The Docklands | |
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| **Character Area** | **The Docklands:** The Docklands Area is of key strategic importance for the development of the City, due to its location at one of the major entrance points to the City. A clear urban structure in the form of a docklands area masterplan is required for this area.<br><br>The legacy of the industrial and trading character of the waterfront of Limerick City has gradually declined in use and a re-activation of this area is required. Most of the Docklands Area comprises low-rise warehouses and storage buildings with the exception of the 10 storey Ranks Silo, which is considerably lower than the neighbouring Clayton Hotel.<br><br>As highlighted in the Docklands Framework, the uses must reflect urban philosophy, including economic, social and cultural activities. Therefore, it is vitally important that if areas of height are to be situated in this location, careful consideration towards multi-functionality through considerate design must be implemented. |
| **Area Objectives** | 1. The development of this area requires the implementation of a strategic masterplan that allocates areas of height in a careful manner, which also responds to the Docklands Framework which has already been set in place;<br><br>2. New high buildings in the Docklands Area should define a new and changing urban form; and<br><br>3. Existing local and key landmark buildings, such as the Ranks Silo, the Dock Clock and Bannatyne Mill, should be protected by controlling the building height of new adjoining and adjacent buildings. |
| **Tall Building Recommendations** | Subject to a Masterplan, 'taller, landmark and gateway buildings' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', are appropriate;<br><br>This site should facilitate a gateway building given its significant location;<br><br>This site can be considered appropriate for a 'City Landmark Building' as defined in the 'Tall Building Classifications', subject to a Masterplan;<br><br>Height/areas of height will be encouraged, in line with the Masterplan, where delivered through excellent design, achieves a high-quality townscape and delivers placemaking; and;<br><br>Taller buildings within a cluster of varying height that relate to each other and their surrounding urban context in terms of street layout, massing and design are encouraged. |
| **Criteria for consideration from the Building Heights Guidelines, 2018 and Development Management Guidance** | **Makes a positive contribution to the urban neighbourhood:** The Docklands Area is a major city building opportunity with a large site likely to be developed over a considerable time period. The development presents the opportunity to establish a new city district.<br><br>**Responds to its built environment and streetscape:** The Docklands has a strong physical character established by the river and the docks, and some heritage buildings, that should be maintained, even as its use character changes completely.<br><br>**Materials / building fabric well considered:** Limited guidance is provided by the area's built context, but the presence of strong water and dock features should be highlighted.<br><br>**Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** A unique opportunity exists for a site closest to the existing city fabric to accommodate a taller building visible at the city-scale. |

**Sense of scale and enclosure of public spaces, thoroughfares and waterfronts:** A unique opportunity exists for a site closest to the existing city fabric to accommodate a taller building visible at the city-scale.

**Contribution to legibility and cohesiveness:** The Docklands should be developed as an extension of the City, with new buildings at the interface providing city-scale address.

**Positively contributes to the mix of uses in the neighbourhood:** The Docklands site is large enough to accommodate a wide range of uses. In addition to the residential opportunity, the potential exists to accommodate a major educational, cultural or other destination institution, as well as new employment activity.

**Contributes to the building/ dwelling typologies in the area:** Contributing to the building/dwelling typologies in this area is not applicable given the nature of the Docklands. However, consideration should be given to providing for taller buildings within a cluster of varying height.

## 11.2 Residential Development - Design, Principles and Standards

This section sets out guidance on qualitative, quantitative and development management criteria for sustainable residential development that will form the basis for evaluating planning applications for residential development and their supporting infrastructure.

### 11.2.1 Design Criteria

The Council will be guided by current national policy documents and any subsequent national policy guidance in relation to planning within the lifetime of the Plan. For additional information, refer to Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy, Chapter 4: Housing and Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure.

The following criteria will be taken into account when assessing applications:

- Land use zoning and specific objectives contained in the Plan and Local Area Plan/Urban Framework Plan/non-statutory planning guidance adopted by the Council;
- Compliance with other policy requirements contained within the Plan;
- Consistency with relevant National and Regional policy objectives;
- Interactions with adjoining complementary uses and land use zoning objectives;
- Development of brownfield sites, under-utilised and vacant sites is favored over greenfield proposals;
- Retention and refurbishment of existing structures, is favored over demolition and new build, where practical and reasonable;
- Consistency with the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024), *the Planning Design Standards for Apartments for Planning Authorities* (2025) and any subsequent update thereafter;
- Density - higher densities should be provided in appropriate locations;
- The emphasis is on high quality materials, design and appropriate landscaping;
- The quality of the residential environment will be of primary significance in determining the acceptability of planning applications;
- Context - having regard to the setting of the site, the surrounding character, streetscape and the impact of any proposed development on the development potential of adjoining sites;

- Layouts, elevations and plan form must be designed to reflect a 'sense of place' and community, utilising existing site features and enhanced landscaping;
- Levels of privacy and amenity, including consideration of overlooking, sunlight/ daylight standards;
- Connectivity - quality of linkage, public realm/streets and permeability;
- Quality of proposed public, private and communal open spaces and recreational facilities;
- Accessibility and traffic safety - proximity to commercial centres and access to public transport;
- Quality and variety in layout in accordance with DMURS;
- Compliance with relevant quantitative standards;
- Variety of house types and unit size;
- Active frontages and passive surveillance will be encouraged;
- The quality of the noise environment that will be achieved, taking account of World Health Organisation and *BS8233:2014 Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings* recommended indoor and outdoor noise levels and the extent to which the principles of good acoustic design have been applied. The level of noise and vibration from construction and demolition activities assessed in accordance with *BS 5228-1/-2:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practise for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites* and the implementation of site mitigation measures where necessary;
- The management of air quality, including dust, during construction and demolition activities through the development of an Air Quality Management Plan and the implementation of site appropriate mitigation measure where necessary.

### 11.2.2 Design and Mix

- Houses should be life adaptable to accommodate changing household sizes through the family lifecycle. Suitable design and mix is required across all new residential development.
- A detailed breakdown of the proposed unit type and size including a percentage split between 1/2/3+ bed units including site and/or floor plans that clearly identify proposed units. This should demonstrate accordance with the Housing Need Demand Assessment.

### 11.2.3 Density and Phasing

- Guidance for Residential density have been set out in Chapter 2: Core Strategy.
- A phasing schedule for any residential development exceeding 30 units, shall be submitted with a planning application.

## 11.3 Residential Development – General Requirements

### 11.3.1 Naming of Residential Estates

Place names are an important part of Limerick's cultural heritage and reflect local history from ancient times to the present. The Council will seek that the naming of streets and residential estates shall reflect local place names or local people of note, heritage, language or topographical features as appropriate. The applicant/developer should ensure that the chosen place name for a new residential development is appropriate relative to its location and is not already in use within Limerick.

### 11.3.2 Management Companies and Taking in Charge

In residential developments, which are not proposed to be Taken in Charge by the Council, evidence will be required to show that private Management Companies will be in place by the time of completion of the estate (of which membership shall be compulsory for all purchasers of property).

If a development (or part thereof) is to be Taken in Charge by the Council, the applicant shall agree which areas are to be Taken in Charge and shall be clearly indicated on a site layout plan. All areas not to be 'Taken in Charge' by the Council, shall also be clearly indicated on a site layout plan and shall be maintained and be the responsibility of a properly constituted Private Management Company. These details shall be submitted with the planning application. All roads, cycle lanes, footpaths, sewers, drains, lighting columns, water mains, services and open spaces within the privately managed areas, irrespective of the management and maintenance regime to be put in place for these areas, shall be satisfactorily completed to the standard for development works as set out in the Council's *Development Works Guidance Document*. In this regard, the applicant shall have regard to the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Governments document *Taking in Charge of Residential Developments Circular Letter PD 1/08* and *Circular Letter PL 5/2014* and the Council's *Development Works Guidance Document*.

### 11.3.3 Bonds

To ensure the satisfactory completion of development works, such as roads, surface water drainage, public lighting and open space, including the protection of trees on a site, which has been the subject of a grant of permission, a bond or cash lodgement may be required until the development has been satisfactorily completed. The amount of such bond or cash lodgement will be determined by the Planning Authority.

### 11.3.4 Refuse Storage and Services

Adequate refuse storage, recycling and composting areas shall be catered for within all residential developments. In the case of communal refuse storage provision, the collection point for refuse should be accessible both to the external collector and to the resident and be secured against illegal dumping by non-residents. In the case of individual houses, the applicant shall clearly show within a planning application the proposed location and design of bin storage to serve each dwelling.

### 11.3.5 Roads, footpaths, water services and landscaping

Road and footpath design and construction shall be in accordance with *DEHLG Recommendation for Site Development Works for Housing Areas (1998)* and design should also be informed by the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, DTTS 2019,* the 2020 *DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response, the Whole of Government National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022* and any subsequent government guidance documents. Where there is a deviation in the general requirements, the primary consideration will be the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and access for emergency vehicles. An assessment of pedestrian crossing requirements to be made at junctions and vehicular entrances with consideration given to appropriateness of dropped kerbs and continuous footpaths in each instance.

Pre-planning discussion with Irish Water is required for all residential estate development to ascertain feasibility of connection to the public mains and sewer.

Each house shall have its own independent foul and surface water sewer connections to the main foul and surface water sewers. There shall generally be no increase in hydraulic flow downstream in the foul or combined drainage networks, from the proposed development as a result of surface water generated on the development site. All sewers shall be located under roadways or open spaces. Water mains shall be located under footpaths where possible. New connections to public water and wastewater networks are subject to Irish Water's Connections Charging Policy and Standard Details and Codes of Practice. Adequate separation between all utility mains (water/gas/sewer/electricity etc.) as required by the relevant authority shall be provided.

All service cables associated with the proposed development including electrical, communal television, telephone and street lighting cables shall be laid underground within the site.

### 11.3.6 Open Space Requirements

Public open space is an integral part of any residential development. A variety of types and sizes of public open space should be provided with natural passive surveillance by the residents. Residential development should incorporate appropriate provision of quality public open space and play lots in accordance with national guidance and any subsequent guidance within the timeframe of the Plan. Open space will be required as follows:

- Open space shall be cognisant of the principles of national guidance including accessibility, personal and child safety, linkage, place-making, public realm, permeability and the hierarchy of open space;
- In accordance with the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024) and any subsequent guidelines, applicants for new residential developments (including mixed use developments with a residential element) shall generally be required to provide 15% of the net site area as public open space;
- A reduced proportion of the net site area as public open space will be considered in exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis, as agreed with the Planning Authority. In such exceptional circumstances, the minimum open space requirement (generally not less than 10% of the net site area) must be justified in consideration of the quantum and nature of existing public open space(s) in the area, the nature and scale of the development, the location and constraints of the site, conservation and environmental considerations, and the achievement of wider planning objectives.
- The Council will determine on a case-by-case basis where it is demonstrated that the function of the space is not viable.
- In the case of strategic and sustainable development sites, the minimum public open space requirement will be determined on a plan-led basis, having regard to the overall approach to public park provision within the area.
- In the case of sites that contain significant heritage, landscape or recreational features and sites that have specific nature conservation requirements, a higher proportion of public open space may need to be retained. The 10-15% range shall not therefore apply to new development in such areas.

The Planning Authority will have regard to the following in the design and provision of open space:

- A reduction in open space may be considered for residential units in new housing estates located within 100m walking distance of a pocket park/play lot, small park, local park, urban neighbourhood park or regional park. Such facilities must be clearly delineated on planning application drawings and demarcated in advance of the sale of any of the units;
- Existing and proposed open space shall where possible be linked, providing green linkages/corridors for wildlife habitats and improving walking and

cycling permeability through the site;
- A landscaping plan will be required for residential developments. Refer to Section 11.3.8 Landscaping for additional information;
- Where a proposed development adjoins a river or canal bank, a linear walkway/ cycleway access for the public may be required. The overall layout of the scheme will not compromise the future development of blue and green infrastructure proposals;
- Open space shall be appropriately sized to accommodate a range of open space activities. Both active and passive open space is required, functional and accessible to all;
- Provide for the retention of existing natural features;
- Include proposals for drainage and landscaping of the public open space;
- Houses shall not be permitted to back onto open spaces;
- Provide high levels of natural surveillance and overlooking by as many houses as possible.

Table DM 2: 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** | 400m² – 0.2 ha. | Every home within 100m walking distance | All residential areas in excess of 50 units should incorporate a play lot provided at a rate of 4sqm per residential unit;<br>Play lot should be overlooked with sufficient passive surveillance by as many houses as possible;<br>Not permitted to side or rear of dwellings;<br>Developer will be required to provide a minimum of two permanent play low maintenance features on site. The design shall reflect nature-based play solutions. |
| **Small Park** | 0.2 ha. – 2 ha. | Every residential unit within 400m walking distance | To accommodate a small playground with a minimum of 4 play features, kick around space and passive recreation;<br>Must be overlooked with passive surveillance by as many houses as is practicable;<br>Not permitted to side or rear of dwellings. |
| **Local Park** | 2 ha. – 20 ha. | Residences to be within 1km | To accommodate a wide range of uses including playing pitches, teenage space, passive recreation and biodiversity areas. |

**Note:** Ancillary open space such as grass verges by roads, on edges of the site or corners in irregular site boundaries should not be included in calculations for the public open space provision on residential development layouts. Similarly, areas of archaeological interest shall not be included in the public open space calculation.

### 11.3.7 Private Open Space

Separation distances between opposing upper floor rear windows and private open space provision shall be in line with the provisions set out in the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024) and any subsequent update to these guidelines.

A separation distance of at least 16 meters between opposing windows serving habitable rooms at the rear or side of houses, duplex units and apartment units, above ground floor shall be maintained. Separation distances below 16 meters may be considered acceptable in circumstances where there are no opposing windows serving habitable rooms and where suitable privacy measures have been designed into the scheme to prevent undue overlooking of habitable rooms and private amenity spaces.

No specified minimum separation distances shall apply at ground floor level.

Proposals for new houses shall meet the following minimum private open space standards:

Table **DM 3:**
Minimum Private Open Space Standards

| House | Minimum Private Open Space | Max Semi-Private (in lieu) |
|---|---|---|
| **1 bed house** | 20 sq.m | 10 sq.m |
| **2 bed house** | 30 sq.m | 15 sq.m |
| **3 bed house** | 40 sq.m | 20 sq.m |
| **4 bed + house** | 50 sq.m | 25 sq.m |

A further reduction below the minimum standard may be considered acceptable where an equivalent amount of high quality semi-private open space is provided in lieu of the private open space, subject to at least 50 percent of the area being provided as private open space.

For building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on smaller sites (e.g. sites of up to 0.25 ha) the private open space standard may be relaxed in part or whole, on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality and proximity to public open space.

In all cases, the obligation will be on the project proposer to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the planning authority or An Coimisiún Pleanála that residents will enjoy a high standard of amenity.

Private open space must form part of the curtilage of the house and be designed to provide a high standard of external amenity space in one or more usable areas. Open spaces may take the form of traditional gardens or patio areas at ground level, and / or well designed and integrated terraces and/or balconies at upper level. The open space must be directly accessible from the unit it serves, and a principal area of open space should be directly accessible from a living space.

Semi-private open space is distinct from public open space. While there is no requirement to provide semi-private open space for a house, the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024) provide an option to provide semi-private open space in lieu of private open space as part of a more flexible design approach. Semi-private spaces shall be for the exclusive use of the residents of a housing development and be directly accessible and integrated into the development. They should be secure and usable spaces with a range of suitable landscape features to meet the needs of intended residents.

Whilst the above standards may be deviated from in instances of sheltered housing/accommodation and infill or backland development, the design should not compromise amenity of the residents. Any deviation from the above standards shall be accompanied by a written statement justifying the deviation and

shall include mitigation/compensatory design features to ensure amenity is not compromised.

Apartments and Duplex Units shall be required to meet the private and semi-private open space requirements set out in the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) or any superseding National Planning Statements issued by the Minister. The building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on smaller sites, (eg sites of up to .25 hectare). The private open space standard may be relaxed in part or whole on a case-by-case basis. Subject to overall design quality and proximity to public open space.

### 11.3.8 Landscaping

Landscape design and maintenance plans will form an integral part of all development applications. Landscape schemes must be in accordance with Limerick City and County Council's standards for road and footpath layout. The design rationale shall identify how the overall approach is ecologically resilient and provides varied landscapes that reflect the character of the area. The landscape design rationale should also address the following:

- Biodiversity (including pollinator friendly approach) open spaces, especially large ones, can provide for a range of natural habitats and can facilitate the preservation and enhancement of flora and fauna. All proposals should be pollinator friendly, providing sufficient year-round diverse flowering plants to address the decline of pollinators. They should generally accord with the planting and maintenance approach set out in the Pollinator Friendly Planting Code of the *All-Ireland Pollinator Plan*, which is inclusive of best practise in the use of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides and growth regulators;
- Nature Based Play including cross-sections, where applicable, indicating the layout and hard and soft treatments of all boundaries, features, external areas and green spaces;
- Urban Greening;
- Specifications for materials together with proposed design detail to include, where applicable, any proposed lighting, seating, kerbing, boundaries, edging, surfacing and water features;
- Soft landscape details are to include detailed planting plans and planting schedules, stating species/varieties, quantities, sizes, rootball presentation and spacing;
- A Landscape Plan shall be accompanied with a timescale for its implementation, including a minimum 18-month landscape maintenance period and a defects liability clause;
- Sustainable Drainage Systems;
- Ecosystems services and carbon capture approach.

#### 11.3.8.1 Hard Landscaping

Hard landscaping is an important element in any scheme and when designed correctly can visually enhance and help define the character of spaces, in addition to helping distinguish between areas for different transport modes. Hard landscaping shall address the following:

- Applications for substantial hard-surfaced areas must demonstrate methods of controlling and limiting surface water run-off consistent with sustainable development. These methods include use of permeable paving/surfaces, bio-retention areas and swales (which should be maintainable), such that rainfall is not directed immediately to surface water drains. Such methods can serve to reduce risk of flooding and help mitigate the impacts of climate change;
- Walls, fences, metal railings and gates used to define spaces should be selected so as to be an integrated part of overall design. Street furniture should be appropriately designed and sited such that it does not provide an obstacle for people with disabilities;
- Where underground or surface works are carried out, the Council will ensure the reinstatement of materials or the replacement with materials of similar style and quality.

#### 11.3.8.2 Soft Landscaping

Key requirements in relation to site development and landscaping works include the following:

- Existing trees and vegetation (hedgerows) should be retained and incorporated into the landscaping of the site, where possible;
- Where a large site adjoins a green corridor, public open space or area of high ecological value, any new public open space on the site should be contiguous to same to encourage visual continuity and expansion of the green infrastructure/biodiversity network;
- Landscaping works should incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems such as biodiversity areas or wetlands, which can reduce surface water run-off. Green roofs, walls and permeable surfaces will be encouraged;
- The Council will encourage and promote tree planting in the planning and design of private and public developments. New tree planting should be planned, designed, sourced, planted and managed in accordance with *BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape – Recommendations*. New planting proposals should take account of the context within which a tree is to be planted and plant appropriate tree species for the location. A useful guide in this regard is the publication *Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages, Heritage Council 2005* which contains a list of trees together with important information, such as eventual size and suitability to particular locations.

It will be a requirement of a planning permission that all planting takes place in the first planting seasons following occupation of the building or completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Any trees or plants, which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, or become seriously damaged or diseased, should be replaced in the next planting season.

### 11.3.9 Trees

The Council will seek the protection of existing trees when granting planning permission and the continued preservation and management of important trees, groups of trees and hedges as part of planning applications. Any proposals to remove mature trees shall be done as part of the planning application process, in order to prevent mature trees being removed on lands zoned for development, in advance of a planning application being submitted, where there is an intention to develop the lands. For applications where trees might be affected, the application should be prepared by a suitably qualified Arboriculturist, in accordance with *British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations* (this information may be helpful in pre-application consultations) and accompanied by the information below,

- Tree survey accompanied by a Tree retention/removal plan;
- Tree protection plan to include details of retained trees and Root Protection Areas (RPA) shown on the proposed layout;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment;
- Arboricultural Method Statement.

All tree works associated with development must be carried out in accordance with *British Standard BS 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations*.

The following criteria shall be taken into account by the Council in assessing planning applications on sites where there are significant individual trees or groups/lines of trees, in order to inform decisions either to protect and integrate trees into the scheme, or to permit their removal:

- Habitat/ecological value of the trees and their condition;
- Uniqueness/rarity of species;
- Contribution to landscape, setting or streetscape;

- Significance of the trees in the context of the landscaping setting, views/vistas;
- The design of vehicular entrances shall avoid conflict with adjacent trees. Where a conflict is unavoidable and where a tree requires removal to facilitate a new or widened vehicular entrance, a financial contribution maybe required in lieu;
- Financial securities for trees: where a significant number of trees and hedgerows are to be retained, the Council will require a developer to lodge a financial security to cover any damage caused to them, either accidentally or otherwise as a result of non-compliance with agreed/specified on-site tree-protection measures. Types of securities include a cash deposit, an insurance bond or such other liquid asset as may be agreed between a developer and the Planning Authority. The security will be returned on completion of the development once it is established that the trees/hedgerows are in a satisfactory condition and have not been unnecessarily damaged by development works. Where damage occurs, the sum deducted from the tree security (or bond/other financial security) will be calculated in accordance with a recognised tree valuation system (e.g. CAVAT).

### 11.3.10 Boundary Treatment

Appropriate boundary treatment is an essential component of any development for private amenity and security, but also impacts on the visual amenity of a residential area and public realm. The following will be required of residential development boundary treatments:

a) Rear boundaries for residential units shall have a minimum height of 1.8m – 2m and consist of capped, rendered concrete block/brick walls. Any wall visible from public road or open space shall be finished appropriately with suitable plaster or dash finish;

b) Extensive lengths of boundary walls should not face onto the public thoroughfare. Design solutions should consider use of dual aspect dwellings and alternative site orientation including provision of side access/ egress arrangements;

c) Provision at a minimum of concrete post and concrete panel fencing as the side boundary between the flank side walls of houses;

d) Where feasible, mature tree and hedge boundaries will be incorporated into the landscaping of a scheme. These boundaries are established biodiversity corridors and, in some cases, local historical value, defining local townlands.

### 11.3.11 SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems)

Urban development generally results in a high proportion of impervious surfaces, pavements, roadways, roofs etc. Adopting traditional methods of storm water runoff disposal can result in quantities of contaminated surface water run-off into the drainage network of sewers, culverts, stream and rivers which can cause both flooding and pollution locally in downstream catchments.

With this in mind, all new developments will be required to manage and minimise surface water runoff by the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), unless otherwise agreed with the Planning Authority. Previously developed sites which are being redeveloped should aim to achieve greenfield run off rates.

A comprehensive Storm Water Management Plan will provide an understanding of the mechanisms of surface water flooding and propose mitigation measures both at a local and strategic level. In this regard, cognisance shall be taken of guidance provided in the following documents: *Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government The Planning System* and *Flood Risk Management (Nov 2009 – Guidelines for Planning Authorities); CIRIA Manual C753 – The SuDS Manual (2015); Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study - GDSDS (2005)* and current best practise.

The SuDS philosophy is to replicate, as closely as possible, the natural drainage from a site prior to its development and adopts the following four pillars of water quantity, water quality (including ground water protection), amenity and biodiversity.

Typical SuDS features to be considered on a site include, but are not limited to:

- Rainwater harvesting;
- Green roofs;
- Infiltration systems;
- Proprietary treatment systems;
- Filter strips and drains;
- Swales;
- Bioretention systems;
- Tree root systems;
- Pervious pavements;
- Ponds and wetlands;
- Detention basins.
- SuDS proposals shall be submitted as part of a planning application. In designing SuDS, developers should also consider the Taking in Charge policy of the Council. The UK SuDS website is a useful site for information and provides some design tools for SuDs (uksuds.com).

In assessing proposals for surface water and SuDS schemes as part of any planning application, the Local Authority shall:

- Require consideration of appropriate long-term storage (separate to attenuation storage and preferably with infiltration) for development runoff volume which is in excess of the greenfield runoff volume. Where long-term storage has been provided:
  a) Rainfall events up to the 1-year return period (RP) should discharge at the 1-year greenfield runoff rate;
  b) Events greater than the 1-year RP and up to the 30-year RP may discharge at the 30-year greenfield runoff rate;
  c) Events greater than the 30-year RP may discharge at the 100-year greenfield runoff rate.
- Where long-term storage cannot be provided, discharges from new developments must be controlled to a maximum of Qbar or 2 l/s/ha, whichever is the greater.
- Require demonstration that interception and/or treatment of surface water run-off is achieved in accordance with GDSDS policy and specifically requirements in respect of the first 5-10mm of run-off. Compliance with the above shall be demonstrated via the Simple Index Approach in the SuDS Manual (CIRIA C753).
- Require consideration of operation and maintenance of SuDS features. A schedule shall be submitted as part of any planning application defining future responsibilities.
- Ensure flow-restricting devices with an orifice of less than 50mm in diameter are avoided.
- Ensure surface water networks are designed for a 5-year rainfall return period with a minimum pipe diameter of DN225 (for Taking in Charge).
- Require percolation and infiltration tests prepared by an Engineer, with a minimum of €2m Professional Indemnity Insurance, are submitted as part of the assessment for SuDS proposals in any planning application. This test report should include details of

infiltration tests and a plan showing test locations and datum of existing ground level. The report should also address groundwater depth encountered during the test period and include available information on local groundwater depths and direction of groundwater flow.
- Ensure groundwater protection measures are demonstrated where applicable.
- Ensure attenuation/storage of flow is designed for the 1 in 100-year return period with an allowance of 30% for climate change. There should be no flooding for the 1 in 30-year return period and no internal property flooding for the 1 in 100-year return period.
- Ensure an allowance of 10% is provided for urban creep.
- Ensure, depending on location and river flood levels, point-of-discharge systems are designed with a free outfall.
- Require redevelopment of previously developed sites to limit flows to the greenfield run off rate.
- Avoid use of concrete attenuation tanks.
- Require submission of a Stage 1 Stormwater Audit as part of any planning submission, a Stage 2 Stormwater Audit prior to construction and a Stage 3 Audit post construction. Stormwater Audits are required for both developments with a site area greater than 0.5 ha and for Strategic Housing Developments (SHD). For developments to be Taken in Charge, Stage Audits, including Limerick City and County Council approval of the audit and maintenance records will be required.
- Require surface water to be appropriately collected on site to prevent flow onto the public roadway, adjoining properties or into the public foul sewer. Exceedance flows shall also be considered.
- Ensure proposed parking and hardstanding areas shall be infiltrated locally, where underlying soil conditions are suitable for infiltration.

Ensure where basements have been proposed within the site, that they shall be protected by the ground being suitably profiled to prevent entry of overland flows.

Alternative SuDS proposals or requests for exemptions or partial exemptions will need to be agreed with Limerick City and County Council.

The Council shall encourage green roofs for the following types of development:
- Apartment developments;
- Employment developments;
- Retail developments;
- Leisure facilities;
- Education facilities.

### 11.3.12 Noise

Excessive environmental noise can be harmful to the health and quality of life of individuals and communities in residential settings. The potential impact of transportation noise on occupants should be considered at the early stages of the planning process for new residential developments.

A key element in the design of new residential development should be the application of good acoustic design so that:
- Internal noise level guidelines, as outlined in BS 8233:2014[1] can be achieved with adequate building ventilation and thermal comfort, in all living areas (e.g. living rooms, bedrooms) with openable windows;
- Private external amenity areas can be enjoyed as intended, taking cognisance of environmental noise levels recommended not to be exceeded by the World Health Organization (WHO).

1 BS 8233: 2014 Guidance on Sound Insulation and Noise Reduction for Buildings

It is required that planning applicants, developers and their acoustic engineers apply the approach taken in the guidance document *Professional Practice Guidance on Planning and Noise: New Residential Development* (ProPG, 2017) and any other relevant guidance or best practice. The ProPG approach may also be applied to the design of other types of noise sensitive developments as well (e.g. educational facilities, hospitals, care homes).

The primary goal of ProPG is to '*assist the delivery of sustainable development by promoting good health and well-being through the effective management of noise*'. The guidance advocates a systematic, proportionate, risk-based approach that facilitates straightforward accelerated decision making for lower risk sites and assists the proper consideration of noise issues, where the acoustic environment is more challenging.

Where noise is identified as an issue on a site, planning applications should be supplemented by an Acoustic Design Statement carried out by a suitably qualified person. The Acoustic Design Statement should demonstrate that all facets of ProPG have been followed. Additional information on noise can be found in Section 6.3.12 Noise Emissions in Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure.

## 11.4 Residential Development - Quality Standards

The provision and protection of residential amenities is a primary concern of Limerick City and County Council. It is the policy of the Council as outlined in the Plan to ensure that new residential development is sufficiently flexible and adaptable to allow for changing circumstances and needs such as aging, disability and a growing family.

The standards for residential accommodation are divided into standards relating to apartments and houses (Section 11.4.1 and 11.4.2 respectively) and apply to new-build residential schemes. The minimum standards set within these sections will be sought in relation to refurbishment schemes however, it is acknowledged that this may not always be possible, particularly in relation to historic buildings, 'living over the shop' projects, tight urban infill developments and in the city under the Living City Initiative. In such cases, the standards may be relaxed subject to the provision of good quality accommodation and where the proposal secures the effective usage of underutilised accommodation.

### 11.4.1 Apartment Development

This section should be read in conjunction with Section 11.8.3 Car and Bicycle Parking Standards, DM Table 9 (a1), DM Table 9 (a2), DM Table 9(b) and Section 11.3.6 Open Space Requirements. In general, the design and layout of apartments shall comply with the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) and any future updates/ amendments thereto.

To align with Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 1 of the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) the following shall apply:

a) With the exception of social housing developments, social/affordable housing provided for under Part V of the Act or schemes to provide housing for older persons where a specific mix of unit sizes may be required, such as in accordance with a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA), there shall be no restrictions within statutory plans in relation to the mix of unit sizes or

types to be provided within apartment developments. There shall be no minimum or maximum requirements for apartments with a certain number of bedrooms.

b) Where any such restriction or requirement is set out within a statutory plan, this Specific Planning Policy Requirement shall apply to any single apartment scheme and there shall be no restriction in relation to the mix of unit sizes or types and there shall be no minimum requirements for apartments with a certain number of bedrooms within the development, except in the circumstances set out above.

#### 11.4.1.1 Minimum Apartment Floor Areas

All apartment developments shall accord with or exceed the minimum floor areas indicated in the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) below.

Table **DM 4:** Minimum Overall Apartment Floor Areas

| Minimum Overall Floor Areas | |
|---|---|
| **Studio apartment (1 person)** | 32 sq.m |
| **One bedroom apartment (2 persons)** | 45 sq.m |
| **Two bedroom apartment (3 persons)** | 63 sq.m |
| **Two bedroom apartment (4 persons)** | 73 sq.m |
| **Three bedroom apartment (4 persons)** | 76 sq.m |
| **Three bedroom apartment (5 persons)** | 90 sq.m |

The floor area parameters set out above shall generally apply to apartment schemes and do not apply to purpose-built and managed student housing.

In the interest of delivering sustainable and good quality urban development, at least 25% of units within a development shall exceed the minimum apartment floor areas by 10%, with the potential for more than 25% of units to exceed the sizes set out in the Guidelines to be provided as required on a scheme-by-scheme basis in apartment schemes in more suburban locations, social housing developments, social and affordable housing delivered under Part V and schemes to provide housing for older persons and/or persons with disabilities.

The recommendation that 25% of all apartments in a proposed scheme shall exceed the minimum floor area standard for any combination of the relevant studio, 1, 2, or 3 bedroom unit types, by a minimum of 10%, does not apply to any proposal with:

- Less than ten residential units;
- Or to building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size;
- Or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha.

Where between 10 to 49 residential units are proposed, the above shall generally apply, but in order to follow for flexibility, it may be assessed on case-by-case basis and if considered appropriate, reduced in part or whole, subject to consideration, by the Planning Authority or An Coimisiún Pleanála of the overall design quality.

#### 11.4.1.2 Dual Aspect Design

A dual aspect apartment shall be designed with openable windows on two or more walls, allowing for views in more than just one direction. The windows may be opposite one another, or adjacent around a corner. To align with Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 3 of the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) in relation to the minimum number of dual aspect apartments that may be provided in any single apartment scheme, the following shall apply:

i) A minimum of 25% of units within a development shall be required to be dual aspect.

ii) For building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha, planning authorities may exercise further discretion to consider dual aspect unit provision at a level lower than the 25% minimum outlined above on a case-by-case basis, but subject to the achievement of overall high density quality in other aspects.

#### 11.4.1.3 Floor to Ceiling Height

To align with Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 4 of the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) the following shall apply:

Ground level apartment floor to ceiling heights shall be a minimum of 2.7m. For building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha, planning authorities may exercise discretion on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality.

#### 11.4.1.4 Lift and Stair Cores

The number of lift and stair cores is principally governed by the dual aspect ratios and should be determined by balancing the financial cost of providing and maintaining lift and stair cores and with appropriate building circulation and compliance with Building Regulations, particularly in relation to accessibility and fire safety.

To align with Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 5 of the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) there shall be no requirement in respect of a minimum number of units per floor per core.

#### 11.4.1.5 Apartments and the Development Management Process

All applications for planning permission for apartment schemes or mixed housing developments that include apartments, should submit a schedule that details the number and type of apartments and associated individual unit floor areas, as part of the planning application process.

A schedule of apartment accommodation should identify the proposed apartments that are at least 10% greater than the minimum floor area standard in schemes with 10 or more apartments.

Apartment unit schedules should detail proposed private amenity space and internal (and any external) storage space associated with each department. The schedule should also detail the aspect of each apartment, i.e. whether dual or single. In the case of single aspect apartments, the schedule should specify the orientation.

Floor areas should be in square metres and should be calculated from internal room dimensions. In addition to the above, planning application drawings must include the principal dimensions of each room as well as the aggregate floor area of each room.

The provision of acceptable levels of natural light in new apartment developments is an important planning consideration as it contributes to the liveability and amenity enjoyed by apartment residents. It is also important to safeguard against a detrimental impact on the amenity of other sensitive occupiers of adjacent properties.

#### 11.4.1.6 Communal, Community and Cultural Facilities

Communal, community, and cultural facilities may be provided in apartment schemes, particularly in some larger developments. For example, communal laundry facilities for drying clothes may be provided in well-ventilated areas. The provision of facilities within an apartment development could also extend to community rooms, gym uses or studios, for example, that may be open to non-residents.

To align with Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 6 of the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) the following shall apply.

The provision of new Communal, Community and Cultural facilities within apartment schemes shall only be required in specific locations identified within the development plan and shall not be required on a blanket threshold-based approach in individual apartment schemes.

#### 11.4.1.7 Purpose-Built Student Accommodation

To align with Specific Planning Policy Requirement (SPPR) 8 of the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) the following shall apply:

i) There shall be no requirement or restriction in relation to the provision of en-suite bathrooms for single study bedrooms within Purpose Built Student Accommodation schemes.
ii) The minimum required area for a single study bedroom without en-suite facilities is 8 sq.m and the minimum required area for a single study bedroom with en-suite facilities is 11.5 sq.m.
iii) The minimum space requirements for kitchen/dining/living areas serving 10 and 12 persons are 3.6 sq.m and 3.3 sq.m per person, respectively.

#### 11.4.1.8 Separation between Blocks

All residential development, particularly apartment developments and those over three storeys high, shall provide for acceptable separation distances between blocks to avoid negative effects such as excessive overlooking, overbearing and overshadowing effects and provide quality living environment for future occupiers.

In general, an appropriate separation distance is required between opposing windows in the case of apartments up to three storeys in height. Discretion of this standard will be dependent onsite layout characteristics and flexibility may be employed where appropriate design can be adequately demonstrated. In taller blocks, a greater separation distance may be required having regard to the layout, size and design. In some cases, subject to design, orientation and location in built-up areas, reduced separation distances may be acceptable. In all instances where the minimum separation distances are not met, the applicant shall submit a sunlight/daylight/overshadowing analysis for the proposed development.

#### 11.4.1.9 Internal Storage and External Storage

Internal storage standards for apartments shall comply with the following:

- Minimum Storage Space Requirements:
  - Studio: 3 sq.m
  - One Bedroom: 3 sq.m
  - Two Bedroom (3 person): 5 sq.m
  - Two Bedroom (4 person): 6 sq.m
  - Three Bedroom (4 persons): 6 sq.m
  - Three Bedroom: (5 persons): 9 sq.m.
- Storage should be additional to kitchen presses or cupboards and loose bedroom furniture, but may be partly provided in these rooms. In such cases this must be in addition to aggregate living/dining/kitchen or bedroom floor areas.
- Hot press/boiler space will not count as general storage.
- No individual storage room should exceed 3.5m$^2$ and shall be provided within the apartment unit.

In addition to the minimum apartment storage requirements, apartment schemes should provide external storage for bulky items outside individual units (i.e. at ground or basement level). These storage units should provide for accessible and secure storage, allocated to each individual apartment unit. Each storage room shall provide appropriate electric points for the purpose of charging electric bikes/scooters.

Where secure, allocated storage is provided in addition to that provided within individual units, it may be used to satisfy up to half of the minimum storage requirements for individual apartment units, but shall not serve to reduce the minimum floor area required to be provided within each individual apartment unit, as set out in the *Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025). This is intended to enable greater flexibility in apartment design, whereby more living or bedroom space may be provided within the apartment unit in lieu of a portion of required internal storage space where such storage space has been provided elsewhere in the building.

For building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha, the storage requirement may be relaxed in part, on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality.

### 11.4.2 Residential Quality Standards – Houses

#### 11.4.2.1 Separation Distances between Residential Units

In the interest of residential amenity the following applies:

- An appropriate separation distance between directly opposing rear windows at first floor level in the case of detached, semi-detached and terraced units in accordance with the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024);
- Any residential development proposal exceeding three or more storeys shall demonstrate adequate separation distances having regard to occupier's amenity including privacy, sunlight and daylight. Each development proposal will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and should not be seen as a precedent for future development in the area;

Note: The developer shall submit a statement demonstrating design mitigation with respect to impact on residential amenity.

#### 11.4.2.2 Floor Areas

The minimum size of habitable rooms for houses shall conform with national guidelines/standards in operation at the date of application for planning permission, including the minimum dimensions as set out in *the Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2025) and the *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities: Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities* (2007).

#### 11.4.2.3 Aspect and Natural Light

As a standard, all habitable rooms within new residential units shall have access to appropriate levels of natural/daylight and be guided by the principles of *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, A guide to good practice (Building Research Establishment Report, 2011)* and/or any updated guidance. A daylight analysis will be required where considered necessary.

### 11.4.3 Serviced Sites

Serviced sites refer to a number of individual residential plots typically, of the order of 0.1ha. with access to services such as utility connections, paths, lighting and within walkable distance of town or village centres, close to the urban core. Serviced sites offer an alternative to the single one-off rural house, to self-build according to one's own design, but located in a town or village. The density is generally 10 housing units per hectare.

There is no additional wastewater treatment capacity in a number of settlements in County Limerick. Where there are no plans to upgrade the wastewater treatment plants in the Irish Water Investment Plan, current at the time of making an application, the Council will allow developments of multiple units where each house is served by individual on-site waste water treatment systems (OSWWTS). However, a technical assessment will be required to demonstrate that such developments pose no risk of pollution or nuisance, either individually or cumulatively. The assessment of discharges to groundwater should be risk-based and receptor-focused and undertaken in accordance with *Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater (EPA 2011)*. The level of the assessment should be proportionate to the risk posed by the discharge.

Under no circumstances will discharges to surface water from such developments be permitted. At the time of construction, provision must be made for the houses to connect into the public sewerage system once capacity is available. The necessary pipe work must be clearly indicated on the planning drawings. Once connected, the individual system should be decommissioned.

Whilst individual house design on serviced sites is encouraged, the overall design of the scheme must be consistent in terms of boundary treatments and landscaping. Traditional forms and materials appropriate to the setting should be used. Serviced sites should integrate with the existing town or village in terms of:

- Village/town and site characteristics, including connection/links/connectivity with the town/village core, layout and design respecting the topography, retention of natural features such as hedgerows, or historical features such as stone walls;
- With infrastructure and service requirements including roads, paths, water services, surface water management and SuDS, public lighting and digital infrastructure;
- Design and materials, including scale, materials palette and simple roof finishes; and
- Suitable landscaping.

A masterplan should be produced by the developer showing the overall layout, infrastructure, services and landscaping for the whole of the serviced site during the planning application stage. All future development should be constructed thereafter in accordance with the masterplan, unless otherwise agreed with the Planning Authority.

Where there are no sewerage facilities or where the existing facilities are inadequate and there are no immediate plans to improve them, a limited number of one-off houses, using treatment systems, may be permitted on suitably sized sites within Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 towns and villages. This would be subject to normal environmental site assessment requirements. The amount and location of these sites would be controlled to ensure that they would not significantly impact on the fabric and character of the village and its sense of identity and place would be retained. The development would also need to ensure the definition of a strong urban edge, resulting in a clear distinction between the urban area and open countryside.

Where Local Area Plans and or zoning maps exist for towns and villages these sites may only be located on suitable zoned lands. Pre-planning discussion with the Council is strongly advised in relation to development of serviced sites.

### 11.4.4 Other Development in Built-up Areas

#### 11.4.4.1 Extensions to Dwellings

##### 11.4.4.1.1 Front Extensions

Porch extensions, other than those deemed to be exempted development, should be of appropriate design and scale relative to the design of the original house and shall not dominate the front elevation of the dwelling.

Front extensions, at both ground and first level will be considered acceptable in principle subject to scale, design and impact on visual and residential amenities. A break in the front building line will be considered subject to scale and design and impact on established residential and visual amenity.

##### 11.4.4.1.2 Rear/Side Extensions

Ground floor rear/side extensions will be considered in terms of their length, height, proximity to mutual boundaries and quantum of usable rear private open space remaining.

First floor rear/side extensions will be considered on their merits and will only be permitted where the Planning Authority is satisfied that there will be no significant negative impacts on surrounding residential or visual amenities. In determining applications for first floor extensions, the following will be considered:

- Degree of overshadowing, overbearing and overlooking - along with proximity, height and length along mutual boundaries;
- Size and usability of the remaining rear private open space;
- Degree of setback from mutual side boundaries. No part of the extension shall encroach or overhang adjoining third party properties.

Any planning application submitted in relation to extensions, basements or new first/upper floor level within the envelope of the existing building, shall clearly indicate on all drawings the extent of demolition/ wall removal required to facilitate the proposed development. In addition, a structural report, prepared by a competent and suitably qualified engineer, may be required to determine the integrity of walls/structures to be retained and outline potential impacts on adjoining properties. This requirement should be ascertained at preplanning stage.

#### 11.4.4.1.3 Alterations at Roof/Attic Level

Roof alterations/expansions to main roof profiles (changing the hip-end roof of a semi-detached house to a gable/'A' frame end or 'half-hip' for example) and additional dormer windows will be assessed having regard to the following:

- The character and size of the structure, its position on the streetscape and proximity to adjacent structures;
- Established streetscape character and roof profiles;
- Dormer extensions to roofs, i.e. to the front, side and rear, will be considered with regard to impacts on existing character and form and the privacy of adjacent properties.

### 11.4.4.2 Sub-Division of Dwellings

The sub-division of existing dwellings into two or more dwelling units will be considered in circumstances where it would contribute to maintaining a viable community in an area, will allow for the opportunity of downsizing, is in a location well served with amenities and where the existing dwelling is of an appropriate size. Conversions must not detract from adjoining/existing residential amenity, or result in a negative visual impact on the streetscape, or on neighbouring properties. Design and landscaping shall be of a high standard with adequate open space arrangements required.

### 11.4.4.3 Corner/Side Garden Sites

The sub-division of an existing house curtilage and/or an appropriately zoned brownfield site, to provide an additional dwelling(s) in existing built-up areas will be considered in line with the following:

- Size, design, layout, relationship with existing dwelling and adjoining properties;
- Impact on the amenities of adjacent properties;
- Development Plan standards for existing and proposed dwellings;
- Building lines followed, where appropriate;
- Car parking for existing and proposed dwellings on site;
- Access arrangements including side/ gable and rear access/maintenance space;
- Adequate usable private open space for existing and proposed dwellings provided;
- Side gable walls as side boundaries facing corners in estate roads are not considered acceptable and should be avoided;
- Appropriate boundary treatments should be provided.

### 11.4.4.4 Mixed-Use Development

To create vibrant, attractive and liveable urban areas, it is important that development accommodates a mix of uses. In considering proposals for mixed-use developments, the protection of amenity and the reduction in potential conflict between the various uses will be considered. Factors such as levels of noise, air pollution and security will be considered. Where these factors would affect amenities, all proposals must include measures to reduce noise levels between the different uses to ambient noise levels and enhance security. In all development, measures should be incorporated to control the extraction of fumes and odours. In new development, internal ducting or flues shall be incorporated so that ground floor units have the potential for fumes to be extracted to and discharged at roof level. This will facilitate current and potential future ground floor uses such as restaurants or dry cleaners. In order to minimise noise

disturbance, sound insulation shall be incorporated between individual units and to the adjoining building, in order to reduce the transmission of impact and airborne noise between units and/or premises and to, or from, the external environment. The scheme of sound/acoustic insulation will be submitted with the planning application for development.

#### 11.4.4.5 'Living-Over-The-Shop'

The Council will promote the residential use of the upper floors of commercial properties in established retail/commercial areas. In this regard, the Council will consider possible dispensations from normal standards to facilitate 'Living-Over-The-Shop' developments that will enhance the critical mass of these areas and contribute positively to the renewal of our urban centres. The Planning Authority will encourage 'Living-Over-The-Shop', subject to suitability of location and standard of accommodation proposed. Exemptions for older commercial buildings in appropriate cases may be given in respect of private open space, parking and unit size standards subject to location.

#### 11.4.4.6 Mews Lane Development

The principle of mews development will generally be acceptable where there is adherence to the qualitative and quantitative standards set out in this chapter.

#### 11.4.4.7 Student Accommodation

All proposals for student accommodation should comply with the Department of Education and Science's *Guidelines on Residential Development for Third Level Students* (1999), the subsequent supplementary document (2005), the provision of the *National Student Accommodation Strategy* (2017) and Circular PL8/2016. The Council will support the provision of on-campus accommodation and purpose built-professionally managed student accommodation off-campus at suitable locations. When assessing applications for student accommodation the Council will have regard to:

- The location of student accommodation: The Council will prioritise student accommodation on campus or within 1km distance from the boundary of a Third Level Institute, followed by locations within close proximity to high quality public transport corridors, cycle and pedestrian routes and green routes;
- The potential impact on residential amenities: The provision and location of student accommodation will not be permitted where it would have a detrimental effect on established residential amenities;
- The provision of on-site facilities, including storage facilities, waste management, quality and quantum of cycle parking and associated showers and lockers, leisure facilities, car parking and amenity areas;
- The architectural quality of the design and integration with the wider streetscape with respect to scale, mass, external finishes and landscaping;
- The number of existing similar facilities in the area (applicable only to off-campus accommodation). In assessing a proposal for student accommodation, the Planning Authority will consider the cumulative impact of student accommodation, which exists in the locality and will resist the over-concentration of such schemes in any one area, in the interests of sustainable development and residential amenity.

#### 11.4.4.8 Short-term Letting

Section 38 of the Residential Tenancies (Amendment) Act 2019 inserts a new Section 3A into the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), to provide that the short-term letting of a house (the definition of which under the Planning Act also includes apartments) in a rent pressure zone, is a material change of use of the property concerned, thereby requiring planning permission, unless otherwise specifically exempted from this requirement.

The current Rent Pressure Zone designation by DHPLG covers all of Limerick City and County. The Council will be guided by the *Guidance Notes for Planning Authorities on the Regulation of Short-Term Letting, 2019* and in particular Section 7 when determining its decision to permit or otherwise and any subsequent revisions.

### 11.4.5 Housing for All – Nursing Homes/ Assisted Living Accommodation

When assessing planning applications for Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Units, the Council will have regard to the following:

- Location - Such facilities will be resisted in remote locations removed from urban areas. They should be located in established neighbourhoods/residential areas well served by community infrastructure and amenities where future residents can access local services such as shops and community facilities;
- Accessibility - Proximity of high-quality public transport links and provision of good footpath links;
- The potential impact on residential amenities of adjoining properties;
- Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Accommodation shall provide at least 20% open space of the overall site area;
- Adequate provision of parking facilities (Refer also to Section 11.8.3 Car and Bicycle Parking Standards, DM Table 9a/9b);
- The design, layout, size and scale of the proposal must be appropriate to the area;
- Quality of proposed landscaping.

### 11.4.6 One-Off Housing in the Countryside

The Council's policy position in respect of the management of 'one-off' housing in the rural areas of Limerick is set out in Chapter 4: Housing.

The suitability of a rural site for any development will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Table DM 5: Design Guidelines for Rural Houses

| Topic | Standard/Guidelines |
|---|---|
| **Site Area, Building Line and Road Frontage** | • The site area shall be a minimum of 0.2ha. (0.5 acres). In cases involving the renovation of existing dwellings, smaller sites will be considered where the applicant can demonstrate adequate provision for disposal of effluent and other criteria in this Plan to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority;<br>• Road frontage - minimum 30 m.;<br>• Minimum building lines measured from the nearest edge of the road surface are outlined in Table DM 8 Building Lines on Public Roads, in Section 11.8.2 of this chapter;<br>• In order to limit the negative visual impact arising from a series of dwellings along a road in rural areas, dwellings generally should avoid regular minimum set back and be staggered in relation to adjacent development, subject to the amenities of nearby residents being protected and no adverse effect on carrying capacity and traffic safety. |
| **Water Services** | • Where public services are available (or likely to be), the developer will be required to connect to them. Applicants are advised to avail of pre-connection enquiries with Irish Water to ascertain if feasible to connect to public services;<br>• Each dwelling shall have viable and secure access to a water supply provided to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority. In the case of use of an existing private well, the applicant shall submit a report from a suitably qualified professional confirming potability of the water from the well;<br>• Connections to Group Water Schemes (GWS) will require a letter from the GWS confirming connection for the proposal. |
| **Waste Water Disposal to Ground** | • To ascertain the suitability of a site to accommodate disposal of wastewater to ground through a septic tank or effluent treatment unit, applicants must carry out a site assessment in advance of submitting a planning application in accordance with the EPA 2021 Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems. Refer to limerick.ie/list-of-site-assessors. Only one house will be permitted per septic tank/effluent treatment unit;<br>• The Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012 requires water services authorities to maintain a register of domestic wastewater treatment systems in their functional areas. |
| **Siting, Design, Materials and Detailing** | • Scale, height, design and siting of the house shall be sensitive to its surroundings and visually integrate with its rural landscape;<br>• Simple design and materials reflecting the traditional vernacular of Limerick's rural architecture should be used. Applicants are required to refer to Limerick's *Rural Design Advice for Individual Houses in the Countryside* updated in 2012 and any subsequent documents prepared by the Council;<br>• A variety of house types of innovative designs, including timber houses will be considered, subject to the dwelling integrating into the local environment and compliance with building regulations;<br>• Acceptable visual impact of the development in relation to the surrounding countryside and dwellings/structures/features in the vicinity;<br>• No other adverse impact on the environment;<br>• Satisfactory screening/shelter;<br>• Protection of residential amenity where appropriate;<br>• No adverse impact on heritage items, European sites and/or protected areas;<br>• Ecological Impact;<br>• Where existing vernacular structures exist on site, consideration should be given to their re-use, adaptation and extension, in preference to a completely new build house;<br>• The applicant should determine if the proposed dwelling is located in a designated national heritage, archaeological area, or within the curtilage of a Protected Structure, as there may be implications for the design of the proposed dwelling.<br>The applicant is advised to submit a Design Statement demonstrating consideration of the above in the design of the dwelling. |

| Topic | Standard/Guidelines |
|---|---|
| **Site Entrance and Sightlines** | • The application must demonstrate safe vehicular access to and from the proposed dwelling, in terms of visibility from the proposed entrance, but also in terms of the impact on traffic safety through the turning and stopping movement of vehicles entering or leaving the site. Should any remedial works be required on land outside the ownership of the applicant, it is required to submit letters of consent for same. If utility poles are to be relocated, letters of consent from utility providers shall be provided.;<br>• All applications should include (at a minimum scale of 1:500) comprehensive details of how adequate sightlines and stopping distances can be achieved according to current TII road geometric standards according to the road category. Where satisfactory sightlines can only be achieved by removing extensive hedgerows, trees, ditches or stone walls and an alternative site should be sought;<br>• Entrance gates shall be recessed 4.5 m. behind the line of roadside hedgerow, with side boundaries splayed at an angle of 45 degrees to the public road carriageway. |
| **Landscaping and Boundary Treatment** | The retention of existing front boundary hedges, sod banks and stone walls are encouraged. If the front boundary or a section of the front boundary is removed, it shall be reinstated with native hedgerow and tree species and local materials;<br>The Council will also ensure the adequate integration of development into the landscape by the retention of existing trees and landscape features and/or suitable planting. |
| **Hardcore Surface and Surface Water Disposal** | • Surface water be disposed of to soak pits or watercourse(s) adjoining the site and shall not be allowed to flow onto the public road or to adjoining properties. Details shall be submitted with the planning application;<br>• There are no minimum standards required for gardens. However, the hard landscaping of areas around dwelling houses shall be limited. |

Note: Suburban-type and/or ribbon development is not acceptable in rural areas as set out in the Sustainable Rural Guidelines and any subsequent update.

## 11.5 Community Facilities

### 11.5.1 Childcare Facilities

Where a new childcare facility is proposed as part of a new residential or commercial development, the facility shall be constructed in tandem with the overall scheme and shall be completed prior to residents moving in. In assessing individual planning applications for childcare facilities, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:

- Type of service provided, whether sessional, full day care, pre-school, afterschool etc., number of children/staff and hours of operation;
- Suitability of the site for the type and size of facility proposed;
- Adequate sleeping/rest facilities;
- Adequate availability of indoor and outdoor play space;
- Convenience to public transport nodes;
- Safe access and convenient off-street car parking and/or suitable drop-off and collection points for customers and staff;
- Local traffic conditions;
- Number of such facilities in the area. In this regard, the applicant shall submit a map showing locations of childcare facilities within the vicinity of the subject site and demonstrate the need for an additional facility at that location;
- Applications for childcare facilities in existing residential areas will be treated on their merits, having regard to the likely effect on the amenities of adjoining properties and compliance with the above criteria;
- Detached houses or substantial semi-detached properties are most suitable for the provision of full day care facilities. Properties with childcare should include a residential component within the dwelling and preferably should be occupied by the operator or a staff member of the childcare facility;
- For new residential developments, the most suitable facility for the provision of full day care should be a purpose built, ground floor, standalone property;
- In assessing applications for new childcare facilities, the Planning Authority will consult with the Limerick Childcare Committee to assess the need for the type of facility proposed at the intended location.

Note: Refer to DM Table 9a/9b in relation to car parking standards for childcare facilities.

### 11.5.2 School Development

The Planning Authority will consider school developments having regard to specific requirements of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and guidance set out within *The Provision of Schools and the Planning System, A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities* (2008). New schools shall be developed in areas where new/additional schools are required as identified by the DES and/or within existing school/education sites. In assessing such proposals, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:

- The overall need/requirement to enhance or develop schools;
- Site location, proximity of school to catchment area, size of site relative to proposed school capacity and associated requirement including outdoor amenities (including future expansion);
- Design relative to site context;
- Traffic and transport -impact on the surrounding road network;
- Accessibility - safe accessible pedestrian and cyclist routes to and from the school from nearby residential and commercial areas;
- Safe access and adequate car parking layout to facilitate drop off/pick up;
- Where possible, support the inclusion of Car Free School Zones where the streets outside a school are closed to traffic at school opening and closing times, maintaining access for residents, businesses, pedestrians and cyclists;
- Adequate cycle facilities (showers, changing rooms etc.) in accordance with the requirements in the Council Cycle Policy Guidelines and Standards;
- Adequate signage, lighting and boundary treatments;
- Impact on local amenities and out of school hours uses/dual functioning of school facilities;
- Land use zoning objectives;
- A School Travel Plan/Mobility Management Plan to be submitted as part of the application;

- Temporary classrooms will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will generally be accepted for a period not exceeding five years and where there is no interference with onsite amenities and facilities such as car or bike parking;
- Extensions to schools will generally be accepted where they will replace existing temporary classroom structures on site;
- Dual function of sports facilities/halls etc. outside of school hours will be encouraged, where the use of such facilities will be of a benefit to the wider community and will not represent a detrimental impact on adjoining residential amenity.

### 11.5.3 Health Care Facilities

The Planning Authority will consider applications for health care facilities on their own merits. In doing so, the Planning Authority will distinguish between small-scale medical practices involving one to two practitioners (i.e. doctor/dentist/physiotherapist owning the business) with a maximum of one to two employees and larger medical practices accommodating two or more medical practitioners and staff.

Larger scale and group medical practices should normally only be located in local, district and major Town/City Centre zonings. They should not have negative impacts in terms of car parking, traffic hazard and residential amenity. All proposed signage shall be appropriately designed and of modest scale.

Medical practices in residential areas should normally be additions to the existing residential use of a dwelling and be subordinate to it in most cases and with suitable and convenient access for those arriving by car, foot or public transport.

In the case of veterinary surgeries, full details of all services provided on site shall be submitted, including details of overnight facilities (including kennels/staff accommodation) and out of hours services shall be submitted together with noise mitigation measures, where appropriate.

## 11.6 Economic Strategy

The Planning Authority will encourage high quality design, materials, finishes and landscaping for all large commercial and office developments in Limerick. For all significant commercial and employment developments (comprising schemes with a gross floor area of 1000 sq.m. and above (or otherwise required by the Planning Authority), a Design Statement will be required. Where applicable, the design statement should outline how the circular economy has been addressed from design through to planned end-use.

### 11.6.1 Enterprise and Employment Development

In assessing planning applications for enterprise and employment development, the Planning Authority will take the following into consideration:

Table DM 6: Design Guidelines for High Tech/Manufacturing, Warehousing, Business Park, Enterprise and Employment Centres

| Topic | Standard/guideline |
|---|---|
| **Zoning** | • More favourable consideration will be given to development in their appropriate zones having regard to the Zoning Matrix Table where relevant. |
| **Design** | • Demonstrate a high standard of design including signage, entrance and boundary treatment and a quality layout considering smarter travel options for employees and suitable green energy and surface water solutions. Developers should be aware of the potential of this type of development to contribute to public realm, sense of place and as a 'landmark', reflecting arrival in a settlement;<br>• Innovative, high quality contemporary designs are welcomed, as are suitable public art/ sculpture/special architectural or landscape features. Refer to Section 11.3.8 Landscaping to inform design;<br>• A Design Statement will be submitted demonstrating consideration of the principles in the chosen design and where applicable, outline how the circular economy has been addressed from design through to planned end-use. |
| **Site Coverage** | • On green field sites, flexibility in the development standards will be considered on a case-by-case basis, appropriate to the location, the design characteristics of the scheme, the site context, the proposed uses and the Mobility Management Plan. In urban centre locations, in order of facilitate the development of a compact centre, a flexible design solution will be considered where a proposal fulfils objectives for compact growth and regeneration, while achieving a high level of design and amenity. |
| **Uses and hours of operation** | • Details of the proposed uses and operational hours will be expected at planning application stage, including industrial processes involved, any toxic materials, chemicals or solvents used should be submitted to the Planning Authority. |
| **Traffic and circulation** | • Details of access arrangements, internal roads, paths, turning areas, loading bays and proposals to encourage positive modal transport shift will be required with applications;<br>• New development, which the Council considers will have significant trip generation and attraction rates at peak hours, or where the utilisation of existing or proposed public transport may be utilised, shall submit a Mobility Management Plan as part of the planning application;<br>• Generally, one vehicular access point will be permitted to serve the development with a minimum carriageway width of 7.5 m. with a 2 m. wide footpath to either side;<br>• A Traffic Safety Audit to ascertain the impact of the proposal on the public road will be required as appropriate;<br>• Accesses onto the national road network will comply with the requirements of the *Spatial Planning and National Road – Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, 2012. |
| **EV charging points** | • EV charging points(s) for staff and/or visitor shall be provided for each unit and shall be clearly identifiable and installed to the requirements of ESB networks. Refer to Section 11.8.3 Car and Bicycle Parking Standards, DM Table 9a/9b in relation to parking requirements and Section 11.8.6 EV Charging Points Table DM 11 for EV parking requirements. The Council encourages business and enterprise to consider alternative fuel options for its freight fleet and infrastructure installed accordingly, to assist the national ambition of transition towards a low carbon economy and national policy on clean air and climate action. Details will be submitted when seeking planning permission from the Planning Authority. |

| Topic | Standard/guideline |
|---|---|
| **Boundary treatment, open space and landscaping** | • Sufficient lands shall be 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. Refer to Section 11.3.8 Landscaping and Section 11.3.11 SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems);<br>• A landscaping plan will be required to be submitted as part of the Planning Application. Existing trees and hedgerows should be retained where possible, in the interest of biodiversity;<br>• Open space provision is encouraged, suitably located to provide amenity and passive recreation of employees. Options for active recreation such as walking/jogging on site, if sufficient in scale, are encouraged for healthier employee lifestyle and well-being. |
| **Surface water** | • The use of SUDS as a surface water solution and as an urban design feature in business parks is encouraged. Refer to Section 11.3.11 SuDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems) in this chapter. |
| **Waste Management** | • Waste and recycling areas will be sufficiently covered, screened from the public road and enclosed and protected from weather. A storage area of sufficient size for all recyclable materials generated from the development to the requirements of the Waste Management Act (Packaging Regulations) 2003 should be provided. All external storage including bin storage and oil tanks shall be visually screened from the public areas, with adequate screening by fencing or walls of not less than 2 m. in height. |
| **Utilities structures** | • The location of new utilities infrastructure such as electricity substations, communication equipment cabinets, should not be located forward of the main/front building line, or on areas of open space visible from the public road. Such structures should be sensitively designed to assimilate with the design of the overall development and maintained to a high standard by the relevant service provider. |
| **Advertising** | • In business parks/industrial estates/enterprise centres, particularly where there are non-competing uses, the grouping of advertising signs will be expected, whereby all the names (and logos) of the businesses are placed on a single advertising structure, located at the entrance and accompanied with a layout map of the estate indicating their location. |
| **Other** | • A Sustainability Statement is required for all large-scale industrial/commercial development above 1,000sqm.;<br>• All industrial, office and warehousing or business park development in excess of 0.5 ha. will be required to submit a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP);<br>• Overground oil/chemical/fluid storage tanks shall be adequately bunded to prevent leakage or spillage;<br>• The Council encourages research development activity as an ancillary part of new and existing business parks in partnership with third level institutions;<br>• Dependent on the scale of the development and its location in the urban settlement, the Council encourages the provision of the supporting services in accordance with the land use zoning matrix;<br>• Buildings >500m2 in floor area are required to provide south-facing solar panels, where feasible;<br>• No security fencing will be permitted forward of the front building line of any industrial or warehouse facility, other than during the construction phase of the development. |

#### 11.6.1.1 Commercial and Industrial Noise

Where there is the potential for environmental noise to be generated from a commercial or industrial facility (e.g. fans, machinery), it will be necessary to submit a Noise Assessment in accordance with *BS 4142:2014+A1:2019,* or any other relevant standards, guidance or best practise. The likelihood of adverse or significant adverse effects at noise sensitive receptors should be established and details submitted of any proposed noise mitigation measures. Any noise assessment should be prepared by a suitably qualified professional with sufficient expertise.

### 11.6.2 Retail Development

#### 11.6.2.1 Assessment of Retail Applications

Applications for new retail development shall:

- Be in line with the role and function of the retail centre in the Plan and accord with the scale and type of retailing identified for that location;
- Accord with the fundamental objective to support the vitality and viability of the retail centre and must demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach;
- Provide a detailed Retail Impact Assessment (RIA) and a Transport Impact Assessment (TIA) to accompany the application where appropriate, having regard to location, scale of development proposed and the retail hierarchy;
- Be of a high quality and incorporate layouts that encourage active and engaging frontages where appropriate;
- Contribute to creating a sense of place;
- Explore opportunities to provide a mix of uses to benefit the vitality of the surrounding area;
- There shall be a general presumption against large out-of-town retail centres.

#### 11.6.2.2 Takeaways/Restaurants/Kiosk/ Popup (Container) Trading Units

Takeaway premises are often of concern to people who live close by and indeed those living in the wider area, when noise and disturbance is generated by increased pedestrian and vehicular traffic drawn into an area. In order to maintain an appropriate mix of uses and protect night-time amenities in a particular area and to promote a healthier and more active lifestyle, it is an objective of Limerick City and County Council to prevent an excessive concentration of takeaways and to ensure that the intensity of any proposed takeaway is in keeping with both the scale of the building and the pattern of development in the area.

The provision of such facilities will be strictly controlled, having regard to the following, where appropriate:

- The effect of noise, general disturbance, hours of operation, litter and fumes on the amenities of nearby residents;
- The developer will be requested to submit as part of the planning application an Odour Impact Assessment, prepared by a suitably qualified professional with sufficient expertise to demonstrate odour abatement solutions, through appropriate modelling and monitoring procedures when operational;
- The need to safeguard the vitality and viability of shopping areas and to maintain a suitable mix of retail uses;
- Traffic considerations;
- The number/frequency of such facilities in the area, particularly in close proximity to schools;
- The need to integrate the design of ventilation systems into the design of the building;
- That all takeaways provide and maintain a suitable waste bin outside their premises during hours of business;
- The number and frequency of such facilities within a 1km radius of the proposed development;

- The context and character of the street, where the aim is to maintain and improve the vitality of the shopping experience, by encouraging a range of convenience and/or comparison retail shops.

The Council recognises the rise in 'container' takeaway cafés across the City and County. The container café is a permanently 'portable development' with its own water supply and power generation. The provision of such facilities will be strictly controlled. In such cases, the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that such proposed development will not be detrimental to the residential, environmental quality, or the established character and function of the area. Matters that shall be taken into account by the Planning Authority in assessing planning proposals for these uses include, but are not limited to the following:

- The amenity of neighbouring residents and occupiers;
- Hours of operation;
- Traffic management;
- Frontage treatment and impact on streetscape;
- Proposed signage.

#### 11.6.2.3 Off-Licences/Betting Shops

Off-licences and betting shops should generally be located in Limerick's commercial areas. The Planning Authority will seek to ensure that the quantum of off-licences/ betting shops is not disproportionate to the overall size and character of the area. However, the number and control of off-licences/betting shops will primarily be a licensing issue.

In any consideration of proposals for off-licences/betting shops, regard to the amenities of nearby residents - i.e. noise, general disturbance, hours of operation and litter, will be paramount.

Any application for betting shops shall include details as to the location and size of any/all satellite dishes required to serve the unit, in addition to proposed signage and advertising.

### 11.6.3 Petrol Stations

Table DM 7: Design Guidelines for Service Stations

| Topic | Standard/Guideline |
|---|---|
| **Design** | • Design approach should reflect an integrated design dealing with buildings, structures, advertising, lighting, overall layout etc. reflecting a high standard of design;<br>• In urban centres where the development would likely have an impact on the historic or architectural character of the area, the use of standard corporate design and signage may not be acceptable;<br>• Service stations are generally not encouraged in the retail core of urban areas or in rural areas;<br>• The application must demonstrate that noise, traffic, visual obstruction, fumes/odours do not detract unduly from residential amenity in the area;<br>• New petrol stations and refurbished existing stations shall ensure provision of Low Emission Vehicle Refuelling/Recharging Infrastructure |
| **Retail unit** | • The retail unit shall not exceed 100m2 net floor area. Retailing shall be confined to the shop floor area with the exception of the sale of domestic fuel where some storage is permissible. Retail sales will be restricted to convenience goods;<br>• Where applications are made for retail units associated with a petrol station, with a retail unit in excess of 100m2, the sequential approach to retail development will apply;<br>• Hours of operation to be detailed. |
| **Access and circulation** | • Generally, two access points with a minimum width of 7.3m and a maximum width of 9.1m with appropriate radius of curvature based on road design speed;<br>• The layout shall demonstrate safe pedestrian and cyclist access and sufficient circulation for delivery vehicles;<br>• The pump island shall not be located closer than 7m from the roadside boundary. |
| **Sightlines** | • Speed Value of Road Less than 80km/h – 160m minimum visibility distance;<br>• Speed Value of Road 80km/h or greater - 215m minimum visibility distance;<br>• No advertising or other structures whether permanent or temporary shall interfere with sightlines on motorists entering or egressing the site. |
| **Boundary** | • The front boundary of the site shall be defined by a wall not exceeding 0.5 m. in height and the area between this and the road edge shall be levelled and laid so that surface water does not pond in the area, nor flow onto the public road. No advertising shall be placed between the wall and the road edge;<br>• A footpath shall also be provided outside the boundary wall. |
| **Lighting** | • All fixtures or fittings, including canopy lighting shall be provided in such a way so as not to cause a glare to road users, or unduly detract from the visual amenities of the area. |
| **Design/ Advertising** | • Design of stations will be required to be of a high standard. Canopies should be appropriate to their setting in terms of height and design and for reasons of visual amenity should be set well back from the public footpath or edge of the public road;<br>• Minimal advertising will be permitted and shall generally be restricted to a main pillar/ totem sign structure, which shall not exceed 4.5 m. in height;<br>• The forecourt and adjacent footpath shall not be used for advertising whether for permanent or temporary structures;<br>• A maximum of two signs shall be permitted on the canopy which shall be externally or halo lit. |
| **Landscaping** | • A Landscaping Plan is required for all applications for petrol filling/service stations. |
| **Parking** | • Parking requirements are set out in the parking standards Section 11.8.3, DM Table 9a/9b Car Parking and Bicycle Parking Requirements. The location of such parking will be so as to minimise pedestrian/vehicular conflict. |

| Topic | Standard/Guideline |
|---|---|
| **Surface Water** | • Surface water from the development will be required to be contained within the site and piped to the public system. No surface water will be permitted to pond within the forecourt, adjoining the boundary walls or along the entrance/exit lanes. |
| **EV Charging Points** | • Rapid EV charging points(s) should be provided, clearly marked and to the requirements of ESB networks at premises that operate sit-down restaurant/café facilities. |
| **Ancillary services** | • Services such as car wash/valeting services, minor servicing such as tyre changing and puncture repairs may be permitted, subject to not negatively impacting on residential amenity. They should be located on site to avoid any queueing of vehicles on the public road, or causing nuisance to residential amenity;<br>• No obstruction other than pump island shall be located within 15 m. of the road boundary;<br>• No structures, whether permanent or temporary shall interfere with the sight lines of drivers or obstruct pedestrians;<br>• A Discharge License may be required. |
| **Service Areas** | • The provision of off-line motorway service areas at national road junctions and road side service facilities on non-motorway national roads and junctions shall have regard to Section 2.8 of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines and the TII Policy on Service Areas. |

### 11.6.4 Shopfronts and Signage

#### 11.6.4.1 Shopfronts

The Planning Authority will encourage good shop front design, maintaining traditional shop fronts where appropriate, controlling advertising (particularly projecting signs) and generally improving the appearance of retail premises. A well-designed shop front forms an integral part of the overall building relating in scale, proportion and vertical alignment as well as to adjoining buildings. Advertising is an integral (not dominant) part of the facade and should be designed in this manner. To achieve this, the Planning Authority will assess a planning application having regard to:

- Materials: The use of natural materials such as timber, stone and plaster, which complement the architectural character of the building itself and reflect existing finishes in the streetscape will be favoured;
- Advertising: Ground floor level advertising will be permitted while restricting advertising above this level. (Advertising aimed at the pedestrian rather than the passing motorist). Advertising should be in scale with and not dominate nor interfere with features of the shop front. The numbers of projecting signs (particularly brand projecting signs) will be restricted. The use of traditional hand painted signs is preferable. The Planning Authority will not favour the use of plastic (PVC, perspex) and internally illuminated signage;
- Shutters: Applications involving roller shutters, unless of the open grille or demountable type, painted to match the existing shop front will not be permitted. The roller shutters should be located inside the shop front wherever possible, in the interests of visual amenity;
- External lighting: The external lighting shall be sympathetic in design and materials to the shop front and the existing streetscape;
- Corporate Image: Developments involving the use of corporate logos/advertising/ shop fronts should be in accordance with good civic design and with existing streetscape.

#### 11.6.4.2 Signage

Advertising will be required to be sympathetic with their surroundings in terms of scale, design, materials and colour. The general requirements for advertising are set out below:

- Encourage the use of hand painted signs and to prohibit plastic box signs, which are internally illuminated;

- Limit the numbers of signs where it is considered they would lead to a cluttered appearance at a junction or on a building;
- On buildings and structures of historic, artistic and architectural interest, only permit advertising which is in character with the building or structure;
- Provide an advertising area or advertising facility in central or focal areas in towns or villages and in lay-bys;
- Limit advertising in areas of special amenity, areas where views and prospects of scenic importance are listed, recommended maximum size of 1 sqm.;
- Restrict the use of advertising structures on public footpaths and on road margins where they conflict with pedestrian or traffic safety or with visual amenity. Large advertising hoardings (bill boards) will be prohibited in the countryside and will only be considered as temporary structures in towns and villages where they screen a derelict site;
- Permit fingerpost signs or advance signs for tourist attractions where they do not conflict with traffic safety;
- Permit the use of finger post signs for hotels, restaurants, sports and community facilities, where they do not conflict with traffic safety or visual amenity, within towns and villages;
- Permit the use of finger post signs for B&B's, restaurants or large traffic generating business where they do not conflict with traffic safety or visual amenity, outside towns and villages. The establishment shall be within 5km of the location of the sign and shall not have a finger post sign at more than one junction on a major route;
- Encourage the use of informational signage with respect to biodiversity, ecology and climate adaptation measures at specific locations throughout Limerick. Particular attention will be paid to the design and location of new advertising in those areas where the Council intends to implement town and village improvement schemes in order to maximise the potential environmental benefits of such schemes and also in areas that are the subject of Local Area Plans;
- Digital advertising may be permitted, in certain locations subject to design, size, detail and level of illumination and the number of existing advertising signs on the shopfront (or similar).

### 11.6.5 Street Furniture

Limerick City and County Council will exercise control over the location and quality of street furniture in the interests of creating a high-quality public domain. All outdoor furniture provided by private operators including retailers, publicans and restaurateurs, etc. should be located to prevent any obstruction or clutter of the footpaths and paved areas and should reflect highest quality, preferably of good contemporary design and respect the overall character of the area and quality of the public realm.

Street furniture requires either a licence under Section 254 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) or planning permission (including street furniture erected on private lands). In both instances, the applicant is required to submit details of the location, design, specification and quality of the proposed elements of street furniture. In considering applications for outdoor tables and chairs, the Planning Authority shall have regard to the following:

- Size and location of the seating area and the facility it will service;
- Concentration of existing street furniture in the area;
- The visual impact of the structure, particularly in relation to the colour, nature and extent of advertising on all ancillary screens;
- Impact on the character of the streetscape;
- The potential impacts of adjoining residential amenity in relation to hours of operation, noise and general disturbance;
- Impact on access and visibility.

### 11.6.6 Night Clubs/Licensed Premises/ Casinos/Private Members' Clubs

Nightclubs, disco bars and public houses play an important role in providing a night-time use. They will not however, be permitted in residential areas. Noise at the boundaries of these establishments will be carefully monitored and noise insulation and reduction measures will be required at the time of the submission of the planning application.

- Entertainment noise levels (*LAeq*) from venues shall be less than 5dB above the background noise level (*LA90*) when measured outdoors, in each octave band at the noise sensitive locations. Entertainment noise levels from venues in the 63 Hz and 125 Hz octave centre frequency bands shall also not exceed 47 dB and 41 dB (*LZeq*) inside habitable rooms of noise sensitive properties, respectively. Sound insulation and noise control measures (including relating to any mechanical ventilation or air-conditioning) will be required to be submitted with any planning application;
- Noise from music events (e.g. large outdoor concerts) shall be required to be controlled by implementing measures recommended in the *Code of Practise on Environmental Noise at Concerts* (1995).

An over concentration of such developments in a particular area, either through redevelopment, refurbishment, or extension will also not be permitted. In applications for such developments the onus will be on the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed new entertainment use, an extension to an existing entertainment use, or variation in opening hours, would not cause harm to residential amenity, environmental quality or the established character and function of the area.

Smoking areas associated with such premises require planning permission and will be assessed having regard to the impacts on the general amenities of the area in question.

### 11.6.7 Small Scale Home-based Businesses in Rural Areas

In general, commercial activities should be accommodated in towns and villages where existing services and facilities are available. However, the Planning Authority recognises that there are circumstances where there is a need for self-employed and small-scale commercial activities, located adjacent to and/or within the curtilage of existing houses in the open countryside. The Planning Authority will therefore seek to balance the need for such proposals against the impact on existing residential amenity and the environment. Proposals that involve the change of use or new development for purposes of home-based employment will be assess under the following criteria:

- The nature and operation of the use requires that it is located adjacent to the existing residence of the applicant;
- It is of an appropriate design and scale for its location and does not detract from the rural character of the area;
- It would not seriously injure the amenities of adjoining residences in terms of general disturbance, noise, traffic generation etc.;
- It does not adversely impact on traffic safety and capacity in the area.
- Adequate landscaping/screening is provided;
- Permission will be subject to normal environmental and planning criteria. Any subsequent change or proposed expansion of the business will need to be reconsidered by the Planning Authority to assess whether the premises or location would still acceptable.

### 11.6.8 Agricultural Buildings, Re-use of Redundant Farm Buildings, Farm Diversification

The following is general guidance for prospective development

- Agricultural buildings and associated works (walls, fences, gates, entrances, yards etc.), while accepting the need to be functional, are required to be sympathetic to their rural surroundings - in scale, materials and finishes. Traditionally this was achieved by having the roof darker than the walls. Appropriate roof colours are dark grey, dark reddish brown or a very dark green;
- The grouping of agricultural buildings will be encouraged and use of existing landscaping, in order to reduce their overall impact in the interests of visual amenity;
- Buildings should be located a minimum of 100m from the nearest dwelling other than the applicant's/landowner's dwelling;
- It should be demonstrated that there are no suitable redundant buildings on the farm holding to accommodate the proposed development.

Some agricultural developments are exempt from planning control. However, no new building or structure on a farm is exempt from planning permission unless it has adequate effluent storage facilities. The Planning Authority will require adequate provision for the collection, storage and disposal of effluent produced from agricultural developments. Developers are required to adhere to the Department of Agriculture Guideline entitled *Guidelines and Recommendations on the Control of Pollution from Farmyard Wastes* and the following slurry storage and slurry disposal/ recycling requirements:

- All effluent storage tanks should be constructed to Department of Agriculture and Food specifications;
- The capacities of all slurry, effluent and soiled water tanks and all other tanks for pollutants shall comply with the current Department of Agriculture Guidelines and any subsequent documents/ guidelines;
- The applicant may be required to demonstrate that sufficient lands of suitable nutrient status are available within a reasonable distance for the disposal/recycling of organic waste from a proposed agricultural development. A Nutrient Management and Disposal Plan will be undertaken by a suitably qualified professional and submitted as part of the planning application to be assessed by the Council;
- A comprehensive Farmyard Management Plan shall be prepared by a suitably qualified Agricultural Advisor, which clearly demonstrates how compliance set out in the *European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2017 (as amended*) will be achieved. The Farmyard Management Plan deals specifically with effluents arising on the farmyard – slurry, dairy washings, silage effluent, seepage from bedded animals, soiled water etc. Details required include slurry storage/capacity, soiled water storage/capacity and daily washings;
- Agricultural waste shall be managed in an environmentally sustainable manner in accordance with the principles set by the Rural Environment Protection Scheme, the Farm Waste Management Scheme and relevant EU and national legislation (in particular, the *EC Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters Regulations 2017) (SI 605 of 2017).*

The re-use of redundant farm buildings for small-scale rural enterprise will be considered where:

- The building was previously in agricultural use for a reasonable period;
- It is no longer required for agricultural purposes;
- The proposed use can be contained within the existing building;
- The traffic movements associated with the proposed development must not give rise to a traffic hazard;
- All waste associated with the proposed development must be stored and disposed of in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidelines and not impact on public health;
- The development can satisfy the various regulatory requirements for the particular use;
- Due consideration is given in the design to protective status if located within the curtilage of a Protected Structure.

Proposals for farm diversification that involves the development of sustainable business initiatives that are subsidiary to and directly linked to the primary use of a property for agriculture will generally be favourably considered. The development of new rural enterprises will be considered on lands where:

- The scale and nature of the proposed development and associated buildings are appropriate to the rural setting and are in areas of low environmental sensitivity;
- It is demonstrated that the proposed enterprise is required to be located in a rural area;
- The proposal will not adversely affect the character and appearance of the landscape;
- The local road network and other essential infrastructure can accommodate any extra demand generated by the proposal;
- Where possible, the proposal involves the re-use of redundant or underused buildings that are of value to the rural area; and
- Where safe access to the public road network can be achieved.

### 11.6.9 Intensive Farm, Poultry and Piggery Development

In assessing an application for intensive farming, pig or poultry units, the Planning Authority with other environmental and health authorities will ensure a high level of protection of the environment and human health prior to permitting the proposed development to proceed.

The Council require information on the following:

- Depending on the scale of the proposed development and its location, an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) may be required as part of the application. The EIAR will be prepared on behalf of the developer by a suitably qualified professional and will be assessed in accordance with *Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment, 2018, DHPLG*;
- Scale and intensity of operations, including the cumulative impact of similar types of developments and proximity to other activities such as residences, businesses etc.;
- Waste management including frequency and location of disposal relative to pig and poultry units. In addition, the applicant will be required to demonstrate that there is a stable, secure, sustainable outlet for all slurries and manures from the proposed development. All slurry and effluent shall be stored in concrete tanks constructed in accordance with *S123 Minimum Specification: Slatted livestock units; Reinforced Concrete tanks (DAFF 1994)* or other types of structures approved by the Planning Authority;
- The developer will be requested to submit as part of the planning application an Odour Impact Assessment, prepared by a suitably qualified professional with sufficient expertise to demonstrate odour abatement solutions, through appropriate modelling and monitoring procedures when operational;

- The developer will be requested to submit as part of the planning application, a Noise Assessment in accordance with *BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound,* taking account of the proposed increased animal numbers, on-site machinery including electrical substations, any potential adverse effects at noise sensitive receptors and any necessary noise mitigation measures. The assessment should be prepared by a suitably qualified professional with sufficient expertise;
- Proximity of development to aquifers and watercourses;
- Units should be located a minimum of 400 m. from the nearest dwelling other than the applicant's dwelling. In the case of villages and towns, intensive poultry and particularly pig units will be required to be located a much greater distance away from the settlement because of the impacts on residential amenities;
- Animal housing units in terms of design and associated activities such as cleaning, ventilation and heating;
- A comprehensive Landscaping Plan should be submitted as part of the planning application;
- A Traffic Impact Assessment and a Road Safety Audit may be required. Refer to Section 11.8 Transport and Infrastructure of this chapter;
- An Industrial Emissions License (IEL) may be required from the Environmental Protection Agency.

### 11.6.10 Extractive Industry

Mineral extraction including rock, sand and gravel can have serious impacts on the landscape, in terms of noise, dust, vibration, visual intrusion, loss of groundwater supplies, water pollution, loss of habitat, traffic generation and adverse impact on the road network. Constraints will be exercised in areas of archaeological importance, recorded monuments, areas of ecological importance and other environment designated areas such as the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs). Any application will be assessed in accordance with:

- *Planning Guidelines on Control of Quarries*, DEHLH, 2006;
- *Environmental Management Guidelines Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (Non-Scheduled Minerals)*, EPA, 2006;
- *Wildlife, Habitats and the Extractive Industry - Guidelines for the Protection of Biodiversity within the Extractive Industry*, NPWS;
- *Geological Heritage Guidelines for Extractive Industry*, GSI;
- *Code of Practice between the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Irish Concrete Federation*;
- Compliance with Section 261 and Section 261A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and any subsequent national guidance and changes to legislation;
- *Draft Policy Statement on Mineral Exploration and Mining in Ireland.*

Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIARs) will be required with a planning application, where the defined thresholds outlined in the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) are exceeded for certain types of development. In cases where thresholds are not exceeded, the Planning Authority may still exercise its powers under Article 103(1) of the Regulations (2001) and require an EIAR for sub-threshold development, where it considers the effect of the proposed development on the environment is likely to be significant.

In assessing an application for development (whether for a new quarry or an extension to an existing), the need for the development in terms of national importance and the impact of the development on the local economy will be considered, together with the following:

- Nature and quantity of aggregate(s) to be extracted, including total and annual tonnage of excavated aggregates;
- Location - relative to dwellings or other development (within 1km of site), aquifers and groundwater, environmentally sensitive areas, special amenity areas and areas of archaeological potential in particular;
- Description of development works including buildings, mine shafts, fixed and mobile plant, roads, fuel tanks, stockpiles, storage of soil, overburden and waste materials, settling ponds;
- Estimated working life of quarry or mine, including phasing programme;
- Working methods, maximum extent and depth of working and hours of operation, including frequency of blasting etc.;
- Nature and extent of operations including ancillary processes (such as crushing, concrete manufacturer) and equipment to be used;
- Noise generation, vibration, subsidence;
- Dust generation and control;
- Waste disposal - waste rock, unmarketable products etc.;
- Water supply, de-watering and discharge requirements;
- Surface water management and flood risk minimization;
- Impact on water supply sources;
- Impact on water table: Minimisation of disturbance to the existing surface and subsurface hydrological regime must be ensured on site and in proximity to the quarry;
- Ecology: Due consideration must also be given to sites of ecological value and designated species which lie outside designated sites;
- Impact on any special designations including SACs, SPAs, NHAs, pNHAs, Protected Views, Protected Structures or curtilage of Protected Structures, archaeological designation and sensitivity;
- Ground Stability: This is not just an issue in shaft mining or underground quarrying but also relates to vertical surfaces left in place after stone, or aggregate extraction;
- Traffic generation and movement including the capacity of the road network;
- Impact on visual amenity of the landscape - A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) shall be submitted, including Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) which indicate the areas over which the proposed development may be seen. Representative assessment viewpoints should also be identified;
- Natural and proposed screening of site;
- Restoration/aftercare proposals/ schemes of rehabilitation – Aftercare proposals should be submitted with the planning application. Details should include appropriately scaled drawings of anticipated finished landform, the rehabilitation works proposed and surface/landscaping treatment, drainage of the site, details of the quality and the condition of topsoil. It should be noted that the record of past restoration by the developer will be taken into account.

The Planning Authority will support the extractive and mineral extraction industry by issuing planning permission that extends over the estimated life of the quarry or mine. It will be necessary, however that the applicant sets out a phasing proposal for the development to assess the time-scale of the proposal. The Planning Authority will impose strict conditions on planning permissions relating to the appropriate mitigation measures to control the impacts on the environment and surrounding area. Limited duration on permissions may be issued by the Council to allow for re-evaluation of the development in light of unforeseen implications or changes in environmental standards and technology.

A standard contribution and in certain circumstances, a special contribution under the Development Contribution Scheme and a financial bond will be required to ensure appropriate restoration and reinstatement works are undertaken within 12 months of the cessation of works. It is obligatory for new mining developments to obtain an Industrial Emissions License from the EPA. All aspects of air and water pollution, noise and waste are covered by this single integrated licence. Refer to dccae.gov.ie/Minerals-Exploration-Mining.

### 11.6.11 Land Reclamation

If you propose to drain or reclaim a wetland you must apply to Limerick City and County Council for planning permission. Permission is required where the area impacted by the works exceeds 0.1ha., or the works may have a significant effect on the environment. If you propose to drain or reclaim a wetland where the area impacted by the works exceeds 2 ha., the planning application will have to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It is the policy of the Council to require all land reclamation development which includes the importation of any material onto site, have the requisite waste authorisation in accordance with the Waste Management Act 1996. The Council will be guided by the *Guidance for Planning Authorities on Drainage and Reclamation of Wetlands, DEHLG, 2011* and the advice of other agencies such as the EPA when assessing applications. The Council will require at a minimum the following for reclamation/soil or stone recovery:

- A comprehensive assessment by a suitably qualified professional of the impact of the proposal on groundwater, surface water, aquifers and compliance with the Water Framework Directive;
- Impact on Natura 2000 sites, NHAs, sites deemed to be of ecological, geological or geomorphological importance;
- Details of the material to be introduced to the site having regard to the mandatory thresholds set out in Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended*);*
- Clear justification for the need for the proposal;
- Traffic generation to import material to the site, including traffic movement and safety on the road network;
- Details of site services if applicable;
- Details of phasing programme for the reclamation including appropriate layout and section drawings;
- Noise, dust emissions and measures to mitigate nuisance and public health;
- Measures to control the spread of invasive species.

*The Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine publication Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations - Guide for Farmers* is a useful resource for land reclamation.

## 11.7 Climate Action

### 11.7.1 Built Environment

In order to achieve a more sustainable built environment, the Planning Authority will encourage the following measures:

- The retention, restoration and reuse of buildings in preference to their demolition and reconstruction where possible;
- Encourage the use of structural materials that have low to zero embodied energy and $CO_2$ emissions;
- Buildings should be adaptable in design (see Criteria 9 of the *Urban Design Manual 2009*) in the case of residential developments;
- Applications of 1000+ sq.m. commercial development or applications of 30+ residential units shall include an Energy Statement setting out what energy efficiency and carbon reduction design measures are being considered;
- Where appropriate, a design statement addressing how the circular economy is addressed from design through to planned end-use;
- Incorporating Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) into the design of buildings and layout – living/green walls, living/green and or blue roofs, including in the design of small buildings and shelters, other soft Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) measures such as swales, rain gardens, using trees for urban cooling and the reduction of wind tunnel effect;
- Applicants should explore the potential for urban greening in developments including high quality landscaping (including tree planting) that make use of a diverse range of species of plants – consistent with the *National Pollinator Plan*, site appropriate and irrigated by rainwater.

#### 11.7.1.1 Circular Economy for Building Design and Construction Projects

The concept of the circular economy can be applied to the whole lifecycle of new developments, from planning and design right through demolition, construction, end-use and repurposing or end of life of a development. To adopt the principle of the circular economy more fundamentally, applicants shall be required to submit a Resource Management Plan, including a Circular Economy Statement, covering different phases of the project from initial design through to construction and end-use functioning. This approach would help the application of modular construction and the facilitation for easy repair and replacement of components and repurposing for reuse. Avoidance of demolition should be promoted in order to promote circularity and/or design for disassembly to facilitate reuse and recycling of materials back into a circular economy loop. An important source of information is the *Environment Protection Agency's Draft Best Practice Guidelines for the preparation of Resource Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Waste Projects*.

### 11.7.2 Renewable Energy

The Planning Authority notes that under current planning legislation, the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), the inclusion of certain renewable technology is considered exempt development. All methods of energy production have impacts on the environment. Notwithstanding this, the need to adopt a more sustainable approach to energy production is acknowledged by the Planning Authority. They will be considered in the context of current Government policy on the subject but will take into account other, often competing, Council policies and any relevant guidelines issued from time-to-time by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

#### 11.7.2.1 Wind Energy

When assessing planning applications for wind energy developments the Planning Authority will have regard to the *Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2006), published by the DoEHLG and the *Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change* (2017) and any subsequent updates. The Planning Authority will also have regard to Chapter 9: Climate Action, Flood Risk and Transition to Low Carbon Economy. This Strategy has analysed suitable areas for wind energy in Limerick.

- The Council will be guided by the *Wind Energy Guidelines, 2006*, the recent *Draft Wind Energy Guidelines, DHPLG, 2019* and any subsequent Section 28 guidance document. Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with the documents when designing proposals. Developers should also refer to the *Code of Practice for Wind Energy Development in Ireland,* DCCAE, 2016 regarding observance with the best industry practices and with engagement of communities. With regard to EPA licensed developments, applicants are advised to refer to the EPA publication - *Guidance Note on Noise Assessment of Wind Turbine Operations at EPA Licensed Sites (NG3), 2011*;
- Wind farms with more than 25 turbines or that have a total output greater than 50MW are classified as Strategic Infrastructure Developments (SIDs) and are adjudicated by An Bord Pleanála as the competent Authority;
- Aspects to be considered by the Council when assessing planning applications for wind energy below SID thresholds include:
  - Natural Heritage, including Environmental Assessments, the Landscape Character Areas of the Plan, or any future Seascape Character Assessment;
  - Ground conditions, hydrology and topography, soil stability, surface drainage from all structures on site, including turbines, roads/tracks and substation;
  - Geology and hydrogeology, impact on groundwater and watercourses, flood risk;
  - Archaeology including National Monuments;
  - Architectural heritage;
  - Noise and mitigation measures for sensitive receptor locations such as residences;
  - Shadow flicker and mitigation measures;
  - Electromagnetic interference;
  - Environmental and ecological aspects including European designated sites, EIAR, AA, SPAs, SACs, NHAs and pNHAs;
  - Connection to the National Grid;
  - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, including the size, scale and layout and the degree to which the wind energy project is visible over certain areas and in certain views;
  - Traffic movement and safety, during construction and when in operation;
  - Carbon emissions balance if the development requires peat extraction;
  - Disposal or elimination of waste/ surplus material from construction/ site clearance, particularly significant for peatland sites;
  - Information on the location of quarries to be used or borrow pits proposed during the construction phase and associated remedial works thereafter;
  - Cumulative impact with similar windfarm development in the area;
  - Community engagement, investment and dividend;
  - Decommissioning and dismantling of the structures and access road/track and restoration of the site; and
  - Previous planning history of the site.

The impact of wind energy development will vary depending on the location of the individual site, together with the number of turbines, layout, size, design and colour. The Planning Authority will take a flexible approach to the location within the city, larger settlements and County Limerick of one-off small scale wind turbines, i.e. of the type to which the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) *(S.I. No.83)* refers to, where the turbine is just above the thresholds specified for exemption (13 m. in height). The location of such developments within settlements and, even in areas deemed unsuitable for wind energy development, will be open for consideration for small-scale wind turbines. In assessing proposals for micro-wind turbines which, due to their height or number are just above the limits of exemption, the developer will be expected to remain below most, if not all of the other thresholds specified in the aforementioned Regulations, e.g. in respect of distance of rotor blade from ground and noise standards.

In assessing an application for a wind farm the following general guidelines shall be taken into consideration:

- Wind turbines will not be permitted on prominent ridges, valley rims or other prominent locations. The siting and layout of turbines should take advantage of existing screening within the landscape and where possible, should follow and respect local land forms;
- All turbines shall be similar in design and dimensions. All turbine blades shall rotate in the same direction. Turbine structures should be of matt finish and neutral colour and be reflected in the photomontage submitted;
- No structures other than wind turbines and the necessary substation shall be permitted. The structure enclosing the substation shall be finished in dark green/dark brown colour to minimise visual impact in the Irish landscape. This shall apply to all ground level components of the development. Landscaping proposals to reduce visibility of the ground level components of the development shall also be submitted;
- A Flood Risk Assessment may be required for the proposal;
- Road and associated development to be planned and designed on the basis of the EIAR information, so as to minimise peat extraction, reduce the necessity for its disposal and mitigate changes in the site's hydrological regime. Access roads shall be uncovered and shall follow the natural contours of the site;
- Fencing shall be only allowed around the substation and not on any other parts of the site, unless agreed as part of a rehabilitation programme for on-site vegetation. The fencing shall then be permitted for the length of time required to ensure recovery of the vegetation;
- Wind speed monitoring - The applicant should demonstrate that wind speed monitoring has taken place in the last 12 months prior to the application being submitted and adequate wind speeds are available for the development. On sites with multiple turbines, the wind monitoring location shall be selected to be reasonably representative of the range of wind speeds considered to be experienced at the site;
- The Planning Authority shall be informed of the plan to carry out background noise surveys and to agree proposed monitoring locations. Background noise surveys shall be carried out in accordance with *A Good Practice Guide to the Application of ETSU-R-97 for the Assessment and Rating of Wind Turbine Noise* (2013), unless current guidelines require otherwise.
  - Planning applications shall include noise-monitoring proposals over the lifetime of the development;

- In the event that the developer proposes to modify the type of wind turbine in a way that may lead to increased noise levels at noise sensitive receptors, a noise assessment shall be undertaken, to be agreed with the Planning Authority, to demonstrate that relevant noise limits shall not be exceeded;
- Noise levels, including the addition of any penalties for special audible characteristics, shall comply with current guidelines;
- Any proposed lower fixed noise limit for night-time at noise sensitive properties shall not exceed 38 dB(A) L90 or 5dB(A) above background noise levels, whichever is the greater;
- Cumulative low frequency noise levels for one-third octave bands between 10 Hz and 160 Hz (*LpA,LF*) from wind turbines shall not exceed 20 dB(A) at evening and night (19:00 to 07:00 hours) and 25 dB(A) during the day (07:00 to 19:00 hours), at any wind speed inside habitable rooms of noise sensitive properties when measured at locations meeting the requirements of the *Environmental Noise Regulation of Denmark (Orientering nr. 45)*;
- Where noise levels interfere with the amenities of the area, the operator shall comply with any requirements of the Planning Authority to undertake an investigation (including shutting down wind turbines for background noise monitoring if required) and implement mitigation measures, up to and including taking turbine(s) out of operation. The Planning Authority may approve a testing programme to demonstrate compliance before turbine(s) are returned to operational service;
- Any noise assessments undertaken in the consideration of a windfarm noise shall be prepared by a suitably qualified professional that can demonstrate sufficient expertise.

- All proposals shall be referred to the Irish Aviation Authority for comment prior to submission;
- Appropriate setback distance shall be determined on a case-by-case basis in line with the *Wind Energy Guidelines 2006* and any subsequent update;
- Peatland hydrology - The influence that wind farms have on their surroundings varies depending on the sensitivity of the development location. In upland peat sites for example, there can be marked effects on peatland hydrology. An in-depth study of peat morphology, hydrology and vegetative cover will be required;
- Ecological survey - Prior to the commencement of the development, a base-line ecological survey shall be carried out and submitted to the Planning Authority for use in monitoring the development. The site shall be re-surveyed on an annual basis for five years after the commencement of the operation of the wind turbines and the information submitted to the Planning Authority;
- A restoration and after-care programme, devised and agreed upon by the interested parties should be furnished before granting planning permission. An on-site hydrological monitoring and amendment programme to be agreed for the construction and operating phase of the development;
- Bonds - Adequate bonds (agreed between the developers and the Planning Authority) shall be provided to meet the costs of agreed remedial and restorative works necessitated by the proposed development;
- Timing and scheduling of site works to take into account the seasonal nature of wildlife activities, such as breeding seasons and site conditions;
- The Planning Authority may grant permission for a duration longer than 5 years if it is considered appropriate, for example, to ensure that the permission does not expire before a grid connection is granted. It is, however, the responsibility of the applicants in the first instance to request such longer durations in appropriate circumstances.

Wind energy developments will not be permitted within those areas as identified in Chapter 9: Climate Action, Flood Risk and Transition to Low Carbon Economy, Map 9.1. Wind farms should be located, wherever possible, within the following types of landscapes:

- On agricultural lands;
- On degraded peats; or
- In a man-modified landscape.

With regard to Landscape Character Areas in Limerick, in general, Shannon Integrated Coastal Management Zone single lines of equally spaced turbines are recommended to reduce the scenic impact. In the Agricultural Lowlands a more regular arrangement of turbines with equal spacing is recommended which takes into account field boundaries.

In relation to archaeological sites, it is recommended that turbines are located three times the turbine height away to prevent visual domination. In the case of particularly sensitive sites, the applicant may be requested to relocate the turbine.

Windfarms on undesignated lands will normally be permitted, subject to compliance with the general wind energy guidelines above, unless it is clear that the windfarm would affect a designated site, or a site which is in the process of survey/ designation. If a development is to go ahead, the following conditions shall apply:

- Avoid deep peat;
- Avoid wet areas, flushes and easily eroded soils;
- Avoid areas important for rare or endangered breeding birds and other important species;
- Avoid bird flight lines;
- Avoid construction work outside the period July to October where possible;
- Avoid drains discharging onto peat areas;
- Avoid stock grazing on disturbed peats.

The following general guidelines shall be taken into consideration during and after construction:

During construction:

- The floated road method of construction should be used as widely as possible. Floating roads should be constructed according to standard specifications, by laying geo-textile on the undisturbed bog surface along the route of the road and build the road on the geo-textile;
- Maximum possible use to be made of existing on site roads and laneways;
- Where new roadways have to be constructed, these should follow contours as much as possible, rather than run perpendicular to them and avoid, where possible, areas of deep or regenerating peat;
- Adequate under road methods of transferring of water should be installed in all places of known or suspected water movement, e.g. channels, emphasis on water spreading not water concentrating. Silt traps and small settling ponds should be used where necessary. These should be emptied regularly to ensure correct functioning;
- Sub-surface cabling should be adjacent to or within road shoulders. Short cuts across virgin bog will not normally be permitted;
- Peat spoil from excavated tracks should be used to mask new stone built or stone constructed surfaces, with the exception of cut rock faces;
- Disturbed surfaces suspected of having a poor chance of reverting to a vegetated state should be subjected to some restorative procedures, e.g. appropriate reseeding or mulching.

After Construction:

- Grazing should be prohibited for three years after construction on peatland sites;
- On site hydrological conditions to be monitored following construction for five years and amended where necessary. Additional drainage relief procedures to be installed where water concentration becomes obvious in areas where it has not concentrated before the development began;
- Notwithstanding any advances in technology the height and type of turbines will be determined by visual and landscape considerations.

*Refer to Guidance Note on *Noise Assessment of Wind Turbine Operations at EPA Licensed Sites (NG3), 2011* for information regarding noise generation.

### 11.7.2.2 Solar

There have been a number of large-scale solar farm applications in Limerick in recent years. In the assessment of any applications for solar farms, the Council will consider these renewable energy developments having regard to:

- Any future Section 28 Guidance;
- Location design, specifications, orientation of the development;
- Landscape Character Areas of the County;
- Visual impact, zones of influence from the solar arrays and associated infrastructure such as road access;
- Glint and Glare Assessments on roads, including in the vicinity of the strategic national road network, and other sensitive receptors;
- Archaeological Impact Assessment and Heritage Impact Assessment;
- Ecological Impact Assessment;
- Landscaping plans to integrate the development into the landscape;
- Security requirements such as CCTV, security lights, fencing etc.;
- Impacts from lighting;
- Construction impacts;
- Impacts on drainage patterns and water tables;
- Suitability of and access to the electricity grid;
- Decommissioning Plan for a site and its associated technologies.

For solar panels on existing structures, an outline of the possible visual effects of the development will be required. For larger scale developments this may take the form of photomontages. Details of grid connections, where applicable and alterations to existing electricity cables that are open to public view are to be provided. Note, this may not be necessary in the case of stand-alone developments intended to serve individual dwellings.

### 11.7.2.3 Biogas/Bio-energy/Bio-mass and Innovative Energies

Aligned with national policy, the Council acknowledges the robust contribution innovative energy solutions make to Ireland's transition to a low carbon society. Innovative energy systems provide opportunities for rural diversification using indigenous renewable resources such as as biomass, energy crops, forestry material, biogas and farm slurry. Other alternative energy generation projects include hydro-schemes, wave and tidal power, harnessing landfill gas and sewage sludge. These contemporary energy projects have a role in securing Ireland's future energy supply and create opportunities to export power.

General requirements of planning applications for such development are outlined below. This is not exhaustive and the Council will be guided by the advisory function of Prescribed Bodies in relation to planning applications.

- Planning history of the site;
- Planning justification and assessment of the project outlining how the project is implementing current national, regional and local policy in relation to sustainable energy;

- Waste management and disposal, Waste Disposal and Asbestos Assessment if refurbishing existing structures;
- Technical specifications of all structures on site including plant buildings, storage facilities, processing structures such as tanks, generators, control buildings, flare stacks, substations, staff facilities, parking provision etc.;
- Natural heritage, environmental reports (EIAR and AA), ground conditions, impact on ground waters and surface waters, drainage and flood risk;
- Landscape Character Area as designated under this Plan;
- Ground conditions, hydrology, geology, hydrogeology, impact on ground water and surface waters;
- Implication for traffic including safety, trip generation and movement during construction and at operational stage, transport of the flammable material, impact on road network;
- Water services availability;
- Connection to the National Grid;
- The developer will be requested to submit as part of the planning application a Noise Assessment in accordance with *BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound,* establishing potential adverse effects at noise sensitive receptors and any necessary noise mitigation measures. The assessment should be prepared by a suitably qualified professional with sufficient expertise;
- Mitigation measures for odour and dust nuisance for public health;
- Visual impact;
- Source and volume of raw material, processing methods including a Nutrient Management Plan if relevant. Details of the destination of final product and method of transport;
- Landscaping, security and fencing.

### 11.7.3 Energy Networks

The Council recognises the strategic and economic importance of investment in networks and energy infrastructure and will be guided by the Government Policy Statement on the *Strategic Importance of Transmission and Other Energy Infrastructure, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, 2012* and any subsequent replacement national policy document. The Council will assist ESB Networks, Eirgrid and Gas Networks Ireland to improve the distribution networks for electricity and gas throughout Limerick.

When assessing proposals, the Council will take the following into account:

- Proper planning and sustainable development of the areas including the economic and social significance of the proposed development;
- Environmental impacts including the protection of European designated areas (NHAs, pNHAs, SPAs, SACs, National Monuments, Protected Views and the Landscape Characters as designated by this Plan;
- Mitigation measures where impacts are inevitable; and
- Cumulative impact of the proposal.

## 11.8 Transport and Infrastructure

The potential impact of any development on the public road network is an important consideration of the Planning Authority when assessing a planning application for development.

### 11.8.1 Access to Roads, Traffic and Transport Assessments (TTAs) and Road Safety Audits (RSAs)

Proposals seeking access to public roads will be accessed in accordance with the relevant design standards; with relevant TII Publications in rural areas; the *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)* in urban locations and the *Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidance for Planning Authorities 2012,* the *Whole of Government National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022* and TII guidance and publications.

To protect the integrity of Limerick's road network the following applies:

- There is a presumption against access onto motorway, national roads, strategic regional roads and regional roads in the interest of safety, preserving the capacity and the efficiency of these roads;
- There is a presumption against the removal of on-street parking space to facilitate the provision of vehicular entrances to single dwellings in predominantly residential areas, where residents are generally reliant on on-street parking space;
- All applications seeking access on the road network will be assessed in accordance with national standards and guidance. Considerations will include:
  - Classification of the road,
  - Speed limit,
  - Width, carrying capacity, condition of the road, drainage, vertical and horizontal alignment of the road, junctions in the vicinity,
  - Nature, scale, type of activity seeking access to the road network,
  - Traffic likely to be generated, type of vehicles,
  - Technical design of access and sightline visibility and stopping distances and general safety. Sight distances and stopping sight distances should be in compliance with current NTA road geometry standards and guidance documents listed above and any subsequent documents.
- Developers will be required to submit a Traffic Impact Assessment/Traffic and Transport Assessment and/or Road Safety Audit where a new development will have a significant effect on the travel demand and capacity of the existing road network in the area. Refer to *Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines PE-PDV-02045, TII 2014* (available on tiipublications.ie) and the *Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines,* 2012. Refer to Section 3.4 of the 2012 Guidelines for further information on the methodology when preparing TTAs. The Council will also be guided by the *Traffic Management Guidelines 2017* (available on gov.ie) and any subsequent national guidance documents. Road Safety Audits are required for developments seeking a new access onto a national road, or a significant change to a new access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access due to the activities undertaken on the site. They may be requested for other categories of road. Guidance on the methodology of the road safety audit are available in the TII publications *Road Safety Audit Guidelines GE-STY-01027, 2017*;
- In addition to the above, developers may be required to submit a Road Safety Impact Assessment (RSIA). RSIA is a separate process to RSA. While RSA examines the safety aspects within a scheme, RSIA considers the safety impact of a scheme on the surrounding road network. RSIA and RSA both work to improve the safety performance of new roads and existing roads that require modifications due to projects or proposals. Both have consequences for the design and layout of any project.

### 11.8.2 Building Lines

With regard to building lines, the Council will require a minimum setback distance from roads according to classification, as per the following table. Exceptions may be made (apart from new national roads) where the applicant demonstrates the application of good acoustic design, meeting the objective outlined in Section 11.3.12 Noise, that acceptable noise levels can be achieved externally and internally with openable windows.

Table DM 8: Building Lines on Public Roads

| Road Category | Minimum building line from the near road edge |
|---|---|
| **County Roads and Regional Roads** | 20 m. |
| **National Primary and National Secondary Roads** | 30 m. |
| **New National Primary Roads** | 90 m. |

Developers of rural houses should consider staggering their building line and seek to avoid a regular minimum setback as established by existing houses if feasible, in the interest of visual amenity subject to protection of the existing residential amenity and without compromising effluent disposal.

### 11.8.3 Car and Bicycle Parking Standards

While the national transport policy is one of modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable means of mobility, provision must be made in the Plan for sufficient car parking as many areas of Limerick are currently poorly serviced by frequent public transport networks. All planning applications will consider parking provision whilst bearing in mind the need to promote modal shift in the interest of achieving national Greenhouse Gases (GHG) targets and healthier, more active lifestyles.

* Table DM 9 (a1) addresses car parking and bicycle parking requirements for Residential Development in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, Newcastle West and all other settlements according to the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024). The accompanying Map 11.1 identifies the car parking zones for the City and Suburbs for both residential and non-residential.

Table DM 9 (a2) addresses car parking and bicycle parking requirements for all other classes of development for Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty.

Table DM 9 (b) address car parking and bicycle parking requirements for all other classes of development for all other settlements in the County.

Table DM 9 (a1) Car Park and Bicycle Parking Standards for Residential Development in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, Newcastle West and all other settlements according to the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024).

| Land Use | Car Parking Zones and Spaces required | | | Bicycle Parking Spaces required |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Residential | City Centre | Accessible Locations | Intermediate and Peripheral Locations | Housing schemes (including mixed-use schemes that include housing) |
| **Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick) Mungret and Annacotty** | Maximum rate of 1 no.spaces per unit, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority. | Maximum rate of 1. 5 no.spaces per unit, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority. | Maximum rate of 2 no. spaces per unit, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority. | Cycle parking standards and storage shall be considered on a case-by-case basis and should comply with SPPR 4 of the sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines, 2024, as follows<br>i) Quality - In the case of residential units that do not have ground level open space or have smaller terraces, a general minimum standard of 1 cycle storage space per bedroom should be applied. Visitor cycle parking should also be provided. Any deviation from these standards shall be at the discretion of the planning authority and shall be justified with respect to factors such as location, quality of facilities proposed, flexibility for future enhancement/ enlargement, etc. It will be important to make provision for a mix of bicycle parking types including larger/heavier cargo and electric bikes and for individual lockers.<br>ii) Design- Cycle storage facilities should be provided in a dedicated facility of permanent construction, within the building footprint or, where not feasible, within an adjacent or adjoining purpose-built structure of permanent construction. Cycle parking areas shall be designed so that cyclists feel safe. It is best practice that either secure cycle cage/compound or preferably locker facilities are provided. |
| **Newcastle West and All Other Settlements** | 2 no. spaces per unit where maximum provision is justified to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority. | | | |
| **Sheltered Housing** | 0.25 spaces per unit | 0.5 spaces per unit | 0.5 spaces per unit | 1 space per 4 units |
| **Visitor/ short term** | 1 space per 8 units | 1 space per 6 units | 1 space per 6 units | |
| **Infill development and building refurbishment** | For building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha., car parking provision may be relaxed in part or whole, on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality and location. | | | |
| Bicycle infrastructure – location, quantity, design and management as per Section 5.2.5 of the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024) and *National Cycle Manual*, NTA 2012. | | | | |

- Applicants are required to provide a rationale and justification for the number of car parking spaces proposed and to satisfy the planning authority that the parking levels are necessary and appropriate, particularly when they are close to the maximum provision. The maximum car parking standards do not include bays assigned for use by a car club, designated short stay on-street Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations or accessible parking spaces. The maximum car parking standards do include provision for visitor parking.
- Car-free developments will be considered for all proposals in City Centre and Urban Neighbourhoods on a case-by-case basis.
- Accessible, intermediate and peripheral locations as defined in the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024) Table 3.8.

Map 11.1
Parking Zones - 'City Centre', 'Accessible', 'Intermediate' and 'Peripheral' Locations

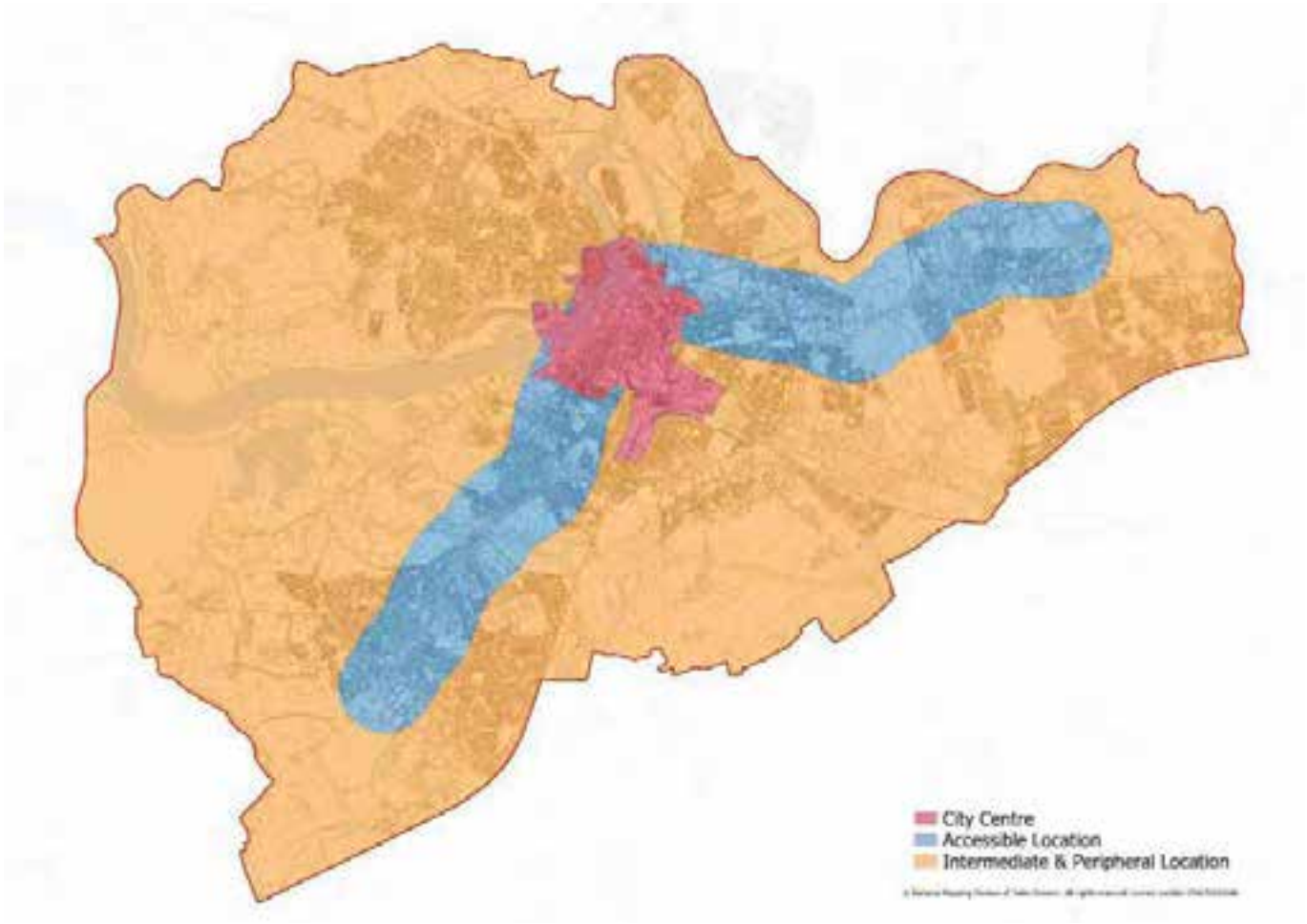


Table DM 9 (a2) Car Parking and Bicycle Parking Standards for all other development classes in Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, according to the parking zones set out in Map 11.1.

| | Car Parking Spaces required – maximum spaces per unit/Gross Floor Area (GFA) | | | Bicycle Parking Spaces required – minimum spaces per unit/Gross Floor Area (GFA) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Land Use** | **City Centre** | **Accessible Location** | **Intermediate and Peripheral Location** | **City Centre, Accessible Location, Intermediate and Peripheral Location** |
| **Retail** | | | | |
| **Retail convenience >100sqm** | 1 space per 60sqm | 1 space per 40sqm | 1 space per 30sqm | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail convenience <100sqm** | none | none | none | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail Comparison** | 1 space per 200sqm | 1 space per 100sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail bank/ business/ financial services < 100sqm** | none | none | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail bank/ business/ financial services > 100sqm** | 1 space per 200sqm | 1 space per 150sqm | 1 space per 100sqm | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail Warehouse** | 1 space per 100sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 500sqm GFA + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Service Stations Retail outlets in service stations**** | 1 space per 50sqm net retail space | 1 space per 35sqm net retail space | 1 space per 20sqm net retail space | 1 space per 50sqm net retail space + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Takeaway/ Fast-food Restaurant/ café/bar/ lounge<100sqm** | none | 1 space per 50 sqm public floor area | 1 space per 30 sqm public floor area | 1 space per 50sqm public floor + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Takeaway/Fast-food Restaurant/ café/bar/ Lounge>100sqm** | 1 space per 100sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 30sqm | 1 space per 50sqm public floor + 1 space per 5 staff |
| Consideration should be given to providing some short-term cycle parking for Cargo Bikes or Tricycles, for developments where there may be a demand, such as retail. | | | | |

| Land Use | Car Parking Spaces required – maximum spaces per unit/Gross Floor Area (GFA) | | | Bicycle Parking Spaces required – minimum spaces per unit/Gross Floor Area (GFA) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | City Centre | Accessible Location | Intermediate and Peripheral Location | City Centre, Accessible Location, Intermediate and Peripheral Location |
| **Recreational/active health activities and entertainment and cultural facilities** | | | | |
| **Cinema, Theatre, Stadia, Conference Centre** | 1 space per 50 seats | 1 space per 25 seats | 1 space per 20 seats | 1 space per 20 seats + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Gym/sports club** | 1 space per 100sqm | 1 space per 75sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Collective Sports Hubs – games pitches** | none | 20 spaces per pitch | 25 spaces per pitch | 1 space per 20 seats or 10 spaces per pitch - negotiable |
| **Community facilities** | | | | |
| **Hospital** | 1 space per 75 sqm | 1 space per 50 sqm | 1 space per 50 sqm | 1 space per 5 staff + 1 space per 20 beds |
| **Nursing Homes** | 1 space per 4 beds | 1 space per 4 beds | 1 space per 4 beds | 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Medical Centres/ consulting rooms** | 1 space per treatment room + 1 space per 2 staff | 1 space per treatment room + 1 space per 2 staff | 1 space per treatment room + 1 space per 2 staff | 1 space per 2 treatment rooms + 1 space per 2 staff |
| **Places of worship*** ** | 1 space per 5 seats max or 1 space per 100sqm of worship area | 1 space per 5 seats max or 1 space per 100sqm of worship area | 1 space per 5 seats max or 1 space per 100sqm of worship area | 10% of number of car park spaces |
| **Community Centres, library, museum, art gallery** | Case by case | Case by case | 1 space per 100sqm public floor area incl. meeting rooms | 1 space per 100sqm public floor area + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Funeral Homes** | 4 spaces per parlour + 1 space per 2 staff | 4 spaces per parlour + 1 space per 2 staff | 5 spaces per parlour + 1 space per 2 staff | 2 spaces per parlour + 1 space per 2 staff |
| **Allotments** | 1 space per 4 allotments | 1 space per 4 allotments | 1 space per 2 allotments | 1 space per 5 allotments |

| Land Use | Car Parking Spaces required – maximum spaces per unit/Gross Floor Area (GFA) | | | Bicycle Parking Spaces required – minimum spaces per unit/Gross Floor Area (GFA) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | City Centre | Accessible Location | Intermediate and Peripheral Location | City Centre, Accessible Location, Intermediate and Peripheral Location |
| **Education** | | | | |
| **All schools** | 1 space per classroom + set down | 2 spaces per classroom + set down | 2 spaces per classroom + set down | 10% pupil numbers - minimum 10 places |
| **Third Level** | Case by case | Case by case | Case by case | 1 space per 4 staff +<br>1 space per 20 students**** |
| **Pre-school/ crèche Childcare/ afterschool** | 1 space per 80sqm<br>+ set down | 1 space per 60sqm<br>+ set down | 1 space per 40sqm<br>+ set down | 1 space per 3 staff |
| **Enterprise and Employment** | | | | |
| **Large scale office business/ professional** | 1 space per 200sqm | 1 space per 150sqm | 1 space per 150sqm | 20-25% staff no.***** |
| **High Tech science** | 1 space per 200sqm | 1 space per 100 sqm | 1 space per 80 sqm | 20-25% staff no.***** |
| **General manufacturing** | 1 space per 300sqm | 1 space per 200sqm | 1 space per 100sqm | 20-25% staff no.***** |
| **Data Centre** | Not Permitted | 1 space per staff<br>+ 2 visitor spaces | 1 space per staff<br>+ 2 visitor spaces | 20-25% staff no.***** |
| **eWorking hubs** | Case by case | 1 space per 3 desks | 1 space per 3 desks | 20-25% desk no. |
| **Commercial storage distribution/ logistics** | Not applicable | 1 space per 500sqm | 1 space per 500sqm | 20-25% staff no.***** |
| **Tourism** | | | | |
| **Hotel/ Aparthotel** | 1 space per 3 rooms<br>+ 1 shared car club | 1 space per 2 rooms<br>+ 1 shared car club | 1 space per room<br>+ 1 shared car club | 1 space per 10 beds + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Hostel** | 1 space per 20 beds | 1 space per 15 beds | 1 space per 10 beds | 1 space per 10 beds + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **B&B/ Guesthouse** | 1 space per bedroom | 1 space per bedroom | 1 space per bedroom | 1 space per 3 bedrooms |

Table DM 9(b): Car and Bicycle Parking Standards – Other Settlements for Other Classes of Development

| Land Use | Car Parking Spaces required – maximum spaces per unit/sqm. Gross Floor Area (GFA) | | Bicycle Parking Spaces required – minimum spaces per unit/sqm. Gross Floor Area (GFA) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere Newcastle West | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere Newcastle West |
| **Residential – Other Settlements** | | | | |
| **Land Use** | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere in settlement | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere in settlement |
| **Dwelling <3 bedroom** | 1 space per unit | 1 space per unit | 1 space per unit | 1 space per unit |
| **Visitor/short term** | 1 space per 3 units | 1 space per 3 units | 1 space per 2 units | 1 space per 2 units |
| **Dwelling 3 bedroom +** | 2 spaces per unit | 2 spaces per unit | 2 spaces per unit | 2 spaces per unit |
| **Visitor/short term** | 1 space per 3 units | 1 space per 3 units | 1 space per 2 units | 1 space per 2 units |
| **Apartment 1-2 bed +** | 1 space per unit | 1 space per unit | 1 space per unit | 1 space per unit |
| **Visitor/short term** | 1 space per 3 units | 1 space per 3 units | 1 space per 2 units | 1 space per 2 units |
| **Apartment 3 bed+** | 2 spaces per unit | 2 spaces per unit | 2 spaces per unit | 2 spaces per unit |
| **Visitor/short term** | 1 space per 3 units | 1 space per 3 units | 1 space per 2 units | 1 space per 2 units |
| **Sheltered Housing** | 0.5 spaces per unit | 0.5 spaces per unit | 1 space per 4 units | 1 space per 4 units |
| **Visitor/short term** | 1 space per 6 units | 1 space per 6 units | | |
| **Infill development and building refurbishment** | For building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha., car parking provision may be relaxed in part or whole, on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality and location. | | | |
| Bicycle infrastructure – location, quantity, design and management as per Section 4.17 of the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2024) and *National Cycle Manual, NTA 2012* | | | | |

| Land Use | Car Parking Spaces required – maximum spaces per unit/sqm. Gross Floor Area (GFA) | | Bicycle Parking Spaces required – minimum spaces per unit/sqm. Gross Floor Area (GFA) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere Newcastle West | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere Newcastle West |
| **Retail – Newcastle West and other settlements** | | | | |
| **Retail convenience <100sqm** | none | none | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail convenience >100sqm** | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 40sqm | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail Comparison** | 1 space per 100sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail Warehousing** | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 500sqm GFA + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 500sqm GFA + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail bank/ business/ financial services < 100sqm** | none | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 100sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Retail bank/ business/ financial services > 100sqm** | 1 space per 150sqm | 1 space per 100sqm | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Service Stations Retail outlets in service stations** | 1 space per 35sqm net retail space | 1 space per 20sqm net retail space | 1 space per 50sqm net retail space + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 50sqm net retail space + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Takeaway/Fast-food Restaurant/ café/bar/ lounge<100sqm** | 1 space per 50 sqm public floor area | 1 space per 30 sqm public floor area | 1 space per 50sqm public floor + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 50sqm public floor + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Takeaway/Fast-food Restaurant/ café/bar/ Lounge>100sqm** | 1 space per 50 sqm public floor area | 1 space per 50 sqm public floor area | 1 space per 50sqm public floor + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 50sqm public floor + 1 space per 5 staff |
| Consideration should be given to providing some short-term cycle parking for Cargo Bikes or Tricycles, for developments where there may be a demand, such as retail. | | | | |

| Land Use | Car Parking Spaces required – maximum spaces per unit/sqm. Gross Floor Area (GFA) | | Bicycle Parking Spaces required – minimum spaces per unit/sqm. Gross Floor Area (GFA) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere Newcastle West | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere Newcastle West |
| **Night time Economy, recreational/active health activities and entertainment and cultural facilities – Newcastle West and other settlements** | | | | |
| **Cinema, Theatre, Stadia, Conference Centre** | 1 space per 25 seats | 1 space per 20 seats | 1 space per 20 seats + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 20 seats + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Gym/sports club** | 1 space per 75sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 200sqm + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Collective Sports Hubs – games pitches** | 20 spaces per pitch | 20 spaces per pitch | 1 space per 20 seats or 10 spaces per pitch - negotiable | 1 space per 20 seats or 10 spaces per pitch - negotiable |
| **Community facilities – Newcastle West and other settlements** | | | | |
| **Hospital** | 1 space per 75sqm | 1 space per 50sqm | 1 space per 5 staff + 1 space per 20 beds | 1 space per 5 staff + 1 space per 20 beds |
| **Nursing Homes** | 1 space per 4 beds | 1 space per 4 beds | 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Medical Centres/ consulting rooms** | 1 space per treatment room + 1 space per 2 staff | 1 space per treatment room + 1 space per 2 staff | 1 space per 2 treatment rooms + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 2 treatment rooms + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Places of worship*** ** | 1 space per 5 seats max or 1 space per 100 sqm of worship area | 1 space per 5 seats max or 1 space per 100 sqm of worship area | 10% of number of car park spaces | 10% of number of car park spaces |
| **Community Centres, library, museum, art gallery** | 1 space per 100sqm public floor area incl. meeting rooms - negotiable | 1 space per 100sqm public floor area incl. meeting rooms negotiable | 1 space per 100sqm public floor area + 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 100sqm public floor area + 1 space per 5 staff |
| **Funeral Homes** | 8 spaces per parlour + 1 space per 2 staff | 8 spaces per parlour + 1 space per 2 staff | 2 spaces per parlour + 1 space per 2 staff | 2 spaces per parlour + 1 space per 2 staff |
| **Allotments** | 1 space per 4 allotments | 1 space per 4 allotments | 1 space per 5 allotments | 1 space per 5 allotments |

| Land Use | Car Parking Spaces required – maximum spaces per unit/sqm. Gross Floor Area (GFA) | | Bicycle Parking Spaces required – minimum spaces per unit/sqm. Gross Floor Area (GFA) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere Newcastle West | Settlement Centre | Elsewhere Newcastle West |
| **Education – Newcastle West and other settlements** | | | | |
| **All Schools** | 2 spaces per classroom<br>+ set down | 2 spaces per classroom<br>+ set down | 10% pupil numbers - minimum 10 places | 10% pupil numbers - minimum 10 places |
| **Third level/ post-secondary/ adult education – outreach** | Case by case | Case by case | 10% pupil numbers - minimum 10 places | 10% pupil numbers - minimum 10 places |
| **Pre-school/ crèche Childcare/ afterschool** | 1 space per 60sqm +<br>1 space per 2 staff | 1 space per 60sqm +<br>1 space per 2 staff | 1 space per 3 staff | 1 space per 3 staff |
| **Enterprise and Employment – Newcastle West and other settlements** | | | | |
| **Large scale office business/ professional** | 1 space per 150sqm | 1 space per 150sqm | 10% staff no.***** | 10% staff no.***** |
| **High Tech science** | 1 space per 150sqm | 1 space per 150sqm | 10% staff no.***** | 10% staff no.***** |
| **Data Centre** | Not suitable | 1 space per staff +<br>2 visitor spaces | 10% staff no.***** | 10% staff no.***** |
| **e-working hubs** | 1 space per 3 desks | 1 space per 3 desks | 10% e-working desks | 10% e-working desks |
| **Commercial storage distribution/ logistics** | Not suitable | 1 space per 500sqm | 10% staff no.***** | 10% staff no.***** |
| **Tourism – Newcastle West and other settlements** | | | | |
| **Hotel/Motel excluding bars, function rooms etc** | 1 space per room | 1 space per room | 1 space per 10 beds +<br>1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 10 beds +<br>1 space per 5 staff |
| **Hostel** | 1 space per 10 beds | 1 space per 10 beds | 1 space per 10 beds +<br>1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 10 beds +<br>1 space per 5 staff |
| **Self-catering Accommodation** | 1 space per room | 1 space per room | 1 space per 3 bedrooms | 1 space per 3 bedrooms |
| **B&B/ Guesthouse** | 1 space per room | 1 space per room | 1 space per 3 bedrooms | 1 space per 3 bedrooms |
| **Caravan, camping/ glamping facilities** | Generally not suitable | 1 space per caravan/pitch | 1 space per 5 staff | 1 space per 5 staff |

**1 HGV parking space required per 30sqm net floor area where food is served on premises in Intermediate and Peripheral Locations. Rapid EV infrastructure to be provided for a minimum of 2 car spaces where food is served on the premises. Car-free developments will be considered for all proposals in City Centre on a case-by-case basis.

***For places of worship without designated seating, parking required for auxiliary uses (e.g. day care) should be assessed separately. Floor area of the worship area refers to the floor area the denomination uses for the observance of its religious services, including any balcony or area which can be opened on a temporary basis to such a sanctuary, hall or meeting room(s) by the removal or opening of any walls or partitions and any choir or musicians' area, but excluding any areas intended solely for the use of the worship group leader such as altar or pulpit areas.

****Refers to fulltime staff and fulltime students.

***** Subject to a minimum of 10 spaces or one bike space for every car space, whichever is the greatest.

Car-free developments will be considered for all proposals in Zone 1 on a case-by-case basis. In some limited circumstances, a higher or lesser standard may be appropriate. Proposals for the provision of car parking for residential development at a reduced rate to the maximum standards will be considered where the Planning Authority are satisfied that good public transport links are already available or planned. Applicants are advised to avail of pre-planning consultations with the Planning Authority prior to submitting planning applications. The developer will submit a Justification Assessment in the Mobility Management Plan providing the rationale for the deviation from the parking standards above and of national planning guidance for their proposed development.

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- Limited/Restricted site area - Site size whereby refurbishment on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha, car parking provision may be relaxed in part or whole, on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality and location;
- Sustainable travel infrastructure supported by a Mobility Management Plan;
- Availability of car sharing and bike/e-bike sharing facilities on-site and in the vicinity;
- Existing car parking in the vicinity, including on street and the potential for dual use subject to agreement and management details;
- Impact on traffic safety and the capacity of the road network;
- Urban design, regeneration and civic benefits of the proposal including enhancement of public realm.

Parking provision above the maximum standards for non residential land uses shall only be considered in exceptional circumstances, where a clear and robust justification is provided to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, supported by a Traffic and Transport Assessment and/or Mobility Management Plan, and where it is demonstrated that the proposal will not undermine sustainable transport objectives.

Where public car parking facilities have been provided or are to be provided which facilitate the development, in these cases, the Planning Authority will require the payment of a contribution towards the provision and management of such car-parking spaces. The amount of the contribution will be related to the size and the nature of the development.

Table DM 10: Car parking dimensions

| Standard Car Parking | |
|---|---|
| **Parking dimensions – perpendicular to the kerb** | 5m x 2.5m |
| **Where space is adjacent to a wall or other obstruction** | 5m x 2.7m |
| **Parking dimensions – parallel to kerb** | 6m x 2.5m |
| **Accessible parking bay to comply with building regulations** | 5m x 2.5m +1.2m to the rear and sides of each space |
| **Angled parking - On wider roads or one-way streets, parking spaces can be angled according to the available road width.** | 4.2m x 2.4m for 60° angle 3.6m x 2.4m for 45° angle |
| **Loading bay** | 6m x 3m |
| **Circulation aisles** | 6m width depending on alignment |

| Mobility Impaired Parking | |
|---|---|
| **Parking dimensions** | 3m x 4.88m |
| **Loading bays** | 6.1m x 3m |
| **Bicycle parking** | As per *National Cycle Manual 2011* - The length of a standard bicycle is approximately 2.0m. A well-designed parking facility should provide 2.5m between the rows to allow cyclists room to manoeuvre when parking and collecting their bicycles. |

#### 11.8.3.1 Motorcycle Parking

Motorcycles using standard car spaces is not an efficient use of land. The Planning Authority will seek a minimum of 1 secure motorcycle parking space for every 20 car parking spaces. The parking bays should be a minimum of 2.5m by 1.5m. These spaces must be clearly indicated and must not compromise pedestrian or vehicle safety and movement.

### 11.8.4 Multi-Storey and Underground Car Parks

Multi-storey or underground basement car parks shall generally accord to the requirements set out in the UK's Institution of Structural Engineers booklet entitled *Design Recommendations for Multi Storey and Underground Car Park Fourth Edition (2011)* and any subsequent updates. In assessing applications for multi-storey and underground car parks, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:

- One way traffic routing is preferred for vehicular traffic;
- A splayed entrance with a 6.0m. flat area at the exit point from a basement car park onto a main road with adequate pedestrian and vehicular sightlines;
- Sufficient headroom clearance (minimum 2.4m.), should be provided to allow access for cyclists and high mobility vehicles for the mobility impaired;
- Adequate access/egress for cyclists;
- Adequate internal lighting and signage;
- Provision shall be made for an emergency access to underground car parks and, where

more than 300 parking spaces are being provided, a second vehicular access point to an underground car park is required;
- Satisfactory proposals to address the disposal of surface water from the public road entering the car park and from the car park;
- Designs and layouts for underground car parks shall demonstrate that the development does not result in any potential for flooding from within or outside with particular emphasis on preventing egress of water through vents and access ramps;
- There should be no cumulative negative impact on the streetscape from overconcentration of car parks in a particular area.

### 11.8.5 Parking in Front Gardens

The cumulative effect of removal of front garden walls and railings damages the character and appearance of suburban streets and roads. Consequently, proposals for off street parking need to be balanced against loss of amenity. The removal of front garden walls and railings will not generally be permitted where they have a negative impact on the character of streetscapes (e.g. in Architectural Conservation Areas, Street Improvement Areas and other areas of architectural and historic character). Where the re-development of a drive-way is permitted the following shall apply:

- Not have outward opening gates;
- Have a vehicular entrance not wider than 3m;
- Have a vehicle entrance not wider than 50% of the width of the front boundary;
- Have an area of hardstanding (parking space of 2.5m x 5m). Suitably landscape the balance of the space taking into account the existing context;
- Dish and strengthen the footpath and relocate any services at the applicant's expense;
- The hardstand/paving areas shall comprise a permeable (or porous) surface which allows water to drain through, such as gravel, permeable concrete block paving or porous asphalt, unless the rainwater is directed to a lawn or border to drain naturally.

### 11.8.6 EV Charging Points

Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles will be integrated into developments in line with national requirements as follows:

Table DM 11 EV Charging Points Requirements

| Development Category | EV Charging Points |
|---|---|
| **Residential multi-unit developments both new buildings and buildings undergoing major renovations (with private car spaces including visitor car parking spaces)** | A minimum of 1 EV Charge Point space per five car parking spaces (ducting for every parking space shall be provided) |
| **New dwellings with in-curtilage car parking** | Installation of appropriate infrastructure to enable installation of recharging point for EVs |
| **Non-residential developments (with private car parking spaces including visitor car parking spaces with more than 10 spaces e.g. office developments)** | Provide at least 1 recharging point, and a minimum of 1 space per 5 car parking spaces should be equipped with one fully functional EV Charging Point |
| **Developments with publicly accessible spaces (e.g. supermarket car park, cinema etc.)** | Provide at least 1 recharging point, and a minimum of 1 space per 5 car parking spaces should be equipped with one fully functional EV Charging Point |

- The Council will liaise with other agencies to secure the retrospective provision of EV Charging Points within the public realm of settlements where appropriate.

### 11.8.7 End of Journey Cycling Facilities

All cycling facilities will be assessed in accordance with the NTA's *National Cycle Manual* and any subsequent national guidance document. For cycle parking, refer to Section 11.8.3 Car and Bicycle Parking Standards, DM Table 9a/9b above. Cycling facilities are considered critical to support the national transport principle of modal shift and is an important element of success of the Workplace Management Plans (Mobility Plans) and new higher density residential development, particularly apartment developments. For new residential developments of less than 5 units and non-residential developments of under 400 sqm, planning applications shall include a Cycle Statement, setting out how it meets the requirements of the Council's *Standards for Cycle Parking and Associated Cycling Facilities for New Developments (2018).*

The Council encourages developers to provide on-site supporting infrastructure for the cyclist including safe, secure, weather protected parking and shower facilities in workplaces. The following should be adhered to:

- One shower for high tech/ manufacturing and enterprise and employment development over 100sqm (over 5 employees);
- Two showers for high tech/ manufacturing and enterprise and employment development over 500sqm (25 employees);
- One shower per 1000sqm thereafter;
- Changing facilities/drying areas, toilets and lockers to be provided with sufficient ventilation.

### 11.8.8 Taxi Services and Bus Shelters

Accessible taxi services are an important element of public transport. All planning applications for significant commercial, retail (including supermarket and neighbourhood development), high tech/manufacturing, enterprise and employment, health and other development will demonstrate the provision of adequate drop-off and pick-up areas for taxi services. Taxi ranks and bus shelters should be designed in accordance with best accessibility practice and in a manner that will not represent a traffic hazard, obstruct or distract, or create a conflict with pedestrians, cyclists, public transport or private vehicles.

Promotional or commercial advertising in bus shelters and other stand-alone structures that are an essential element of public infrastructure or provide a public amenity, such as telephone kiosks, will only be permitted in a format and location which is clearly integral and subsidiary to the structure as designed and does not detract from the surrounding location.

### 11.8.9 Road Reinstatement and Temporary Traffic Management during Construction Phases

Any damage to public roads or paths occurring as a result of a development shall be repaired to the satisfaction of the Local Authority and where deemed necessary, a cash security may be required to guarantee the satisfactory repair of damage. In certain circumstances, the road network may be deficient in carrying capacity and it may be appropriate to facilitate the development subject to a requirement that road strengthening works be undertaken by the Local Authority at the expense of the developer. In such circumstances, a development contribution shall be levied or in appropriate circumstances a condition may be imposed requiring works to be undertaken by the developer to Council specifications, including indemnification of the Council.

In terms of traffic management, the provisions of the *Temporary Traffic Management Design Guidance, DTTS, 2019* and the *Temporary Traffic Management Operations Guidance, DTTS, 2019* apply.

## 11.9 Tourism, Recreation Activities and Visitor Accommodation

### 11.9.1 Facilities/Amenities ancillary to Tourism and Recreational Attractions

Certain amenities and services are often required to support the enjoyment of tourism and recreational attractions. For example, such facilities include car parks, viewing points, toilets and cafes. The Council must be satisfied that facilities are justified through robust evidence, anticipating the need for and demand of the public for the attractions and inclusive access to basic restroom and refreshment facilities, to certain walks and open areas, taking into account local topographical constraints.

### 11.9.2 Sustainable Forms of Niche Tourism and Recreation

The Council will promote sustainable forms of niche tourism and recreation in the countryside. These include theme holidays and group-based activities that take advantage of local and natural resources in a way that enhances the appreciation of place, minimises disturbance to the local environment and improves the prospects for tourism in the long term. As a general preference, facilities should be in existing settlements, or in buildings of character requiring renovation or in traditional farmhouses. Where new buildings are permitted outside of this framework, they should be modest in scale, sensitively located and designed having regard to existing buildings, topography and landscape, they should be adequately serviced and suitably managed.

### 11.9.3 Adventure Activities

Some recreational activities require resources that are generally only available in rural areas or sensitive natural heritage areas in the urban setting (e.g. water-based activities). The following standards and guidelines relate to these activities and to their appropriate setting. Such land uses and associated works shall be considered under the following criteria:

- All planning applications for these adventure/recreational activities involving special natural features, shall be accompanied by a management plan indicating projected numbers of users, hours of operation, seasons of operation and an undertaking to protect the natural environment in the form of a risk assessment with proposed amelioration measures in respect of flora, fauna, hydrology, geology and soils;
- All proposals should be accessible insofar as possible by sustainable means of transport including public transport and by modes other than the car;
- Where the traffic generated is likely to exceed the capacity of the local road network, or require changes to the road network that would adversely affect the character of the area, the use will not be permitted;
- Where the activity is likely to be noise generating, a noise assessment will be required in connection with the application, measuring likely noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptors. Noise sensitive uses include all residential uses, passive public amenities and the bloodstock industry. Where the use involves significant disturbance to any of these noise sensitive uses, that use will not be permitted in that location.

### 11.9.4 Visitor Accommodation and Holiday Homes

In particular, the Council promotes the redevelopment of brownfield sites, both in settlements and in rural areas, for the provision of tourist accommodation.

It is recognised that some forms of tourism developments, due to their scale or nature, may require a location outside of the settlement boundaries. Such developments include international-scale, integrated tourism developments e.g. golf courses. Such developments and their requirement to locate outside of an established settlement, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis having regard to their nature, scale, site suitability and normal planning considerations.

In general, Limerick City and County Council will not permit new single holiday homes in the countryside and will direct this type of development to settlements. Alternatively, this need can be met through the second-hand housing stock in the countryside or the refurbishment of derelict dwellings/ structures subject to the other planning matters, including water services and road safety. Similarly, brown-field sites in existing towns and villages may offer alternative opportunities for visitor accommodation.

### 11.9.5 Caravan/Camping/Glamping

The provision of tourist caravan parks and motorhome/caravan parking (Aires) to facilitate the expanding tourist industry is encouraged in appropriate locations by the Planning Authority. It is advised that the developer consult with the Environmental Health Officer, the Chief Fire Officer as well as the Planning Authority in advance of making a planning application. In assessing an application for a tourist caravan/camping/ glamping park, the following matters will be assessed by the Planning Authority:

- Location of the development relative to existing services including retail, social facilities, access network and water services;
- Impact on existing residential amenities - overlooking, increased traffic and general disturbance will be taken into account;
- Capacity of the road network to cater for the development - direct access onto national primary or national secondary roads will not be permitted;
- Type and size of development - caravans for all year-round occupation will not be permitted;
- Landscaping - every application for a caravan park will be accompanied by a comprehensive landscaping plan both proposed and existing;
- Compliance to Fáilte Ireland's standards for caravan parks will be required;
- Sufficient waste management including recycling on the site;
- Provision of overnight EV charging points for users of the facilities.

Where connection to public wastewater network is not possible, the application must demonstrate that the proposed wastewater treatment system is suitably designed to cater for the development without negatively impacting on water quality in accordance with EPA Code of Practice. Consideration should be given to the selection of a wastewater treatment system that can adequately deal with periods of inactivity (i.e. when unoccupied for long periods such as outside the summer period). Where required, a caravan and camping development must hold a Section 4 Discharge Licence for the discharge of treated effluent to either surface or groundwater in accordance with the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977-1990.

### 11.9.6 Bed and Breakfast/Guest House/ Hotel/Hostel/Apart-Hotel

In determining planning applications for new or change of use to bed and breakfast, guesthouse, hotel or hostel in residential areas, the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:

- Size, scale and nature of the business and the dwelling remaining the residence of the developer;
- Impact on existing residential amenity;
- Off-street parking provision;
- Signage; and
- Special designations such as Protected Structures, within the curtilage of Protected Structures, or located in Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs).

## 11.10 Environmental Infrastructure

### 11.10.1 Hours of Construction

In the absence of a Construction Management Plan approved by the Planning Authority, hours of construction shall be as follows:

- Site development and building works shall be restricted to 7.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 2.00pm Saturdays. Deviations from these times will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. No works shall take place on site on Sundays or Bank Holidays;
- There shall be no access onto the site before 7am or after 7pm in the absence of an approved deviation.

In certain instances, in order to address site specific issues of impact on residential or other sensitive amenity, a later start time and/or different hours may be conditioned.

### 11.10.2 Waste Management Infrastructure Facilities and Refuse Transfer Stations

Proposals for privately operated Waste Management Infrastructure facilities and refuse transfer stations will be required to have regard to the provisions of the appropriate European Council Directives, together with appropriate national legislation, regulations and guidance documents in respect of disposal of waste and disposal of toxic and dangerous waste in addition to normal planning criteria. Where permission is granted, the Planning Authority will impose strict conditions in the interest of health, safety and amenities. The provision of Waste Management Infrastructure facilities shall adhere to the Regional Waste Management Office's *Waste Management Infrastructure Siting Guidelines*.

Waste Management Infrastructure facilities and refuse transfer stations will only be permitted where it does not materially detract from the relevant Land Use Zoning Objective and is at a scale appropriate to its surrounding environment and adjoining amenities.

The Council will consider the following when assessing development proposals for waste infrastructure:

1. Compliance with the zoning objective for the subject lands;
2. Justification for the proposal at the location, in particular having regard to the *Southern Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021*, the Irish Water *National Sludge Waste Management Plan 2016-2021* and any subsequent plans produced during the lifetime of this Plan;
3. The site is not in in a flood risk area;
4. No adverse impacts on amenities, public health or road safety;
5. Minimal risk of pollution and robust migration measures are demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority and relevant environmental agencies and compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive, the *National River Basin Management Plan 2018-2021* and any subsequent plans during the lifetime of this Plan;
6. An appropriate buffer zone shall be provided around the site in order to protect the amenities of adjoining lands and properties. This buffer zone will be determined by the Planning Authority, in consultation with the EPA, where relevant; and
7. Compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

## 11.11 Drainage and Water Supply

### 11.11.1 Development on the Foreshore

- Development along the coastline must consider coastal erosion and deposition and coastline movement. As a general principle, development in these areas should be accommodated in previously developed areas before any consideration is given to the development on coastal greenfield sites;
- In all cases, proposals for coastal development shall consider coastal defence. Development will only be considered by the Council where it is satisfied that the development will not exacerbate erosion issues at the location, or elsewhere in the vicinity of the proposal or any defence works in the area;
- New development outside urban areas within 100m of the coastline at risk from coastal erosion is prohibited, unless it can be objectively established based on best scientific information available at the time of the application. The likelihood of erosion should be minimal accounting for any impacts in terms of erosion, deposition and predicted impacts of climate change. The Council prohibits development in areas liable to estuarine/coastal flooding in accordance with the 2009 guidance – *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG and OPW;*
- Some developments require foreshore licences under the Foreshore Act 1933. The Department for Housing, Planning and Local Government issues this consent. The foreshore is classed as the land and sea bed between the high water of ordinary tides and the 12 nautical mile limit. Foreshore also covers the tidal areas of rivers, particularly estuaries. For development on state-owned or private foreshore adjacent to the Local Authority functional area, planning permission is required from the Council or from An Bord Pleanála if the proposal is deemed a Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) in accordance with the Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006, also.

* Any person proposing to undertake works or an activity on the foreshore should contact the Marine Planning and Foreshore Section of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in advance, to ascertain if foreshore consent is required. Refer to housing.gov.ie/consent-project-types.

## 11.12 Environment and Heritage

Refer to Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure and Volume 3 for Architectural Conservation.



# 12
# Land Use Zoning Strategy

## 12.1 Land Use Zoning

Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that development plans comprise objectives for the zoning of lands for particular purposes, in the interest of proper planning and sustainable development. Effective zoning promotes orderly development by integrating land use and transportation, providing a high quality of life for the county's population, eliminating potential conflicts between incompatible land uses and establishing an efficient basis for investment in public infrastructure and facilities. Each land-use zoning objective in this chapter is accompanied by a purpose setting the context for the type of development which would be acceptable in the particular zone.

The purpose of zoning is to indicate to property owners and the public the types of development, which the Planning Authority considers most appropriate in each land use category. Zoning is designed to reduce conflicting uses within areas, to protect resources and ensure that land suitable for development is used to the best advantage of the community as a whole.

The Land Use Zoning Maps show the Land Use Zoning Objectives for each of the settlements. The Land Use Zoning Maps should be read in conjunction with the Land Use Zoning Objectives and the Land Use Zoning Matrix set out below.

There are a wide range of land uses identified under each of the Land Use Zoning Objectives. Proposals for development will need to demonstrate compliance with the various written provisions of the Plan, as relevant, including those relating to environmental protection and management. Environmental considerations, such as those related to elevated levels of flood risk or designated European sites, or other ecological designations or issues, may limit the types of uses that may be possible at certain sites. Prospective applicants are encouraged to engage with the Planning Authority at the earliest opportunity to seek guidance as to the appropriateness of emerging proposals.

## 12.2 Zoning Principles

In accordance with the overall strategy, the zoning strategy of this Plan is based on the following principles:

- Sufficient lands are zoned at appropriate locations throughout the county, to facilitate the growth envisaged in accordance with the population growth targets as set out in the Core Strategy and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region;
- Encourage compact growth and sustainable development through the consolidation and intensification of the built environment and the redevelopment of brownfield and infill sites within established settlements in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Framework (NPF);
- Ensure new residential development is provided in tandem with services, investment in infrastructure including transport and the provision of employment, together with supporting amenities and services;
- Ensure land is zoned where it is serviced and/or serviceable within the life of this Plan based on Appendix 3 of the National Planning Framework.

## 12.3 Land Use Zoning Objectives

The zoning strategy of this Plan includes the following land use zoning types, objectives and purposes:

| Land Use Zoning | Objective and Purpose |
|---|---|
| **City Centre** | **Objective:** To protect, consolidate and facilitate the development of the City Centre commercial, retail, educational, leisure, residential, social and community uses and facilities.<br><br>**Purpose:** To consolidate Limerick City Centre through densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments ensuring a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure, residential uses and urban streets, while delivering a high-quality urban environment which will enhance the quality of life of residents, visitors and workers alike. The zone will strengthen retail provision in accordance with the *Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick*, emphasise urban conservation, ensure priority for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, while minimising the impact of private car-based traffic and enhancing the existing urban fabric. |
| **Town/Village Centre** | **Objective:** To provide for the development and enhancement of town/village centre core uses including a mix of retail, residential, commercial, civic and other uses.<br><br>**Purpose:** To consolidate the existing fabric of the core/central areas of settlements, by densification of appropriate commercial and residential developments, ensuring a mix of commercial, recreational, civic, cultural, leisure, residential uses and urban streets, while delivering a quality urban environment. The zoning emphasises compact growth objectives and priority for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists while minimising the impact of private car-based traffic. |
| **District Centre** | **Objective:** To provide for a mixture of retail, residential, commercial, civic and other uses.<br><br>**Purpose:** To facilitate a district level centre consisting of a compatible mix of uses complementary to the City Centre, having regard to the principles of compact growth, consolidation and densification. A diversity of uses for both day and evening may be considered. These areas require high levels of accessibility, including pedestrian, cyclists and public transport (where feasible).<br><br>Retail proposals which would undermine the vitality and viability of Limerick City Centre will not be permitted. The sequential approach to retail development set out in the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities*, 2012 will be strictly enforced. Any development shall comply with the *Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick*. |

| Land Use Zoning | Objective and Purpose |
|---|---|
| **Local/ Neighbourhood Centre** | **Objective:** To protect and provide local centre facilities to serve the needs of new/ existing neighbourhoods and residential areas.<br><br>**Purpose:** To provide a mix of community and commercial neighbourhood facilities to primarily serve the immediate needs of the local working and residential population and complement, rather than compete with the City Centre. A mix of appropriate convenience retail, commercial, community, childcare and medical facilities, residential and recreational development of a local scale will be considered. Larger scale office and residential development will be considered in new developments where public transport is available.<br><br>The retail scale and type will be controlled to prevent negative impacts on the retail function of Limerick City Centre at the top of the hierarchy. A materially broader range of comparison goods than currently exists shall not be allowed in order to avoid further competition with the City Centre. Any proposal for retail development shall comply with the *Retail Strategy for the Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick*. |
| **Existing Residential** | **Objective**: To provide for residential development, protect and improve existing residential amenity.<br><br>**Purpose:** This zone is intended primarily for established housing areas. Existing residential amenity will be protected while allowing appropriate infill development. The quality of the zone will be enhanced with associated open space, community uses and where an acceptable standard of amenity can be maintained, a limited range of other uses that support the overall residential function of the area, such as schools, crèches, doctor's surgeries, playing fields etc. |
| **New Residential** | **Objective:** To provide for new residential development in tandem with the provision of social and physical infrastructure.<br><br>**Purpose:** This zone is intended primarily for new high quality housing development, including the provision of high-quality, professionally managed and purpose built third-level student accommodation. The quality and mix of residential areas and the servicing of lands will be a priority to support balanced communities. New housing and infill developments should include a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, to cater for all members of society. Design should be complimentary to the surroundings and should not adversely impact on the amenity of adjoining residents. These areas require high levels of accessibility, including pedestrian, cyclists and public transport (where feasible).<br><br>This zone may include a range of other uses particularly those that have the potential to facilitate the development of new residential communities such as open space, schools, childcare facilities, doctor's surgeries and playing fields etc. |
| **Education and Community Infrastructure** | **Objective:** To protect and provide for educational, training and adult learning, community, healthcare, childcare, civic, religious and social infrastructure.<br><br>**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. |

| Land Use Zoning | Objective and Purpose |
|---|---|
| **University** | **Objective:** To support the growth of the University of Limerick campus.<br><br>**Purpose:** To support and facilitate expansion of the University and provide for purpose-built student and ancillary residential accommodation and research and development buildings, which facilitate the sustainable development of community, cultural, educational and ancillary needs, for the benefit of the University population and wider area. General Office, Business and Enterprise uses may be considered on a limited basis on lands not within the ownership, or for the benefit of the University. |
| **Mixed Use** | **Objective:** To provide for a mixture of residential and compatible commercial uses.<br><br>**Purpose:** To facilitate the use of land for a mix of uses, making provisions, where appropriate for 'primary' uses i.e. residential and combined with other compatible uses e.g. offices as 'secondary'. These secondary uses will be considered by the Local Authority, having regard to the particular character of the area. A diversity of uses for both day and evening are encouraged. These areas require high levels of accessibility, including pedestrian, cyclists and public transport (where feasible). Opportunity sites set out in Chapter 3: Spatial Strategy, include Mixed Use zoned lands located at Towlerton, Parkway Valley, and Thomond Park, which have been accounted for in the Core Strategy figures. In addition, the Retail Strategy has identified capacity for additional retail floor space in Moyross, which could be accommodated on the Mixed-Use lands at The Bays identified for employment uses only.<br><br>Compatible uses include residential, retail, community, civic, hotel, leisure and recreation, offices, professional services, etc. |
| **High Tech/ Manufacturing** | **Objective:** To provide for office, research and development, high technology, regional distribution/ logistics, manufacturing and processing type employment in a high quality built and landscaped campus style environment.<br><br>**Purpose:** To facilitate opportunities for high technology, advanced manufacturing including pharmaceutical and food production, major office, regional distribution/ logistics, and research and development-based employment, within high quality, highly accessible, campus style settings. The zoning is for high value-added businesses and corporate facilities that have extensive/specific land requirements, such as those located at Raheen Business Park and the National Technology Park. These businesses are generally not accessible to members of the public. Retail warehousing will not be acceptable in this zone.<br><br>The uses in this zone are likely to generate a considerable amount of traffic by both employees and service vehicles. Sites should be highly accessible, well designed and permeable with good pedestrian, cyclist and public transport links. The implementation of mobility management plans will be required to provide important means of managing accessibility to these sites. |

| Land Use Zoning | Objective and Purpose |
|---|---|
| **Enterprise and Employment** | **Objective:** To provide for and improve general enterprise, employment, business and commercial activities.<br><br>**Purpose:** To provide for enterprise, employment and general business activities and acknowledge existing/permitted retailing uses. To accommodate compatible industry and employment activities that are incapable of being situated in the City Centre, in a high-quality physical environment. Marine related industry shall be allowed on Enterprise and Employment zoned lands on the Dock Road.<br><br>New enterprise and employment developments shall be provided in high quality landscaped park style environments, incorporating a range of amenities. These zones may accommodate light industry, low input and emission manufacturing, logistics and warehousing, campus style offices and commercial services with high space and parking requirements. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location, having regard to surrounding uses and scale. A proliferation of retail uses will not be permitted.<br><br>The uses in this zone are likely to generate a considerable amount of traffic by both employees and service vehicles. Sites should be highly accessible, well designed and permeable with good pedestrian, cyclist and public transport links. The implementation of mobility management plans will be required to provide important means of managing accessibility to these sites. |
| **Industry** | **Objective:** To provide for specialised and heavy industrial development and associated employment creation.<br><br>**Purpose:** To provide employment locations specifically for heavy and specialised industry associated with environmental emissions including noise, dust and odour (e.g. waste processing, aggregate processing etc.) and with intensive or hazardous processing (e.g. Seveso) which may give rise to land use conflict if located within other land use zones. Marine related industry shall be allowed on Industry zoned lands on the Dock Road. |
| **Retail Warehousing** | **Objective:** To provide for retail warehouse development.<br><br>**Purpose:** To facilitate the sale of bulky household goods such as carpets, furniture, electrical goods and bulky DIY items catering mainly for car-based customers, in high quality and accessible locations subject to the requirements of the *Retail Planning Guidelines* and the *Retail Strategy for Limerick Shannon Metropolitan Area and County Limerick*. |
| **Data Centre** | **Objective:** To accommodate the provision of a Data Centre on appropriately zoned lands.<br><br>**Purpose:** To enable the development of a data centre campus consisting of multiple structures and associated power generating infrastructure as necessary, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria. Any proposed development shall adopt sustainable practices in terms of building design, materials, construction and operation. Any planning application shall include a landscaping plan incorporating dense trees to the site boundaries. General Enterprise and Employment uses will not be permitted in the Data Centre zone. |
| **Open Space and Recreation** | **Objective:** To protect, provide for and improve open space, active and passive recreational amenities.<br><br>**Purpose:** To provide for active and passive recreational resources including parks, sports and leisure facilities and amenities including greenways and blueways. The Council will not normally permit development that would result in a loss of open space. |

| Land Use Zoning | Objective and Purpose |
|---|---|
| **Sports Arena** | **Objective:** To protect, provide for and improve sports arenas and stadiums and associated ancillary facilities.<br><br>**Purpose:** To provide for recreation, leisure and tourism facilities and associated ancillary amenities at a regional and national scale. Fast Food Outlet/ Take Away, Offices, Public House, Restaurant/Café and Retail Convenience </150m2 nfa. are uses which are 'Generally Permitted' ancillary to the Primary Use Only. |
| **Semi Natural Open Space** | **Objective:** To protect Natura 2000 designated sites, candidate/proposed sites and flood plains in a semi natural open state.<br><br>**Purpose:** This zoning recognises the importance and need for protection of these areas for wildlife, habitat, flora and fauna and floodwater storage. Within these areas development will be prohibited in order to maintain the integrity of the sites. |
| **Groody Valley Wedge** | **Objective:** To preserve and protect the Groody Valley from development.<br><br>**Purpose:** To maintain the area's importance in preventing the encroachment of the built-up area of Limerick City and to retain its important role as a wildlife corridor and a flood management zone. |
| **Special Control Area** | **Objective:** To protect the heritage significance of the specified sites.<br><br>**Purpose:** This zoning recognises the heritage importance of the area. The Special Control Area designation will facilitate the preservation in situ of the identified archaeological, including any subterranean, remains. Within this area, new development will be prohibited in order to maintain the archaeological heritage of the area and in the case of Mungret, to protect views from the monastic complex/deserted settlement. |
| **Utilities** | **Objective:** To provide for the infrastructural needs of transport and other utility providers.<br><br>**Purpose:** Park and Ride facilities and commercial development associated with the provision of public transport services are considered appropriate in this zone. This zoning also provides for and preserves land for the provision of services such as electricity and gas networks, telecommunications, the treatment of water and wastewater etc. |
| **Agriculture** | **Objective:** To protect and improve rural amenity and provide for the development of agricultural uses.<br><br>**Purpose:** Protect rural amenity and agricultural lands from urban sprawl and ribbon development and provide a clear demarcation to the adjoining built up areas. Uses which are directly associated with agriculture or rural related business activities which have a demonstrated need for a rural based location and which would not interfere with rural amenity are open for consideration. Compliance is required with the criteria for Small-Scale Home-Based Businesses.<br><br>One off dwellings will only be considered on agriculturally zoned land outside of Flood Zones A and B, subject to the terms and conditions of the rural housing policy as set out in this Plan.<br><br>Dwellings are categorized as 'highly vulnerable development' in the Section 28 Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2010) and will not be permitted in flood zones. |

## 12.4 Land Use Zoning Matrix

The approach of Limerick City and County Council to various types of developments is determined by the Zoning Objective in conjunction with the Land Use Zoning Matrix, which should be read in tandem with the Zoning Map.

The Land Use Zoning Matrix outlines the types of developments, which are:

**Generally Permitted = /**
A generally permitted use is one which the Council accepts in principle in the relevant zone, subject to compliance with all relevant planning criteria, including applicable policies, objectives, development management standards and Section 28 Guidance.

**Open for Consideration = O**
A use open for consideration is one which the Council may permit where it is satisfied that the suggested form of development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, will not conflict with existing uses or the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

**Generally Not Permitted = X**
A generally not permitted use is one that would be incompatible with the zoning policies or objectives for the area, would conflict with the permitted/existing uses and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Non-Conforming Uses are uses which do not conform to the zoning objective for the area in which they are located. Where legally established, extensions or improvements to these uses shall be considered on their merits on a case-by-case basis, where they do not adversely affect the amenities of properties in the vicinity and are not prejudicial to proper planning and sustainable development.

Transitional Zoning Areas should be considered in the design of developments in order to avoid abrupt transitions in scale, density and use in the boundary areas of adjoining land use zones. In particular, developments which would be detrimental to the amenities of residential properties should be avoided in order to protect the amenities of such properties.

| Land Use Zone | City Centre | Town Centre | District Centre | Local/Neighbourhood Centre | Existing Residential | New Residential | Educ & Community Infra. | University | Mixed Use | High Tech | Enterprise & Employment | Industry | Retail Warehousing | Sports Arena | Open Space | Semi Natural OS /Groody Valley /Space | Special Control Areas | Utilities | Agriculture |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Type of Use | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Abattoir** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | O |
| **Advertising and Advertising Structures** | / | / | / | / | X | X | O[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | X | X | O | X |
| **Aerodrome/ Airfield** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | X | O |
| **Agricultural Buildings** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / |
| **Agricultural Supplies/ Machinery Sales** | X | / | X | X[2] | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Allotments** | X | X | X | X | / | / | / | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | O | O | X | X | O |
| **Amusement Arcade/Casino** | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Bank/Credit Union** | / | / | / | / | X | X | / | O[1] | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Bed & Breakfast/ Guesthouse** | / | / | / | / | / | / | X | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | /[3] |
| **Betting Office** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Boarding Kennels** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | /[1] |
| **Bring Banks/ Bring Centres** | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | O | O | O | O | X | X | X | X | / | X |
| **Builders Providers/Yard** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | X | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Burial Grounds** | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | X | / |
| **Campsite/ Caravan Park - Holiday Use** | X | X | X | X | X[4] | X[4] | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Car Park** | / | / | / | / | X | X | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | /[1] | X | X | / | X |
| **Childcare Facilities** | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | O[1] | / | O | O | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X |

| Land Use Zone | City Centre | Town Centre | District Centre | Local/Neighbourhood Centre | Existing Residential | New Residential | Educ & Community Infra. | University | Mixed Use | High Tech | Enterprise & Employment | Industry | Retail Warehousing | Sports Arena | Open Space | Semi Natural OS /Groody Valley /Space | Special Control Areas | Utilities | Agriculture |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Civic Recycling/ Waste Facility | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | / | X | X | X | X | X | / | X |
| Community/ Cultural/Tourism Facility | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | O | / | X | X | X | X | / | / | X | X | X | X |
| Conference Centre | / | / | O | O | X | X | O[1] | O | / | O | O | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X |
| Dancehall/ Nightclub | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Education/ Training Facility | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | O | O | / | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X |
| Enterprise Centre | / | / | / | X | X | X | O[1] | O | O | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Extractive Industry/Quarry | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | O |
| Fast Food Outlet/Take-Away | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | O | O | X | X | X | X | /[1] | X | X | X | X | X |
| Food and Drink Processing/ Manufacturing | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | /[1] |
| Fuel Depot/ Storage | O | O | O | O | X | X | X | X | O | X | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Funeral Home | / | / | / | / | O | O | X | X | O | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Garden Centre | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | O[1] |
| General Public Administration | / | / | O | O | X | X | O | X | O | O | O | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Hair and Beauty Salons | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Halting Site | X | X | X | X | O | O | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | X |
| Health Centre | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | O | / | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Health Practitioner | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | O | / | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

| Land Use Zone | City Centre | Town Centre | District Centre | Local/Neighbourhood Centre | Existing Residential | New Residential | Educ & Community Infra. | University | Mixed Use | High Tech | Enterprise & Employment | Industry | Retail Warehousing | Sports Arena | Open Space | Semi Natural OS /Groody Valley /Space | Special Control Areas | Utilities | Agriculture |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **High Technology Manufacturing** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | O | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Hospital** | / | / | X | X | X | X | / | X | O | O | O | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Hotel** | / | / | O | O | X | X | X | X | / | X | O | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Industry - Heavy** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X[5] | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Industry - Light** | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | / | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Leisure/ Recreation Facility** | / | / | O | O | X | X | X | O | O | X | O | X | O | O | O | X | X | X | X |
| **Logistics** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | / | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Nursing Home/ Residential Care or Institution*/ Retirement Village** | / | / | / | / | / | / | X[6] | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Offices** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | O[1] | / | / | / | O | X | /[1] | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Park and Ride Facilities** | / | / | / | / | O | O | / | / | / | O | O | X | O | X | X | X | X | / | X |
| **Petrol Station[7]** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | X | O | X | O | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Place of Worship** | / | / | / | / | O | O | / | O | O | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Plant Storage/ Hire** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | O | / | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Professional Services*** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | O[1] | / | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Public House** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | O | O | X | X | X | X | /[1] | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Renewable Energy Installation** | O[1] | O[1] | O[1] | O[1] | O[1] | O[1] | O[1] | O[1] | O[1] | O[1] | / | / | O[1] | X | O | X | X | / | O |
| **Research and Dev./Science and Technology** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | / | O | / | O | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | /[8] |
| **Residential** | / | / | / | / | / | / | /[9] | /[9] | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | /[10] |
| **Restaurant/Café** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | /[1] | O | X | X | X | X | /[1] | X | X | X | X | X |

| Land Use Zone | City Centre | Town Centre | District Centre | Local/Neighbourhood Centre | Existing Residential | New Residential | Educ & Community Infra. | University | Mixed Use | High Tech | Enterprise & Employment | Industry | Retail Warehousing | Sports Arena | Open Space | Semi Natural OS /Groody Valley /Space | Special Control Areas | Utilities | Agriculture |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Retail Convenience* >/1,800m² nfa** | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Retail Comparison* >/1,800m² nfa** | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Retail Convenience* </1,800m² nfa** | / | / | O | O | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Retail Comparison* </1,800m² nfa** | / | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Retail - <150m² nfa** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | /[1] | / | X | X | X | X | /[1] | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Retail - Warehouse** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Scrap Yard** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Sports Facility** | O | O | O | O | / | / | / | O[1] | / | O | O | O | X | / | / | X | X | X | X |
| **Student Accommodation** | / | / | / | / | / | / | /[1] | /[1] | / | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Telecommunica-tions Structures** | / | / | / | / | X | X | / | / | / | / | / | / | / | O | O | X | X | / | / |
| **Vehicle Sales Outlet** | X | X | X | X[11] | X | X | X | X | O | X | / | X | / | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Vehicle Servicing/ Maintenance/ Repairs** | X | X | X | X[11] | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Veterinary Clinic** | / | / | / | / | X | X | X | X | / | X | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | /[12] |
| **Warehousing** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | / | / | O | O | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Waste Disposal and Recover Facility** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | / | X | X | X | X | X | / | X |
| **Wholesale - Cash and Carry** | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | / | O | / | X | X | X | X | X | X |

1. Ancillary to the primary use only
2. Except for Local/Neighbourhood Centres in Tier 4 Settlements
3. Where the use is ancillary to the use of the dwelling as a main residence
4. Not permitted with the exception of Residential zoned lands in Kilfinane
5. Not permitted except for Enterprise & Employment zoned lands in the Settlements outside of Limerick City and Suburbs, Mungret and Annacotty
6. Except at Milford Care Centre, St. Gabriel's Centre and Little Company of Mary Milford, where Nursing Homes/ Residential Care or Institution/ Retirement Village are Open for Consideration
7. Petrol station shops shall not exceed 100m$^2$ (net) as per the Retail Planning Guidelines
8. Rural related research and development only
9. Purpose built student/ ancillary accommodation only
10. Subject to compliance with the Rural Housing Policy
11. Except in settlements
12. Only where the need to locate in a rural environment has been demonstrated because of the nature of the clinic required

*** Definitions:**

**Comparison:**
Goods including Comparison Goods:
- clothing and footwear; - furniture, furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods); - medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment; - educational and recreation equipment and accessories; - books, newspapers and magazines; - goods for personal care; - goods not elsewhere classified; - bulky goods.

**Convenience:**
Goods including -food;- alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages;- tobacco;- non-durable household goods.

**Professional Services:**
Including for example accountants, architects, solicitors etc.

**Residential Care or Institution:**
The use of a building or land as a convent, monastery, hostel, or home for older persons.





# 13 Implementation and Monitoring

## 13.1 Implementation of Plan

The Plan sets out the Council's vision and strategy, including a broad range of policies and objectives to provide a framework for the sustainable development of Limerick over the period 2022-2028.

Section 15(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) places a statutory obligation on the Planning Authority to take such steps within its powers as may be necessary to secure the objectives of the Plan. The Council is fully committed to securing the implementation of the Plan.

The implementation of the Plan requires the cooperation and participation of all stakeholders. The Council will continue their leadership role in progressing and securing the policies and objectives of the Plan. The Council will also continue to foster a collaborative approach with citizens, communities, stakeholders, sectoral interests, government and non-government agencies and adjoining authorities to achieve collective support and successful implementation of the Plan.

## 13.2 Local Area Plans

The strategic and broad ranging policies and objectives of the Plan provide a general framework for Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty and Limerick County. However, the Plan does not necessarily include the local level details and policy objectives required for development proposals in certain settlements. The policy objectives unique to Limerick City and Suburbs (in Limerick), Mungret and Annacotty, Ballingarry, Bruff, Bruree, Cappamore, Doon, Dromcolliher, Foynes, Glin, Hospital, Kilfinane, Murroe, Pallasgreen and Pallaskenry have been incorporated into the Plan. In addition, Local Area Plans are in place for Abbeyfeale, Adare, Caherconlish, Castleconnell, Croom, Newcastle West, Patrickswell, Rathkeale, and Kilmallock.

### 13.3 Pre-planning

Consultation between a prospective applicant and the Council regarding proposed development, prior to their lodgement as planning applications is beneficial to both parties.

Under the provisions of Section 247 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), a prospective applicant shall have consulted with the Planning Authority in respect of the development that comprises:

- Residential development of more than 10 housing units.
- Non-residential development of more than 1,000sqm. gross floor space.
- Other development as may be prescribed in legislation.

Details with regard to applying for a pre-application consultation can be found at limerick.ie/council/services/pre-planning. Applicants are also advised to avail of pre-connection enquiries with Irish Water to ascertain if connection of water services (mains and sewer) is feasible for their proposal prior to submitting a planning application.

### 13.4 Implementation of Planning Permission

Planning permission is required for any development of land or property, unless the development is specifically exempted from this need under the Planning and Development legislation. All planning applications will be assessed in accordance with the Development Management Standards set out under this Plan. The granting of planning permission does not necessarily enable development to be undertaken, as development will have a legal context outside the remit of the permission e.g. land ownership. Development will also be required to conform with the requirements of legislation and regulations that are outside the scope of planning legislation and that will impact upon the specific development proposed e.g. EPA licensing.

**Policy IM P1**
**Implementation of Plan**
It is a policy of the Council to assess all planning applications in accordance with the Development Management Standards of the Plan and any applicable Section 28 Guidelines.

## 13.5 Development Contributions

To facilitate the provision of roads and transport services, surface water drainage, recreation and community facilities infrastructure etc., the Council will require the payment of contributions from benefitting developers.

### 13.5.1 General Development Contributions

Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) enables the Planning Authority when granting planning permission under Section 34 of the Act, to include conditions, requiring the payment of a financial contribution. This contribution is in respect of public infrastructure and facilities benefitting development in the area of the Planning Authority that is provided, or that is intended to be provided, by or on behalf of the Local Authority, regardless of other sources of funding for the infrastructure and facilities.

A scheme may make provision for the payment of different contributions in respect of different classes or descriptions of development. A scheme may allow for the payment of a reduced contribution or no contribution in certain circumstances, in accordance with the provisions of the scheme. The basis for the determination of a contribution under this Section is set out in the *Development Contribution Scheme Limerick City and County Council 2022* (and any subsequent scheme). The Planning Authority will require the payment of contributions in accordance with this scheme.

### 13.5.2 Special Development Contributions

Section 48(2)(c) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provides for a Special Development Contribution where exceptional costs not covered by the general contribution scheme are incurred by a Local Authority in the provision of a specific public infrastructure or facility. The Planning Authority may require the payment of a Special Development Contribution in addition to a contribution under the General Scheme.

### 13.5.3 Supplementary Development Contributions

Section 49 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), enables the Planning Authority to include conditions requiring the payment of a financial contribution in respect of any public infrastructure service or project specified in a Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme, where the provision of infrastructure concerned will benefit the development to which the permission relates when carried out.

A Supplementary Development Contribution Scheme applies to the R526 Link Road Phase 3 Mungret. Similar supplementary contribution schemes may be applied to the other areas within the lifetime of the Plan.

## 13.6 Enforcement

The Council has extensive powers under Part VIII of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) to take enforcement action where unauthorised development has occurred, is occurring or where permitted development has not, or is not being carried out, in compliance with the planning permission granted or exempted development legislation. The Council will enforce the planning legislation to ensure that the environmental, visual and economic development of Limerick is not jeopardised by inappropriate and environmentally damaging development and to ensure that the policies and objectives of the Plan are implemented and adhered to.

## 13.7 Monitoring and Review

The Council has responsibility for monitoring and implementing the Plan, mainly through the development management function. However, it is important to note that the Plan coordinates the work and objectives of all directorates of Limerick City and County Council. In some instances, the implementation of certain policy objectives may be the responsibility of external bodies such as Irish Water, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Fisheries Ireland, National Roads Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the Environmental Protection Agency etc. The Planning Authority will work in collaboration with the relevant external bodies to ensure implementation of the policy and objectives. The Plan policy and objectives aim to be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic. However, a number are set within a longer timeframe, thus they may not be fully achieved over the lifetime of this Plan.

The *Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities – Draft for Consultation (August 2021)*, recommends that Planning Authorities need to establish a strong, frequent and ongoing monitoring system for their Development Plan as a permanent function. The guidelines outline that the monitoring task shall comprise two strategic monitoring elements:

a) Core Strategy Monitoring;
b) Plan Objectives Monitoring.

In order to develop a dedicated, permanent system of monitoring progress of the Development Plan, the Council will establish a dedicated team (or performance management system) within the Forward Planning section of Limerick City and County Council to monitor the performance of the Plan. The ongoing programme of monitoring will measure the outcomes of the Plan against its stated objectives. The team will be responsible for maintaining key datasets required, which will incorporate indicators that will monitor the broad range of policies in this Plan.

In accordance with Section 10.3 of the guidelines, the Council will deliver the following:

**A. Core Strategy Monitoring:**

The Council shall deliver an Annual Development Plan Monitoring Report, which will be presented to the Elected Members and thereafter shall be published on the Council's website Limerick.ie. This report shall monitor the nature of new development that is occurring in Limerick, including planning and development trends, which shall be analysed with accompanying digital maps. This will illustrate the spatial trends in development in order to assess the agreed housing and population targets as contained in the Core Strategy of this Plan. The data required for this report will include information from the Council's own sources, including Development Management (planning and commencement data) and external sources such as the CSO. The annual Core Strategy Monitoring will include the following indicators:

Table 13.1:
Core Strategy Monitoring Indicators:

| | Indicator |
|---|---|
| **Residential** | |
| **1** | New home completions (including refurbishments/ conversions) |
| **2** | New home completions per NPO3 (Compact growth) |
| **3** | Planning permissions granted for residential development with:<br>i. A breakdown of 1, 2, 3 and 4+ bedroom units permitted<br>ii. A breakdown per Tier 1 and Tier 2 lands |
| **4** | Breakdown by relevant rural area type of rural housing:<br>i. Planning applications lodged<br>ii. Breakdown in decisions<br>iii. New home completions |
| **Commercial** | |
| **5** | Developed and occupied commercial floorspace |
| **6** | Planning permissions for business/employment uses (m2 of development) for:<br>i. Office<br>ii. Industrial<br>iii. Retail<br>iv. Warehousing/Logistics |
| **Settlement Consolidation Sites** | |
| **7** | Specific reporting on the progression of the Settlement Consolidation Sites identified in the Development Plan including:<br>i. Enabling infrastructural services delivery<br>ii. Planning permissions granted<br>iii. Units constructed<br>iv. Funding applications made<br>v. Project timelines<br>vi. Vacant site levy<br>vii. Commentary. |
| **Brownfield/ Infill Sites** | |
| **8** | Establish a database of and monitor planning applications on brownfield and infill sites. |
| **Transport Strategy** | |
| **9** | i. Progress with the delivery of enabling transport infrastructure projects identified<br>ii. Change in transport modal share for travel to work, school and college<br>iii. Progress with improvements in bus infrastructure serving the City and County<br>iv. No. of new bus stops/ rail stations opened<br>v. Improvements to the cycle network<br>vi. Provision of new park and ride facilities<br>vii. Progress with improvements to the road network |

**B. Plan Objectives Monitoring:**

In addition to the annual reporting, the *Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities – Draft for Consultation (August 2021)* requires a more formal Development Plan report, which details progress on the specific objectives set out in the Development Plan. Accordingly, the Council shall prepare the two reports as follows:

(1) The Two-Year Progress Report by the Chief Executive on the Development Plan in accordance with Section 15(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). The Plan will be reviewed after 2 years and a progress report will be prepared by the Chief Executive on the achievements in securing the policy and objectives of the Plan at that time. The Two-Year Progress Report shall monitor and assess the overall implementation of policy and objectives including those pertaining to the Core Strategy and the environmental objectives as set out in the Strategic Environmental Assessment. The report will include the results of the SEA monitoring for the Development Plan, as well as variations to the Plan and the effects of implementing Local Area Plans.

(2) The Baseline Report, which is published as the evidence base for commencing the review procedure for the Development Plan not later than four years after its adoption.

The aforementioned reporting exercises will allow the Council to determine the status of the effectiveness of the Development Plan in meeting its stated objectives.

In accordance with Section 3.1 of the *Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities – Draft for Consultation (August 2021),* the Council shall commence the preparatory work at least one year prior to the formal commencement of the Plan review, which, under Section 11(1) of the Act, will be initiated not more than four years after the making of the Limerick Development Plan.

The implementation and delivery of the Plan will be monitored by the Office of the Planning Regulator, the Southern Regional Assembly and the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC). The Council shall report to the Southern Regional Assembly outlining the progress made in supporting objectives of the RSES as required under Section 25A(1) of the Act.

The Plan will continue to have a presence on the Council's website Limerick.ie/Council where information will be supplied and updated, including any variations to the Plan and the monitoring progress.

The Council shall endeavour to attract state and other investment programmes to support the implementation of the objectives of the Development Plan, including national funding programmes for urban and rural regeneration.

**Policy IM P2**
**Review**
It is a policy of the Council to co-operate with the Office of the Planning Regulatory, Southern Regional Assembly and National Audit and Oversight Committee as part of the monitoring and review procedure.

### 13.8 Material Contravention

In appropriate circumstances, the Council may permit a material contravention of the Plan where a proposed development contravenes materially an objective of the Plan, but which, following detailed assessment is considered appropriate by the Council's Executive. The granting of a permission which materially contravenes the Plan is a reserved function of the members.



# Appendices



# Appendix 1: Section 28 Guidelines Compliance

## Statement Outlining Compliance with Section 28 Guidelines

Pursuant to Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), Limerick City and County Council is required to append a statement to the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 to include information which demonstrates the following:

i) How the Planning Authority has implemented the policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the guidelines, when considering their application to the area or part of the area of the Development Plan, or

ii) If applicable, that the Planning Authority has formed the opinion that it is not possible, because of the nature and characteristics of the area or part of the area of the Development Plan, to implement certain policies and objectives of the Minister contained in the guidelines, when considering the application of those policies in the area or part of the area of the Development Plan, and shall give reasons for the forming of the opinion and why policies and objectives of the Minister have not been so implemented.

The following table demonstrates how the applicable Ministerial Planning Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Act, are implemented in the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 and lists other important national design and planning guidance documents.

Table A1:
Ministerial Planning Guidelines issued under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and other relevant sources of planning guidance and associated compliance within the Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028

| National Guidelines | Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 |
|---|---|
| **Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland: Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)** | This guidance informed the preparation of this Plan at all stages.<br><br>A Natura Impact Assessment accompanies this Plan – Volume 4 |
| **Implementation of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment: Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities (2004)** | This guidance informed the preparation of this Plan at all stages.<br><br>A Strategic Environmental Assessment accompanies this Plan – Volume 4 |
| **Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanala on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment (2018)** | Referred to in Chapter 11: Development Management Standards |
| **Development Plans- Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007)** | Development Plan prepared to align with Development Plan Guidelines – All Chapters |
| **Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2021)** | Development Plan prepared to align with Draft Development Plan Guidelines - All Chapters |
| **Local Area Plans-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2013)** | Ensuring Local Area Plans are used where appropriate – will be carried out as appropriate |
| **Development Management-Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007)** | Chapter 11: Development Management Standards prepared in light of relevant guidelines |
| **Development Contributions-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2013)** | Chapter 13: Implementation |
| **Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (2020)** | The methodology was applied to housing forecasts in the Plan period. Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Chapter 4: Housing |

| National Guidelines | Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 |
|---|---|
| **Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 Guidelines (2017)** | Chapter 11: Development Management Standards and informing Chapter 4: Housing |
| **Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and Best Practice Urban Design Manual (companion document)** | Chapter 11: Development Management Standards and informed the preparation of Chapter 4: Housing |
| **Sustainable Rural Housing- Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005)** | Chapter 4: Housing and Chapter 11: Development Management in respect of Rural Housing |
| **Sustainable Urban Design Standards for new apartments (2015, updated 2018)** | Chapter 11: Development Management |
| **Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013, as updated in 2019), 2020 DMURS Interim Advice Note – Covid-19 Pandemic Response and the Whole of Government National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2022** | Chapter 11: Development Management Standards and Chapter 7: Sustainable Mobility and Transport. |
| **Urban Development and Building Heights- Guidance for Planning Authorities (2018)** | Chapter 11: Development Management |
| **Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)** | Chapter 5: A Strong Economy |
| **Quarries and Ancillary Activities-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004)** | Chapter 5: A Strong Economy |
| **Landscape and Landscape Assessment (2000) Draft only** | Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure |
| **Architectural Heritage Protection-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2004 and 2011) S52 of Planning and Development Act 2000, incorporating 'AHPG for Places of public worship' (2003 and 2007)** | Chapter 6: Environment, Heritage, Landscape and Green Infrastructure |

| National Guidelines | Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028 |
|---|---|
| **Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines-Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)** | Chapter 7: Sustainable Mobility and Transport |
| **Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures (1996)** | Chapter 8: Infrastructure |
| **Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)** | Chapter 9: Climate Action, Flooding and Transition to a Low Carbon Economy<br><br>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment |
| **Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006)** | Chapter 9: Climate Action, Flooding and Transition to a Low Carbon Economy. Also Chapter 8: Infrastructure (in relation to Energy and Electricity generation and networks) |
| **Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate change (2017)** | Chapter 9: Climate Action, Flooding and Transition to a Low Carbon Economy. |
| **Provision of Schools and the Planning System - A code of practice for Planning Authorities (2008)** | Chapter 10: Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure |
| **Childcare Facilities Guidelines (2001)** | Chapter 10: Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure |
| **NPF Implementation: Housing Growth Requirements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)** | Chapter 2: Core Strategy<br><br>Chapter 11: Development Management<br><br>Housing Strategy and HNDA |
| **Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)** | Chapter 11: Development Management |
| **Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)** | Chapter 11: Development Management |



