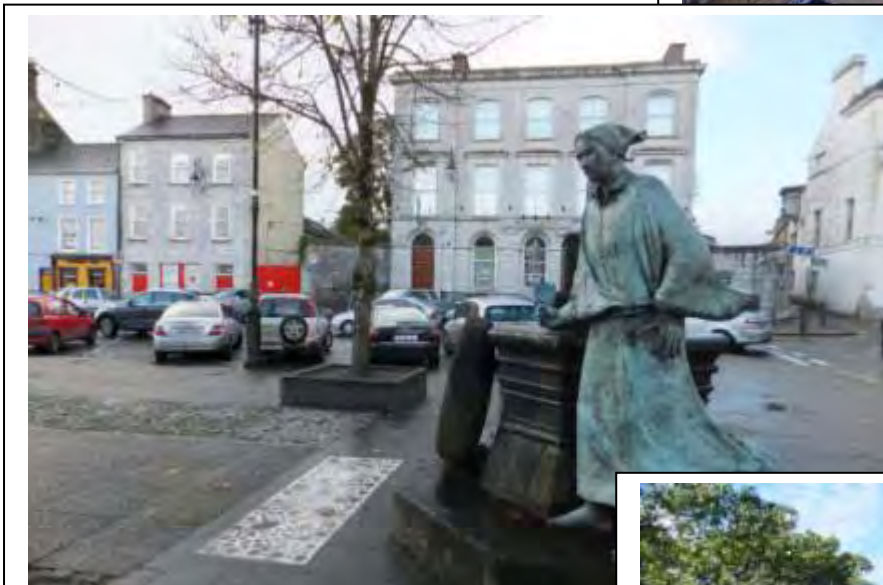
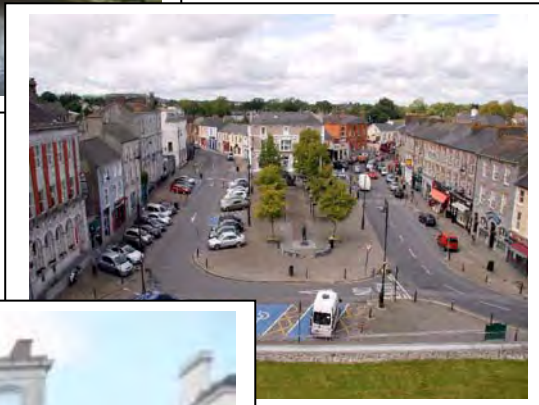
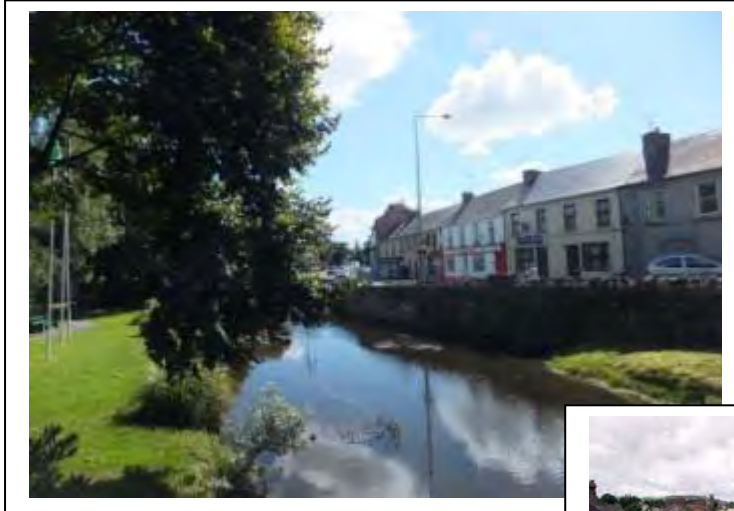


Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 – 2020 Environmental Report



**August 2014
Volume 2**



Forward Planning
Pleanáil chun tosaigh

In accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2013, Section 20 (4A), this Local Area Plan comes into effect on 4th August 2014, four weeks from the date of its adoption by elected members of Limerick City and County Council on the 7th July 2014.

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1.0 Non Technical Summary

1.1 Introduction

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a formal process that is carried out as part of the preparation of the LAP 2014-2020. It informs decision making in the making of the LAP, improving the environmental compliance of the plan and raising awareness of the potential environmental consequences of its implementation so that these consequences may be mitigated or avoided altogether. It also gives the public and other interested parties an opportunity to comment on and to be kept informed on decisions that may affect the local environment and how the plan was made. It should be noted in this regard that the Chief Executive's Report to the Elected Members 30th June 2014 should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Report and the Plan itself to gain a complete understanding of how environmental considerations were responded to in the process of making the plan.

In accordance with the legislation, a 'scoping' exercise was carried out to determine the range of environmental issues and level of detail to be contained in the Environmental Report. This took place in October 2013 and involved consultation with the relevant Environmental Authorities:

- The Environmental Protection Agency
- The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government
- The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
- The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
- The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

The main output of SEA is the Environmental Report, which outlines the findings of the assessment process. This is the Environmental Report for the LAP that has been prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 and SEA (Amendment) Regulations 2011. As mentioned above this report should be read in conjunction with the LAP and the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening Report and the Chief Executive's Report.

1.2 Contents and Main Objectives of the LAP 2014-2020.

The plan provides a six year planning framework for the development of Newcastle West. The plan is prepared under the requirements of Section 10 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and provides a land use planning framework for the years 2014-2020 and beyond. It contains a written statement outlining the planning context of the town which goes on to define specific policies and objectives for the town centre, economic development, infrastructure, housing, heritage and amenity and community and social and development management. The plan includes a Core Strategy Statement showing that the development objectives in the Plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives as set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines and the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016.

1.3 Current State of the Environment

1.3.1 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

The Daar and the Arra waterways provide the setting for a range of wildlife habitats and species and are important local amenities. Sites of local biodiversity interest in the town include the rivers and the local demesne which is important not just as habitat and an amenity but is also part of the history of the town as despite being modified is the successor to the 19th century demesne which has always been closely associated with the town itself. The previous draft of the Environmental Report has outlined its importance to the town and the surrounding area.

A key objective is the maintenance of favourable conservation status for protected habitats and species within the plan area. While no Natura 2000 sites are present in the plan area it is considered that the maintenance of an appropriate buffer zone along the riparian habitat and enhancing green infrastructure and ecological corridors between key sites of nature conservation value are also required. These have been included in undeveloped sections of water courses in the eastern portion of the plan.

The issue of bio-diversity conservation and the conservation of the Castle Demesne emerged as a key concern during the public consultation period.

AA screening was carried out on the Draft Plan and the findings of that process are integrated into the Environmental Report. The AA screening concluded that due to the distance from Natura 2000 sites and the incorporation of mitigation measures involving ecological assessment at project design stage will mitigate for any potential adverse impacts from development projects that may affect Natura 2000 sites outside the plan area.

1.3.2 Population and Human Health

The Census of 2011 shows the population of Ireland increased from 4,239,848 in 2006 to 4,588,252 in 2011 an actual increase of 348,404 persons or 8.2%. The population of Newcastle West, as outlined in the current plan in 2011 was 6327 people. The Waste Water Treatment capacity is adequate for the towns need with a population capacity of 9000. The plant came into operation in 1984 and consultants have been recently appointed in order to recommend improvement to the plant.

Air quality in Ireland is generally of a high standard across the country. Newcastle West lies in Zone D i.e. rural areas outside zones of urban conurbations. The current air quality in the **Newcastle West** Air Quality Index Health Region is **1 - Good**. The index is based on information from monitoring instruments at representative locations in the region and may not reflect local incidents of air pollution. The index was calculated at 16:25, Thu 15-May-

2014. At some times particularly during holiday periods through traffic through the town can create localised issues with traffic fumes.

Climate change impacts may present challenges to future land use and location of development in the town. Predicted impacts from projected temperature rises include more concentrated periods of higher rainfall and more exposure to flood risk. This issue has been dealt with in the Stage 1 Flood risk assessment which is part of the plan documentation.

1.3.3 Geology and Soils

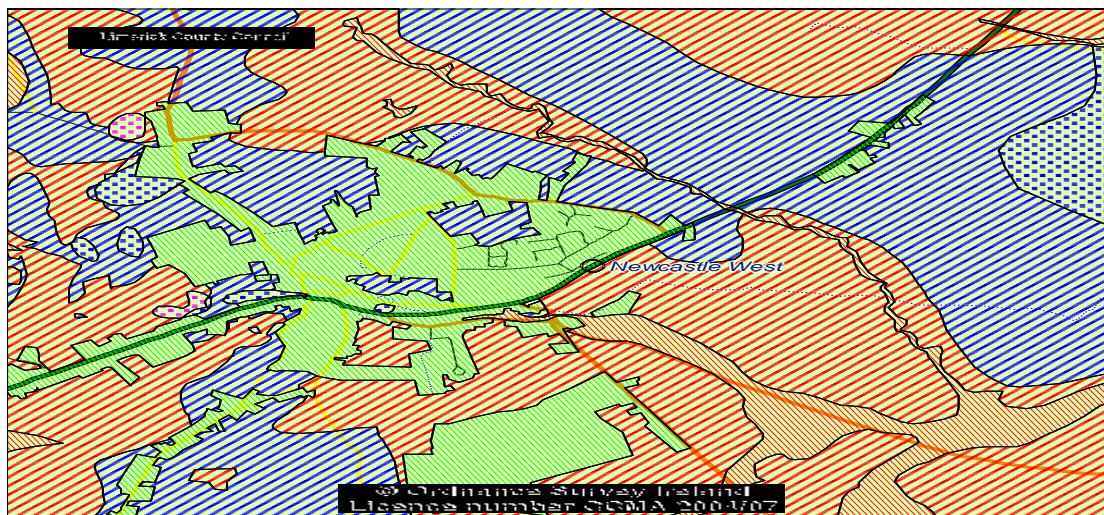


Figure 1: soils of Newcastle West, the blue hatching shows deep well drained mineral soils, while the red shows deep poorly drained mineral soils.

The soils of the plan area and the surrounding area are a mix of mineral soils with varying drainage characteristics and also some limited amounts of alluvial soils located in the western most parts of the plan area.

1.3.4 Cultural Heritage

There are eleven sites listed as recorded monuments including the historic town of Newcastle West protected under the National Monuments Act 1930-2004. The historic town is concentrated on the town centre with the castle providing an important historic presence. A key challenge for the architectural heritage of the town is sustainable and sympathetic reuse, regeneration and development of the built environment whilst retaining and protecting the distinctive character of Protected Structures and the Architectural Conservation Area.

- An **Architectural Conservation Area**, designated in the town centre. The ACA includes the Square, Bridge St, Maiden St and North Quay. This area holds special heritage values due to the associated character of the streetscape, characterised by two and three storey narrow fronted traditional town buildings, with original shopfronts and window openings.

- **67 individual and groups of buildings designated as Protected Structures** in the proposed LAP. Many of these protected buildings surround the Square and extend the full length of both sides of Maiden Street, lower Bridge Street and along the North Quay.
- **A Zone of Archaeological Potential** is shown in the Historic town centre surrounding the Desmond Castle Demesne (containing a number of recorded monuments).
- **11 additional recorded monuments** in the wider settlement area mostly characterised by enclosures (one church and graveyard).
- Clusters of mature trees within the plan area, in addition to being of scenic amenity are important urban habitats. The Castle Demesne as outlined above is an important amenity, not just for the town, but also for the local area.

1.3.5 Landscape

Newcastle West's riverside setting and the survival of the demesne landscape in the western part of the town makes it an attractive landscape for accommodating a range of competing land uses. As part of the urban landscape the Desmond Castle, historic town square and street pattern dating from the 19th century, offers in sight into the growth of the town over the centuries.

Future developments will continue to be required to be sympathetic to the riverscape in terms of design and building height and to take the issues of flooding into account by incorporating the relevant measures of the 2009 Flood Risk Guidelines. Protection of the waterway corridor is desirable and in the case of this plan buffer zones have been put in place along undeveloped sections of river bank.

1.3.6 Material Assets

Material assets are taken to include infrastructure and utilities including rail, road, water supply and wastewater treatment facilities. It also includes economic assets such as buildings and lands and water resources which support tourism and amenities. National routes running through the town include the N21 Limerick and Tralee route. Waste Water treatment works are located at Clonyschrene and water supply is served by the Tobergal well and Castlemahon water treatment plant.

1.4 Existing Environmental Issues

Key environmental pressures in the Town relate to:

- Water including need for restoration of surface water quality in the River Arra and Daar is an issue. The need for ongoing works to maintain higher rates of water conservation is also recognised.

- Biodiversity including maintenance of the Demesne Parklands and enhancement of ecological corridors, for both amenity and nature conservation purposes.
- Cultural Heritage involving the need to maintain the character of the setting of the Desmond Castle and the town centre with associated consideration of infrastructural needs of the visiting public such as access and parking for both local residents and businesses and visitors to the town. . Proposals for new road /traffic infrastructure will need to be carefully balanced with the needs to maintain the cultural heritage value and setting of sites that may be affected by such proposals. A key challenge for the architectural heritage of the town is sustainable and sympathetic reuse, regeneration and development of the built environment whilst retaining and protecting the distinctive character of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Area.
- Human Health: maintenance of drinking water quality and of ensuring continuing access to amenities and services.

1.5 Consideration of Alternative Strategies

Alternative strategy options are explored in the main report along with the do-nothing scenario.

Zoning options were reviewed in the context of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Newcastle West and the necessity to preserve amenity areas in the town.

Alternative Strategy Option 1- Continue with existing zoning in Newcastle West LAP (NCWLAP) 2008.

A review of the current NCWLAP showed that the existing area of residential zoned land had been put in place prior to the current guidelines on flooding and prior to the Core Strategy figures (MRA, 2010) .

Alternative Strategy Option 2- Review zoning and apply phased zoning. It was decided based on the above to reduce the area of residentially zoned lands to 63.4ha in Phase 1 and 40.98 ha in Phase 2 in order to satisfy Core Strategy requirements - see page 33 of the adopted plan. A total of 24.52 hectares of serviced sites have been designated in the final zoning template. The Council will consider new residential development on Phase 2 development only where relevant criteria set out in the plan are adhered to.

Preferred Option- Option 2

The proposed phasing is based on the principles of sustainable development including the likelihood of sites coming forward for development, a sequential approach to the town's expansion where practical and the core strategy criteria.

1.6 Environmental Protection Objectives

The Environmental Protection Objectives provide a standard against which the goals, policies and objectives of the NCW LAP can be measured in order to highlight those with the potential for environmental impact. These have

been used as an aide memoir for the preparation of the final objectives in the plan, which are listed in the appendix together with relevant comments. They are as follows:

1.6.1 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

B1: Protect, conserve and enhance habitats, species and areas of regional and local importance, including aquatic habitats and species and promote the sustainable management of ecological networks.

B2: Ensure that the continued conservation of the Demesne Parklands remains as a priority for the plan area. This is important both as an amenity and natural history resource.

1.6.2 Population and Human Health

P1: Facilitate a good standard of quality of life for the population of Newcastle West through ensuring high quality residential, recreational and working environments.

1.6.3 Water

W.1 Ensure that waste water infrastructure keeps pace with development proposals.

1.6.4 Air Quality and Climate

AQ1: To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources.

1.6.5 Geology and Soils

S1: Place an emphasis on the development of brown field sites rather than green field sites in the town. By reducing the possible development of green field sites this makes a positive contribution to soil conservation.

1.6.6 Cultural Heritage

C1: Protect and conserve features of archaeological heritage and their setting.

C2: Protect conserve and promote the sustainable reuse of architectural heritage.

1.6.7 Landscape

L1: Protect and conserve the quality, character and distinctiveness of the Newcastle West townscape and that of the Demesne.

1.6.8 Material Assets

MA1: Maintain sustainable access to assets such as open spaces, water resources and all other physical and social infrastructure.

1.7 Likely Significant Effects on the Environment of Implementing the NEWCASTLE WEST LAP and Mitigation Measures

The proposed changes to the LAP from the final Chief Executive's Report are included together with comments in relation to their environmental effects.

Assessment of the policies and development objectives in the NCWLAP showed that overall, these policies and development objectives will not pose a significant adverse impact on the environment. Many of the policies and objectives are considered positive, setting out to manage and protect aspects of the environment such as water quality, landscape, heritage resources and management of flood risk.

The findings of the Appropriate Assessment screening process were carried through the Environmental Report and were addressed through the incorporation of amendments to Draft NEWCASTLE WEST LAP policies during the course of plan preparation.

1.8 Monitoring Proposals

Measures were proposed as part of the SEA process to monitor the effects on the environment of implementing the NCWLAP and these are presented in the Environmental Report in terms of the achievement of the environmental protection objectives and the impact on the environmental factors that the SEA legislation requires to be considered. Monitoring for SEA will be carried out as part of the overall monitoring of implementation of the NCWLAP and using existing assessment frameworks such as individual planning assessments and mid term review of the CDP where broad trends can be identified. There is currently no mechanism within existing legislation for a midterm review of LAPs.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Background

The objective of the NCWLAP is to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development for Newcastle West for the years 2014-2020.

The purpose of this environmental report is to identify and evaluate the likely significant impacts on the environment of implementing the NCW LAP 2014.

2.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is defined as 'the formal, systematic and comprehensive process of evaluating the effects of a proposed policy, plan or programme or its alternatives, including the written report on the findings of that evaluation, and using the findings in publicly accountable decision making'.

SEA is a process for evaluating at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental quality, and potential consequences, of policies, plans or programmes and to ensure that any potential consequences are assessed during their preparation and the findings taken into account before they are adopted. Its overall purpose is to contribute to sustainable development. SEA is intended to provide a framework for influencing decision-making at an early stage; to improve the environmental sustainability of the Plan and to raise awareness of the potential environmental consequences of its implementation so that these consequences may be mitigated or avoided altogether. It also gives the public and other interested parties an opportunity to comment and to be kept informed on decisions that may impact on the environment and how they were made.

The SEA process includes the following outputs:

- Scoping Report – stating how the scoping responses of the environmental authorities were taken account of in preparing the Environmental Report;
- An Environmental Report updated as the plan is prepared (a report containing the findings of the SEA) on the likely significant effects of implementing the NCWLAP 2014.
- A SEA Statement (identifying how environmental considerations and consultation have been integrated into the final adopted NCWLAP 2014).

This is the Environmental Report for the NCWLAP 2014 and has been carried out in accordance with Schedule 2B of S.I. 436 of 2004 and SI 201 of 2011, which sets out the information that is required to be included in SEA and Environmental Reports. This report should be read in conjunction with the NCWEST LAP 2014 and AA Screening Report and Flood Risk Assessment.

2.3 The Contents and Main Objectives of the NEWCASTLE WEST LAP 2014

The former NCWLAP was adopted in 2008 and remained in effect until August 2014; the statutory review period was commenced in Autumn 2013. Under Section 11 (1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 this Plan is subject to review and sets the context for the now adopted NCWLAP for the period 2014-2020.

The NCWLAP 2014 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 10 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and provides for the proper planning and sustainable development for Newcastle West for the years 2014-2020. Through its policy content and zoning template it provides detailed guidance for development activity in the town for the next six years.

2.4 Relationship of the NEWCASTLE WEST LAP with other Plans

2.3.1 International Conventions and Agreements

Ireland has ratified a range of international agreements in relation to the environment. Such agreements place legal obligations on the State in relation to the conservation and management of our environment and heritage. Appendix 1.1 includes details on the International Conventions and Agreements ratified by Ireland.

2.3.2 National, Regional and Local Planning Policy Context

Much of the policy background for the proposed LAP has been determined by with the County Development Plan (2010-2016), and the Regional Planning Guidelines (2010 - 2022). These in turn are informed by national government policy in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2008 – 2013. The NSS designates Limerick city as one of a network of gateway centres to function as a node for infrastructural development to ensure balanced regional growth outside the Greater Dublin region. The NSS states that Newcastle West is to play a complementary role to the development of the Limerick – Ennis - Shannon Gateway and the town is located on important national transport corridor between the gateway and the hubs of Tralee and Killarney.

The settlement structure for County Limerick which is set out in the County Development Plan designates Newcastle West as a Tier 2 settlement which is a key service centre. Newcastle West is the largest of the two key settlements in the County Limerick as identified in the County Development Plan.

County Development Plan Policy background: Position within the County Settlement structure

Newcastle West – Location and Population

The town is located on the N21 National Limerick - Killarney Route within the functional area of Limerick County Council, 45 kilometres south west of Limerick City (see Figure 1 below). Newcastle West is located on the lowlands east of the Mullaghareirks in West Limerick. The landscape character area as

designated by the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 is Agricultural Lowlands (Map 7.4- 2010 CDP) while the settlement policy area is the Area of Strong Agricultural Base (Map 3.2-2010 CDP)



Figure 2: Location of Newcastle West Town

Newcastle West is the largest town in County Limerick, with one of the fastest growing populations in the County (from 4,800 persons in 2002, to 5,098 persons in 2006 according to the census). The 2011 Census records a population of 6327 for the town which is an increase of 24% above the 1991 census population figure for the town. The most recent census population figure for the town is within the threshold of mandatory SEA for the proposed LAP.

Newcastle West is defined in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 in its settlement strategy as a Tier 2 town, which given the range of local commercial and community services within the town is termed a key service centre.

3.0 SEA Methodology

3.1 Steps in the SEA Process

The Environmental Report is an important element of the SEA process. The report is prepared in a series of distinct steps taken in the assessment of the likely potential impacts of the preparation and implementation of the new plan. The steps taken in the execution of this SEA process follow the layout of this document, and are as follows:

1. Introduction to and familiarisation with the SEA process.
2. Setting out the Background to the NCWLAP 2014-2020.
3. Consultation with the Environmental Authorities, the public and officials with a range of expertise within the Local Authority: Scoping was carried out with the environmental authorities prescribed in the legislation:- the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine and the Department for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and adjoining local authorities. These were all consulted in order to determine the scope and the level of detail to be included in the environmental report.
4. Establishment of Environmental Baseline and Trends for the town: Baseline data were collected based on the information included in the scoping report as well as having regard to the requirements of the SEA Directive. The various factors used to describe the current state of the environment include biodiversity, population and human health, water, air quality, landscape, soils and geology, archaeology and built heritage and the inter-relationships between these factors. Much of the data were extracted from existing data sources. There is no requirement for generating new data under the SEA process.
5. Identifying significant Existing Environmental Issues in the town: This was facilitated by the various forms of consultation that took place as part of the SEA process along with the plan preparation process and ensuing public consultation process. Drafting of Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) from regional, national and international environmental policy, consideration of the significant environmental issues facing Newcastle West specifically and from best practice. The preparation of the EPOs was an important step as they serve as an aide memoir for the planner preparing the LAP and are reflected in the final objectives which appear in the plan and are also included in the appendix with further comments.
6. The proposed changes to the plan in the final Chief Executives Report and council meeting are also shown in the appendices.
7. Reasonable and realistic alternative strategies were considered regarding options for future land use zoning in the town in terms of amount of zoning and location. Zoning patterns were altered to take into account the Core Strategy and that of the flood risk guidelines and s.28 guidance that has appeared since the preparation of the previous plan.

8. Monitoring measures were identified in order to quantitatively assess the consequences of the identified impacts.
9. Consultation. The Environmental Report and the Draft NCWLAP 2013 was made available for public consultation as per the statutory process provided for under the Planning and Development Acts 2000 (as amended). Along with prescribed bodies the documents were made available to neighbouring local authorities.

3.2 Difficulties Encountered in Compiling the Required Information

The SEA Guidelines produced by the DoEHLG in November 2004 state that the SEA process “does not require major new research”. As such, the Environmental Report was prepared and informed by many already available data sources including planning reports, interviews with key personnel such as local engineers and members of the public. The input of the public and the effort they made to engage with the Planning authority has to be acknowledged in the preparation of this plan. . The NCW 2008 was not subject to SEA thus no previous Environmental Report or SEA monitoring report was available.

Difficulties encountered in compiling data include the availability of spatial data for human health. Table 3.1 details data sources used relating to the Environmental Protection Objectives.

Table 3.1 Environmental Protection Objectives and Data Sources

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Data Sources
B1: Protect, conserve and enhance habitats, species and areas of national and local importance, including aquatic habitats and species and promote the sustainable management of ecological networks.	No designated sites in the town, but much information made available through public input and privately held reports.
B2: Preservation of the Demesne Parklands.	Public input also Neighbourhood Scheme Reports.
Population and Human Health	
P1: Facilitate a good standard of health for the town's population through ensuring high quality residential, recreational and working environments.	CSO Council Monitoring and EPA discharge licence.
Water Resources	
W1: Achieve and maintain required water quality standards and reduce discharges of pollutants or contamination to waters.	Good data available- EPA water quality Data, Fisheries Board interviews.
Soils and Geology	
S1: Protect the quality of soils in the interests of avoiding environmental degradation in water quality and biodiversity.	Data available- GSI, EPA. Planning Reports and Council Plan Map also used.
Air and Climatic Factors	
AC1: To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources.	Limerick Clare Energy Agency Audit.
Cultural Heritage	
C1: Protect and conserve features of archaeological heritage and their settings.	Good Data available through Record of Monuments and Places, also Council Archaeologist.
C2: Protect and conserve and promote the sustainable re-use of architectural heritage	Good Data available through Record of Protected Structures and the local Conservation Officer.
Landscape	
L1: Protect and conserve the quality, character and distinctiveness of the townscape and minimise negative visual impacts.	Planning reports.
Material Assets	
MA1: Maintain the quality of, and access to, assets such as open spaces, water resources and all other physical and social infrastructure	Planning and local engineer reports, particularly in relation to amenity provision. Great Southern Trail documentation also used.

4.0 Current State of the Environment

4.1 Introduction

Ireland's Environment 2012- An Assessment, the Environmental Protection Agency's fifth state of the environment report provides an overall assessment of Ireland's environment. The overall conclusion of the report is that the quality of Ireland's environment is generally high but there are some key environmental challenges facing Ireland and these include;

1. Limiting and adapting to Climate Change
2. Reversing Environmental Degradation
 - Preventing eutrophication and other water pollution
 - Protecting natural habitats and species populations
 - Remediation of contaminated land
3. Complying with Environmental Legislation and Agreements
4. Mainstreaming Environmental Considerations

The Assessment states that Ireland faces formidable challenges in meeting international obligations on water quality, air quality, GHG emissions and waste management.

Remediation of unsatisfactory quality in groundwater, rivers, lakes and estuaries is one of the main environmental challenges. The Water Framework Directive marked a new approach for the protection and improvement of water resources. Commenced in 2009, a six year cycle of river basin management plans is being implemented for the purpose of protecting and enhancing all waters- groundwater, rivers, lakes, transitional waters (estuaries) and coastal waters including protection for related terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands.

Biodiversity loss is a serious threat to the quality of Ireland's environment as habitat degradation and species loss are often irreversible. Many of Ireland's most important habitats afforded protection under the EU Habitats Directive were assessed in 2008 as having bad conservation status. There are no Natura 2000 sites in the plan area though activities in the plan area such as potential overloading of sewage infrastructure could have downstream effects on these sites. The provision and maintenance of sufficient infrastructure in the areas of wastewater treatment, water supply, flood prevention and control, renewable energy, sustainable transport and waste management is critical to ensure maintenance of a good quality environment. The following baseline details the current status of the environment in Newcastle West in relation to these issues.

4.2 Baseline and Relevant Environmental Problems

4.2.1 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

The need to conserve biodiversity is underlined in the National Biodiversity Plan and Convention on Biological Diversity which Ireland signed and ratified in 1996. Conservation of biodiversity in Ireland is in part, directed by the EU

Birds Directive, EU Habitats Directive (transposed into Irish law by the Natural Habitat Regulations amended by SI 233/1998, SI 378/2005, SI 477 Birds and Habitats Regulations 2011 and the 1976 and 2000 (Amendment) Wildlife Acts.

Sites of local biodiversity interest

The Arra River flows through the centre of the town and is known to host a range of fish species. The Doally river and the Demesne are hugely important in terms of local biodiversity and amenity.

The Demesne area of the town is zoned as Open Space and Recreation which will continue to protect this amenity. This is a long established area of mature woodland and as such is of habitats importance in that mature woodland offers variety in terms of habits structure that is lacking in younger stands of trees. Older trees, with their associated cavities provide existing roosting crevices for bats and birds and invertebrates that younger trees lack. This area is also of historical importance in that the survival of the trees marks the survival of the original castle demesne marked on the first six inch map series.



Figure 3: aerial view of the demesne.

Ecological corridors include the river bank, old railway line, treelines and hedgerows which may be used as foraging areas by bats. Many of the older buildings in the town including houses, churches and warehouses may be used as bat roosts. All bat species and their roosts are protected under National and European law. The importance of these, not just for ecology, but also as an amenity for the townspeople and visitors to the town was emphasised repeatedly throughout the public consultation process.

Bird species noted as birds of conservation concern in Ireland (BoCCI) that occur in Newcastle West include, Kingfisher, Mute Swan, Yellow Wagtail, Starling, Swallow and Swift¹. The stock of medieval buildings in the town and the long established built fabric provides suitable habitats for the latter two species.

Crayfish are also known from the River Arra while otter spraints were encountered on river banks within the plan area.

¹ Observed during field work for the plan.



Figure 4. First edition 6 inch map showing the location of the demesne to the west of the town. Its tree growth was well established in the 1840s as is indicated in this map.

Trees ,Woodlands and Hedgerows

Trees provide great amenity value for the townscape and provide important ecological corridors connecting wildlife habitats. As mentioned above the Castle Demesne is very important in this regard.

4.2.2 Population and Human Health

The population of the town is 6237 which is an increase of 24.1% on the 2006 figure. The largest percentage of the population is within the 20-39 age group (LAP S.2.5.2) at 35%. These are the people with young families which place increased demands on housing, educational and social facilities and amenities for children in particular. Particular attention was paid during the plan preparation process to the provision of an adequate amount of lands zoned for such uses.

During the plan preparation process a Part 8 application was granted for a multi-use games area in the Demesne. This is allied to the provision of outdoor exercise equipment which makes a contribution for active amenity facilities in the town.

Existing Environmental Pressures/problems; Population and Human Health

Due to the flood alleviation measures carried out along the River Arra it is considered that flood risk represents less of a risk to the town than was the

case in 2009 when the centre of the town, in particular was badly flooded. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out as part of the review of the NCWLAP. There has been substantial de-zoning of lands in the current plan, where lands zoned for intensive and vulnerable uses such as housing has been re-zoned for agriculture, which in many cases is a reflection of existing land uses. Air quality is not an issue within the town but localised impacts from traffic can be a factor-see above.

4.2.3 Water

Surface Waters

The River Arra is shown on the Deel/Shannon Estuary Management Unit Action Plan as being of poor quality in Newcastle West where quality had declined from Q4 in 2002 to Q3 in 2008. The insertion of buffer zones in the plan, along undeveloped section of the plan area rivers -see zoning maps- is intended to reduce the chances of pollution due to overland flow and to provide a buffer against the encroachment of development.

Groundwater

Groundwater protection schemes have been prepared by the GSI in conjunction with local authorities aiming to preserve the quality of groundwater, particularly for drinking water purposes. A Groundwater Protection Schemes was prepared for Limerick in 1998 (amended 2001), which identifies the main sources for groundwater within the county and the vulnerability of such resources to pollution. The report outlines the geology, hydrogeology and groundwater quality within the County. The local authority have used this information to prepare interpretive maps, which facilitates planning and resource development in the form of a Groundwater Protection Scheme and associated Groundwater Protection Response Matrices. The main purpose of the scheme is to enable initial screening of potentially polluting activities.

Drinking Water

The European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations (No. 2), 2007 came into force in March 2007. In accordance with these regulations, the local authority must notify the EPA where there has been a failure to meet a quality standard.

The EPA publish an annual Remedial Action List (RAL) which details water supplies requiring improvement in water quality standards to ensure compliance with the Drinking Water Regulations. Inclusion of a public water supply on this list does not mean that the water produced by the supply is unsafe to drink but that some environmental criteria are unsatisfactory. The list is a working list with the possibility of supplies being added or removed as work is completed and further information becomes available.

Newcastle West water supply is served by Tobergal well and Castlemahon water treatment plant. There is sufficient resource available to supply the existing needs and predicted needs of the area.

Waste Water

The Newcastle West Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) is located outside the LAP boundary on the R520 at Cloonyschrene. It was commissioned in 1984 with design capacity of 9000PE. The sewerage network is predominately a combined sewer with effluent flowing by gravity into the WWTP and a single outfall into River Deel.

Newcastle West WWTP and collection network is on the Water Services Investment Programme and consultants have recently been appointed to prepare a preliminary report to recommend improvements and extensions to the existing Newcastle West Sewerage Scheme.

Flooding

The main watercourse in Newcastle West is the River Arra, this flooded the centre of the town in August 2009. Some flood relief measures and defences have been constructed since and substantial de-zoning from vulnerable land uses to more suitable land uses such as open space and agriculture has taken place in the current plan.



Figure 5: Demountable flood defences close to the Bridge of Tears, south east of the town centre.

The OPW are currently involved in preparing catchment-based flood risk management plans (Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMs) with the relevant local authorities, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other key agencies, providing an integrated and pro-active approach to flood risk and the mechanism through which predictive flood maps and Catchment Flood Risk Management Plans (CFRMPs) are

being developed. These CFRAM studies will establish a prioritised set of flood risk management measures for their relevant areas, including the use of physical and management responses.

These maps will be finally available in the autumn of this year and a commitment has been made by the Planning Authority to vary the plan should it be necessary following the publication of the completed CFRAM maps.

Existing Environmental Pressures and Water

Under the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 a concentration of 2.6mg/l of BOD as a 95%ile and 0.14mg/l ammonia as a 95%ile must be met to enable 'good ecological status' to be achieved. The River Arra is a tributary of the Deel and is an important trout river in its own right.

Since the water quality requirements of the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 are more onerous than the water quality requirements set out in the salmonid regulations compliance with the former should ensure water quality requirements for the protection of salmon are met. Furthermore because the water quality requirements of Atlantic salmon are more onerous than the water quality requirements of lamprey and brown trout, compliance would also ensure the water quality requirements of all fish species supported by the River Arra are met.

Along with other areas in the country water conservation is an ongoing issue to be addressed with regard to loss of water supply through leakage. Work is beginning on some schemes in west Limerick to replace older leaking pipe networks with modern infrastructure. Currently work will commence in Glin and Templeglantine and it is expected that works will be carried out in Newcastle West within the life time of the plan.

Mention has to be made of the Ballygowan bottled water plant in the town and the aquifers from which it draws its supplies. This area is protected by open space zoning and given the importance of the purity of the source aquifers it is imperative that this area continues to be protected by appropriate zoning. This area is to the west of the plan area and the open space zoning for the demesne parklands plays a part in ensuring adequate protection.

4.2.4 Air Quality and Climate

Air quality in Ireland is generally of a high standard across the country. Newcastle West lies in Zone D i.e. rural areas outside large conurbations and is in compliance with Air Quality standards.

Global climate change is now recognized as the primary environmental challenge of this century. The European Union is taking the lead in this regard with the adoption of climate change strategies, including the Kyoto Protocol, aimed at reducing the level of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Under the Kyoto Protocol, the EU has agreed to reduce its GHG emissions by an overall

8%. Ireland's target in the EU "burden sharing" agreement is to limit increases to 13% above 1990 levels by 2008-2012. For the period beyond 2012, the EU Council of Ministers has committed to achieving at least a 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 compared to 1990 levels.

To ensure Ireland reaches its target under the Kyoto Protocol the Government published a reviewed National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012. Policy statements such as the White Paper, Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland sets out the Government's Energy Policy Framework 2007-2020 to deliver a sustainable energy future for Ireland. Local Authorities are working in collaboration with their local energy agencies to implement Climate Change Strategies and an energy audit for the county was produced by the Limerick Clare energy Agency in 2009. This outlines the energy requirements of the county on sectoral basis and outlines actions for the sourcing of renewable energy.

Existing environmental pressures air and climate

Currently there are no significant concerns with regard to air quality in the town as was indicated earlier in this report. Climate change impacts may present challenges to future land use and location of development in the Town. Predicted impacts from projected temperature rises include more concentrated periods of higher rainfall and more exposure to flood risk. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared as part of the NCW LAP review and site specific FRAs will be required for all developments that occur within Flood Zones A and B. As indicated above a commitment has been made to vary the completed plan should the completed CFRAMS process indicate the need for revised zoning patterns. .

4.2.5 Geology and Soils

The underlying geology of a catchment can significantly affect the speed that rivers respond to rain in an area, for example through the permeability and runoff that is allowed over and through the bed materials. The geology of the Arra catchment consists primarily of a mixture of limestone and mudstone. These are fairly impermeable materials which mean water more readily runs over the surface, and soil-rock interface, than infiltrates into the rocks. Combined with the steep slopes, this increases the speed with which rain is converted into river flow.

Soils have an influence on catchment response to rainfall, primarily through their permeability.

The soils within the Arra catchment are generally fairly impermeable (Figure 1). Gley soils are found across much of the catchment, occurring everywhere except the mountain ranges. Gley soils form where the natural groundwater table is constantly high enough to influence the soil profile.

Existing Environmental Pressures and Soils and Geology

To the north west and just outside the plan area is an historic land fill, in the townland of Churchtown. This old land fill has been identified as potential source of pollutants by Limerick City and County Council and works have been carried out to divert any leachate from the waste deposits and pipe this

to the WWTP. These works will minimise chances of pollution from this source.

4.2.6 Cultural Heritage

Archaeological Heritage

The centre of Newcastle West is a Recorded Monument protected under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2004. The historic town includes medieval town structures including the Desmond Castle which has had substantial works done to it by the OPW with many original features intact, and is a national monument open to the public under the management of the OPW. Details of archaeological sites are available on www.archaeology.ie.



Figure 6: Extract from Record of Monuments and Places indicating the extent of the medieval town core and outlying sites.

Architectural Heritage

Sixty seven structures throughout the town have been identified for their contribution to the architectural heritage in the town and have been designated as 'protected structures' under section 51 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2013. These structures are included within the Record of Protected Structures (R.P.S.) set out in Appendix 2 of this Plan. This list of structures is an abstract from the Record of Protected Structures, which is a statutory document maintained by Limerick County Council as part of the County Development Plan.

Existing environmental pressures/ Cultural Heritage

The maintenance and conservation of the town's Cultural Heritage is key in order to maintain an irreplaceable resource, sense of identity for the town and as a source of visitor interest and tourism revenue. The sense of place within the historic core around Desmond Castle is an asset and this area is complemented by the largely intact 19th century streetscape and the historic town square. The layout of the town does not lend itself to traffic movements. Proposals for new road /traffic infrastructure will need to be carefully balanced with the needs to maintain the cultural heritage value and setting of sites that may be affected by such proposals. A key challenge for the architectural heritage of the town is sustainable and sympathetic reuse, regeneration and development of the built environment whilst retaining and protecting the distinctive character of Protected Structures and the Architectural Conservation Area. Policies EH1 and EH2 outline the councils approach towards these issues (LAP S.8.2)

4.2.7 Landscape

The landscape of the Plan area include urban, peri-urban and the demesne parkland landscape. In wider term in the county development plan 2010 it is located within the agricultural lowlands. The Great Southern Trail a 70km linear walking trail runs to the north of the town along the old rail way track and is rapidly developing into an important local and tourism amenity. It runs as far as the Kerry border and has the potential for Newcastle West to benefit from the current interest in biking and walking tourism.

Existing environmental pressures/ Landscape

The town's parkland and the Desmond Castle makes it an attractive landscape for accommodating a range of competing land uses. Future developments will continue to be required to be sympathetic to the townscape in terms of design and building height. Recognition and protection of the waterway corridors in the plan area is desirable by at least maintaining if not increasing areas zoned as open space/amenity along the corridor and ensuring integration of green infrastructure principles in development proposals along the waterway corridor.

4.2.8 Material Assets

Material assets is taken to include infrastructure and utilities including rail, road, water supply electric grid, gas network and wastewater treatment facilities.

National routes running through the town include the N21 Limerick to Tralee route. Traffic congestion is a problem within the town but in the current economic climate it is unlikely that any significant measures to alleviate this will take place within the time frame of the plan. A proposed distributor road has been indicated as running to the south of the town.

Existing environmental pressures/ Material Assets

Protection of the carrying capacity and the strategic transport function of the N21 is an objective of the NCWLAP. This is dealt with in Objective T4 on page 48 of the plan.

4.3 Interrelationships between the above environmental factors

The interrelationships between the range of environmental topics is an important consideration in the environmental assessment. Table 4.1 below indicates the interrelationships identified between the environmental topics in this assessment. Green Infrastructure is now recognised as an important concept in land use planning and environmental protection. It relates to the network of open spaces, parks, gardens, green corridors, woodlands, waterways and urban tree lines. Green space and biodiversity provide environmental, social, economic and physical benefits and give added value for quality of life and flood attenuation where integrated in the development process.

Table 4.1 Inter-Relationships between Environmental Topics

Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna	√								
Population/ Human Health	√	√							
Soil/Geology	√	√	√						
Water	√	√	√	√					
Air	√	√	√	X	√				
Climate	√	√	√	√	√	√			
Material Assets	√	√	√	√	X	√	√		
Cultural Heritage	X	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	
Landscape	√	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	√
	Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna	Population/ Human Health	Soil	Water	Air	Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape

4.4 Evolution of the Environment in the absence of the Plan (Do Nothing Scenario)

Under Section 10 (2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) this Plan is subject to review and thus the absence of a review of the current plan would not be in compliance with statutory obligations under the Planning Acts.

4.5 Conclusion – Significant Environmental Issues

In summary, key environmental pressures in the town relate to:

Water ensuring that the provision of waste water treatment keep pace with development.

Biodiversity including maintenance of the Demesne Parklands and the River Arra, conservation of sites of local biodiversity interest, enhancement of ecological corridors and retention of urban open space where desirable.

Cultural Heritage involving the need to maintain and promote the historic core of the town centre without affecting the setting of key sites of archaeological and architectural interest e.g. Desmond Castle. A key challenge for the architectural heritage of the town is sustainable and sympathetic reuse, regeneration and development of the built environment whilst retaining and protecting the distinctive character of Protected Structures and the Architectural Conservation Area. This is dealt with in Chapter 10 of the plan Urban Design.

Human Health- continued protection of the Castle Demesne and promotion of green routes and access to recreation and amenity areas.

4.6 Consideration of Alternative Strategies

It is required in the legislation that the Environmental Report must consider “reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme” and the significant environmental effects of the alternatives selected.

Alternative strategies that were considered are outlined below.

Alternative Strategy Option 1- Continue with existing zoning in Current NCW LAP

A review of the current Town Plan showed that the existing area of residential zoned land had to be revised to take into account the provisions of the Core Strategy-see above. This meant that the continuation of the plan was a non starter.

Alternative Strategy Option 2- Review zoning and apply phased zoning

It is proposed to reduce the area of residentially zoned lands in order to satisfy Core Strategy requirements and the requirements of flood risk guidance and other section 28 guidance which appeared since the last plan (e.g. Local Area Plan Guidance in 2013). The Council will consider new

residential development on Phase 2 development only where relevant criteria set out in the plan a Phase 2 Justification Test are satisfied.

Preferred Option- Option 2

The proposed phasing is based on the principles of sustainable development including the likelihood of sites coming forward for development, a sequential approach to the town's expansion where practical and the core strategy criteria. The inclusion of opportunity sites in Chapter 10 is one strategy of attempting to promote development in those areas of the town which are at risk of dereliction.

5.0 Environmental Protection Objectives Relevant to the NEWCASTLE WEST LAP 2014

5.1 Introduction

The use of environmental protection objectives fulfils obligations set out in Section F, Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004. The environmental protection objectives are distinct from the NCWLAP objectives and provide a standard against which the policies and objectives of the NCW LAP can be measured in order to highlight those with the potential for environmental impact. They are used as a tool to cross check the policies of the Plan in order to maximise the environmental sustainability of the Plan. The cross checking process will help identify policies that will be likely to result in significant adverse impacts, so that alternatives may be considered or mitigation measures may be put in place.

The environmental protection objectives for the new LAP were generated from European, National and Regional Policy and Guidance. Sample objectives are given in Table 4B of the SEA Guidelines produced by the DoEHLG in 2004 and these were amended to reflect the specific issues that were considered relevant to the Draft Plan and the range of issues that are significant within the town. The scoping process informed the generation of appropriate objectives. The objectives are set out below, under a range of headings, which were taken from the SEA Regulations and the DoEHLG guidelines.

5.2 Environmental Protection Objectives

5.2.1 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

B1: Protect, conserve and enhance habitats, species and areas of national and local importance, including aquatic habitats and species and promote the sustainable management of ecological networks.

B2: protect the Demense Parklands.

5.2.2 Population and Human Health

P1: Facilitate a good standard of quality of life for Newcastle West's population through ensuring high quality residential, recreational and working environments.

5.2.3 Water

W1: Achieve and maintain required water quality standards as laid down in the River Basin Management Plan and reduce discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters.

5.2.4 Air Quality and Climate

AC1: To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources.

5.2.5 Geology and Soils

S1: Protect the quality of soils in the interests of avoiding environmental degradation in water quality and biodiversity.

5.2.6 Cultural Heritage

C1: Protect and conserve features of archaeological heritage and their setting.

C2: Protect and conserve and promote the sustainable reuse of architectural heritage.

5.2.7 Landscape

L1: Protect and conserve the quality, character and distinctiveness of the townscape and minimise negative visual impacts.

5.2.8 Material Assets

MA1: Maintain sustainable access to assets such as open spaces, water resources and all other physical and social infrastructure.

5.3 Use of Environmental Protection Objectives

The above Environmental Protection Objectives have been used to carry out the SEA in accordance with the legislation. They provide a standard against which the policies of the NCW LAP were measured for their environmental sustainability. A crosschecking process was used whereby the Draft NCW LAP policies and development objectives were proofed against the Environmental Protection Objectives so that any policies/development objectives with the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts were highlighted in addition to significant positive impacts. Alternative strategic options were considered and mitigation measures proposed to counteract any adverse environmental effects identified, thereby maximising the environmental sustainability of the NCW LAP 2014.

6.0 SEA of NEWCASTLE WEST LAP 2014-2020

6.1 Methodology for Assessment and Determination of Significance of Effects

Each strategic policy and objective proposed in the various drafts of the LAP was assessed against the agreed SEA objectives.

The Draft LAP produced was then formally assessed. The final objectives are shown in the appendix together with comments from an environmental perspective, in particular comments relating them to the Environmental Protection Objectives see tables in Appendix 1. The assessment of each was assigned a symbol.

Evaluation of significance requires consideration of four questions, which will establish the importance, or “significance”, of the predicted impact:

1. Will the policies and objectives in the NCWLAP lead to a risk of environmental standards being breached?
2. Could it lead to failure to achieve environmental policies or targets?
3. Will it affect environmental resources, which are protected by laws or policies, e.g. Natura 2000 habitats, species, landscapes, water resources, agricultural resources and cultural heritage sites, etc.?
4. Could it lead to impacts on environmental resources, which, although not legally protected, are important or valuable?
5. Are policies and objectives consistent with planning legislation?

As a follow on from the preparation and evaluation of the previous sections of the report, i.e. baseline data and trends, existing significant issues, environmental vulnerabilities, the above questions were considered in determining significance of environmental effects identified. Suggested alternatives, mitigation, and offsetting, to any potential adverse significant effects were identified and amendments recommended to the NCW LAP 2014 where required.

6.2 Summary of Likely Significant Effects of Implementing the NCW LAP 2014 on the Environment and Measures Proposed to Prevent, Reduce or Offset

6.2.1 Introduction

The full range of final objectives is included in Appendix One of this report. A summary of the outcome of this assessment is provided in this section.

In accordance with the legislation, the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the NCW LAP 2014 and proposed amendments are summarised under headings that include all of the issues required to be covered.

The existing NCW LAP 2008 was not subject to SEA. Preparation of the NCW LAP 2014 is required to be done within revised thresholds for SEA, i.e. a population threshold of 5000, the requirement for Flood Risk Assessment and Appropriate Assessment, Water Quality Regulations, the National Climate Change Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010, in particular Core Strategy population figures. Thus, it is to be expected in accordance with best practice that the policies and objectives of the Plan would comply with environmental standards and incorporate environmental considerations at the earliest stage. This is in contrast to plans that were subject to SEA the first time round where significant amendments were identified as being required to ensure environmental compliance in land use zonings policies and objectives at the Draft Plan Stage.

SEA of the review of the current NCW LAP involved best practice in a process where key environmental objectives were identified at SEA Scoping and public consultation meetings and policies, objectives and zonings drafted or amended to address these issues. Examples include objectives for protection of the demesne parklands and the incorporation of the flood risk assessment.

Assessment of the policies and development objectives in the NCWLAP 2014 showed that most of the policies and objectives are considered positive or at least insignificant/neutral, setting out to manage and protect aspects of the environment such as water quality, heritage resources and management of flood risk, these policies and objectives will not pose a significant adverse impact on the environment.

The finding of mainly positive or at least insignificant/neutral impacts from the Draft policies and objectives demonstrates integration of environmental considerations into the Plan at an early stage which fulfils the requirements of the SEA Directive.

6.2.2 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

In fulfilment of the requirements of Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive an Appropriate Assessment Screening was carried out to assess the impacts of the NCW LAP on Natura 2000 habitats. While no Natura 2000 habitats existed within the plan area it was important to carry out the process in order to establish if any of the plan contents might have ex-situ effects on the nearby Natura 200 sites such as the Lower River Shannon SAC site or the West Limerick Hills Special Protection Areas. The assessment indicates that there would not be any significant effects.

Another useful role of the AA screening was to indicate non-statutory habitats in the plan area and as a result of this assessment a riparian buffer zone was put in place along undeveloped stretches of rivers in the plan area. In addition, the need to protect the demesne parklands was identified as it is the largest area of woodland within the plan area. Through its origin as demesne landscape it is of considerable ecological value as it has a large

stock of mature broad-leaved trees, comprised both of native and non native ornamental species.

Policy EH5 of the NCW LAP provides for compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive by ensuring that that appropriate waste water treatment capacity is provided to keep pace with development.

The opportunity sites for Newcastle West are a direct response to the need for addressing issues of urban dereliction in the town. These sites are all urban sites and will not cause loss of habitat from the green space areas in the town.

Positive impacts on biodiversity are identified through the Plan objective to protect and improve the natural amenity potential and accessibility of the River Arra and its tributaries to protect riparian habitats along the watercourses by maintaining an appropriate ecological buffer zone from the top of the watercourse riverbank and to protect and improve access to the River Arra without compromising the quality and setting of the river.

Policy EH6 ensures compliance with the water framework directive and in particular with the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan 2009-2015.

6.2.3 Population and Human Health

Generally, impacts on population and human health from the NEWCASTLE WEST LAP are considered positive as the Plan seeks to provide for choice in housing, access to amenity and recreation and protection of the environment and heritage. Objectives C1 to C4 seek to offer a range of facilities within the town itself in order to ensure accessibility for the widest sections of the population. The Core Strategy has been taken into account in recognition of the existing and future proposed capacities in infrastructure and is designed to promote population growth in the interests of avoidance of environmental degradation and damage to human health.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared as part of the Development Plan Review Process. Availability of detailed Flood Risk Zone mapping will significantly reduce the risk of adverse impacts from flooding in the town.

6.2.4 Water

Water Quality is a key environmental issue for the Plan area. Review of river quality data for this SEA indicate the River Arra as “being at risk of not achieving good status” under the WFD (adjacent to the Plan area) while the need to protect the source aquifers for the Ballygowan plant have been high lighted previously. While the zoning of the demesne protect the aquifers, objective IN2 ensures that adequate sewerage facilities are provide for future development.

6.2.5 Air Quality & Climate

Air quality in Newcastle West is considered to be of a very high standard and there are no issues arising from the Plan that would adversely impact on air quality. While there are negative localised impacts from traffic in the centre of the town, during busy periods such as summer traffic heading west wards, this is not regarded as significant in overall terms.

6.2.6 Geology and Soil

Assessment of policies and objectives in the Plan show neutral impacts on geology and soils. The preparation of Chapter 10 which shows opportunity sites and encourages development in brown field sites and re-use of existing buildings plays role in minimising any green field development which plays a direct role in soil conservation. The substantial re-zoning from development uses to agriculture is also practical means of soil conservation as it reflect existing land uses which is less a intensive than proposed development zoning which would call for lands to be built on.

6.2.7 Cultural Heritage

The historic town core of Newcastle West is a recorded monument and a key objective of the plan is to protect its architectural and historic heritage Objectives EH1 and Objectives EH3 apply in this regard. See S6.2.8 below.

6.2.8 Landscape

Objective EH4 (Section 8.4) seeks to promote and protect trees within the town which is particular interest as the town has considerable stock of mature trees. A number of architectural conservation areas are also protected in the plan (s8.2.3), all which serve to protect the townscape value of the town plan area. There may be uncertain impacts arising from projects such as the potential new developments but this will be more accurately assessed at the project level when design and exact location are decided.

6.2.9 Material Assets

Objectives relating to strategic infrastructure projects such as distributor road and river crossings will be more appropriately assessed at the project level by EIA and Appropriate Assessment. Potential impacts from other strategic plans such as the future County development Plan will involve strategic environmental/appropriate assessment under its own review process and not through the NCW LAP assessment.

6.3 In-combination Effects

Due to its location on the N21 and position within the settlement hierarchy it is necessary to consider the NCW LAP as a whole and its effects at larger scale.

Land use zonings do not encroach on any of the environmental vulnerabilities identified in Section 4.12 of this SEA.

The cumulative impact on the rivers in the plan area should not be significant provided that the buffer zones which have been indicated are complied with and that waste water infrastructure keeps pace with development.

The delivery of the southern distributor is likely to be long term and is dependent on the required developer lead funding being allocated. The distributor road realignment will remove potential for increased noise from traffic and localised air quality issues that may have affected residential areas in the northern section of the plan area and thus the new proposed route will reduce impacts on local population and human health. In terms of biodiversity, water, landscape and cultural heritage impacts from the distributor road will be required to be subject to EIA and AA screening if required.

6.4 Conclusion

SEA assessment of the NCW LAP policies and proposed amendments has determined that no significant adverse impacts are predicted from the Plan while negative impacts will be minimised through proposed objectives for biodiversity, population, water, and cultural heritage.

For certain aspects of the plan e.g. the southern distributor road impacts will be determined at a lower level of environmental assessment largely through EIA and AA at the project level. These assessments will involve application of Appropriate Assessment, landscape appraisal, archaeological and architectural heritage appraisal and flood risk assessment to accurately determine the impacts under the range of environmental headings detailed above.

Compilation of the background information, discussions with Council staff such as area engineers and public consultation process have all informed the Environmental Report to address key environmental issues in Newcastle West.

Table 6.1

Key Environmental Issue		Relevant NEWCASTLE WEST LAP content and objectives.
Water Quality	Protection of Water Quality - Water Framework Directive, incorporation of relevant objectives and measures -Surface and ground water protection, --Drinking water, -Wastewater treatment, -Water conservation	Objectives EH6, IN1, IN2 IN3 and IN4.
	Integration of flood risk assessment into the Plan to ensure appropriateness of land use and inclusion of SUDS technology Increased risk of flooding due to Climate Change	IN4
	Increased risk of flooding due to Climate Change	S7.5 and IN4
Biodiversity	Protection of Biodiversity- Natura 2000 sites, pNHAS, non-designated habitats, riparian buffer zones, green infrastructure	Section 8.4 Objectives EH4 and EH5
	Conservation of the Demesne Parklands	S9.2.1 Objective C5
	Consideration of potential impacts of climate change	S8.5 and Objective EH8.
Air and Climate	Development of traffic management measures	As above.
	Sustainable modes of transport	S6.2 and T1 and T2
	Protection of air quality	See Above
	Consideration of potential impacts of climate change	See above
	Promotion of use of energy conservation	S7.7
Cultural Heritage	Architectural Heritage Protection	S8.2 and Objectives EH1 and EH2
	Protection of archaeological heritage of the town	S8.3 and EH3

7.0 SEA Statement for Newcastle West Local Area Plan

7.1 Introduction

In accordance with article 9 of the SEA directive and 14(I) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) regulations the following is a statement summarising how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Local Area Plan and how the Environmental Report and the outcome of consultations were taken into account and indicates the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted in light of other reasonable alternatives considered.

7.2 *Summary of how environmental considerations were factored into the plan*

During the preparation of the Proposed Local Area Plan no consideration was given to expansion of zoning outside the current plan boundaries. One area was zoned-see Appendix 1 but while this was contrary to planning policies its environmental effects were not regarded as significant. No further lands were zoned outside the plan boundaries-this option was rejected as analysis indicated that sufficient land was zoned for different purposes within the Plan area to cater for the population for the next plan period. It was considered that further expanding zoned land would result in under used or partially developed land which would take from efforts to assist with the development of the core of the town in line with the Local Area Plan Guidance Documents 2012. The issue of ex-situ effects on Natura 2000 sites and the issue of the need for appropriate assessment screening had been flagged by the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government during the statutory consultation period. Appropriate Assessment was not deemed necessary as buffer zones were incorporated into the plan along the undeveloped sections of the river banks in the plan area, while the distance from such sites indicated that no significant effects would be caused to them by activities in the plan area. An objective within the plan was introduced to ensure that infrastructure kept pace with development.

The need to ensure that the urban form of Newcastle West was further consolidated is reflected in the zoning patterns of the new plan. The zoning as presented in the plan seeks to consolidate the settlement pattern of Newcastle West ensuring that future development in terms of location and scale contribute to this end. In addition the revision of the sections of the plan relating to Protected Structures and the Architectural Conservation Areas also seeks to ensure that these aspects of the heritage of the town are adequately conserved.

7.3 *Summary of how the Environmental Report and submissions and observations made to the Planning Authority under Section 20(3) of the Act were taken into account*

The submissions under section 20(3) of the Act were taken into account in the final plan by ensuring that the Castle Demesne was conserved (Objective C5-

Chapter 9). This was identified by the population of the town as being the most important environmental issue within the plan boundaries as this area of parkland with its well developed amenities and mature tree cover is a highly regarded amenity, not just for the town but for West Limerick as a whole.

The following provides a summary of how submissions / consultations were taken into account following the first and second public display periods.

- Submissions were received requesting the rezoning of lands within and outside the plan area. In order to consolidate the settlement structure of Newcastle West no new lands were zoned outside the settlement boundary, with the exception outlined above.
- In response to submissions from the EPA in the first public display period concerning overloading of infrastructure the additions were made to the waste- water policy to prevent overloading the capacity of the waste water treatments systems. The policy in relation to flood risk management was also strengthened following submissions from the Environmental Authorities-see below
- Policies in relation to the promotion of sustainable transport links were included as was one that allowed promotion of public transport links and promotion of the Newcastle West Cycling strategy.

Flood policies were further strengthened as a result of submissions received during the first public display period. This included reference being made to the *“The Planning System and Flood risk Management: guidelines for Planning Authorities”*. DEHLG, 2009. These were carried through into the final plan through the medium of de-zoning lands from more intensive uses such as mixed use to those reflecting their existing use such as agriculture.

Other changes that took place were minor in nature and were not considered to have significant environmental effects following screening.

7.4 Reasons for choosing the plan as adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives considered

The following three scenarios were considered:

- 1 Continuation of the existing 2008 plan.
- 2 The plan as currently presented.
- 3 The zoning of large amounts of additional lands outside the current development plan boundary.
- 4 The plan with residential zoning lands unchanged.

1: Precede with existing plan i.e. the do nothing alternative. As indicated earlier such a course of action would not allow the plan to be updated to include aspects of current best practice in relation to environmental and planning issues. In addition once a plan has been prepared the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2012 states that it shall indicate for how long a local

area plan will remain in force. This time period has come close to expiry so preparation of a new plan was required.

2: The plan, as presented, is considered to be the best compromise between adapting to the changing needs of Newcastle West i.e. conserving the demesne, and providing for the changing needs of the community by allocating additional lands for community uses. Buffer zones have been introduced along undeveloped banks of rivers in the plan area. Submissions received, both from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the general public had raised concerns regarding the local environment and designated sites in Newcastle West. The plan as adopted is considered to be the best way to accommodate the ongoing development needs of Newcastle West with the conservation of its natural heritage and historic features. The provision for to accommodate sufficient housing lands have been accommodated within the existing plan boundaries and the plan has incorporated new policies which reflect the emergence of new guidance on planning and environmental matters. It also has enhanced measures for the protection of the heritage features and sites within the plan boundaries

3: It had been submitted that lands outside the existing plan area would be zoned for development purposes. This option was considered but not pursued as it would result in zoning which would be in excess of requirements and contribute to urban sprawl which runs counter to the contents of the Department's guidance document called *Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (2007, S4.6). This states that "*excessive areas of land around small towns and villages should not be zoned for development*". While some alteration of zoning took place within the existing development boundary only limited expansion of the boundaries has taken place, these lands close to the N21 had been zone in the 2008 plan. Sufficient lands for differing purposes have been zoned within the existing boundaries to cater for the forthcoming plan time period.

4: This option was not pursued, as there were issues, from both a core strategy population figure perspective but also from a flooding perspective.

8.0 Monitoring

8.1 Introduction

As part of the SEA process, measures envisaged for monitoring the likely significant effects of implementing the NCW LAP must be included in the Environmental Report. The review of the NCW LAP 2014 will include monitoring of any significant environmental effects.

Monitoring is often based on indicators, which measure changes in the environment, especially changes which are critical in terms of environmental quality. The Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government SEA Guidelines state that indicators that can be easily and realistically measured should be used. "Environmental indicators are key statistics, which describe an environmental issue. Their purpose is to communicate information on environmental issues in a simplified manner and over time to create a benchmark against which future progress towards sustainable development can be measured. To be effective they should be representative of the issue and be based on scientifically valid information. In this manner they can support policy development and reflect the interrelationship between society, the economy and the environment."

Several kinds of indicators may be used to fulfil particular functions and measure the quality/quantity of environmental resources:

- 1 State of the environment indicators reflect environmental quality, or quantity of physical and biological or chemical phenomenon;
- 2 Stress indicators reflect development effects;
- 3 Performance indicators may be used to evaluate long-term achievements in environmental management and protection;
- 4 Sustainable development indicators introduce a new dimension to the provision of information, in that they seek to describe and measure key relationships between economic, social and environmental factors.

In all cases, indicators should both quantify and simplify information, thereby making it more accessible to policy-makers and the public.

Where new or improved monitoring measures come to light during the course of the Guidelines review they will inform monitoring for SEA, to ensure that monitoring of effects during the course of implementing the guidelines can be meaningful and effective.

As the former NCW LAP 2008 was not subject to SEA there is no SEA monitoring report to inform the plan review.

The following measures are proposed as part of this SEA process, to monitor the effects on the environment of implementing the NCW LAP 2014, presented in terms of the achievement of the environmental protection objectives and the impact on the environmental factors that the SEA legislation requires to be considered. Measures include targets and thresholds

that determine where remedial action may be required in order to achieve that target and fulfil the environmental protection objective.

Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna

Environmental Objectives and Objectives in the LAP	Indicators	Responsible Authority	Frequency of Monitoring	Targets	Remedial Action.
<p>B1: Protect, conserve and enhance habitats, species and areas of national and local importance, including aquatic habitats and species and promote the sustainable management of ecological networks.</p> <p>Objectives in the plan:</p> <p>EH5 Chp 8 and S 8.4 Natural Environment.</p>	<p>Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.</p>	<p>NPWS</p> <p>LCCC through planning applications and LAPs</p> <p>IFI</p>	<p>Every 6 years. Next report due in 2014</p> <p>Development Plan Mid-Term Review in 2015</p>	<p>Maintenance of favourable conservation status² for all habitats and species protected under national and international legislation.</p> <p>Identification of sites of local biodiversity and ecological corridors</p>	<p>Loss of favourable conservation status of protected habitats and species. Altered zoning may be required in the case of LAPs.</p> <p>Enforcement action may also be required.</p>
<p>B2: preservation of the Demesne Parklands</p> <p>Objectives in the plan:</p> <p>Objective C5 and S9.2.1</p>	<p>Encroachment on the Parklands.</p>	<p>Newcastle West Area Office.</p> <p>City and County Council Planning Section</p>	<p>Quarterly-assessment by Heritage Officer.</p>	<p>Preservation of current area of amenity land in the Demesne.</p>	<p>Monitoring of planning applications to ensure that none run counter to this aim. Review of objectives of they need to be strengthened.</p>

Population and Human Health

Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Authority	Frequency of	Targets	Remedial action
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			Monitoring		
P1:Facilitate a good standard of quality of life for the towns population through ensuring high quality residential, recreational and working environments.	<p>Increase in employment opportunities, services and public amenity areas, playgrounds and walkways within the town plan area</p> <p>Increase in the towns population.</p> <p>Provision of walking routes and cycling lanes</p>	LCCC	Development Plan Mid-Term Review in 2015	<p>Increase in employment opportunities, services and public amenity within Newcastle West and increase in population.</p> <p>Increase in length of cycle lanes and provision of riverside walkways</p>	Implementation of business support initiative with CEB.
Water					
Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Authority	Frequency	Targets	Remedial Action
<p>W1:Achieve and maintain required water quality standards and reduce discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters.</p> <p>Objectives in plan:</p> <p>Objective EH6.</p>	<p>Water quality monitoring results by the EPA and by LCCC</p> <p>EPA data under <i>Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland Population Equivalents Greater than 500 persons - Reports for the Years 2008 and 2009 and 2010-2011.</i></p> <p>Performance of WWTP in relation to conditions of licence of discharge licence.</p>	LCCC.	Annual	<p>Protect and Restore areas identified in the River Basin District Management Plan required to achieve "good" status, i.e. 4+ for water quality by 2021 in line with the Water Framework Directive objectives.</p> <p>No deterioration in levels of compliance with drinking water quality standards and maintenance</p>	Consultants have been appointed to draw up plans for update of the WWTP.

				of national average compliance rate.	
Soils					
Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Authority	Frequency	Targets	Remedial action
<p>S1:Protect the quality of soils in the interests of avoiding environmental degradation in water quality and biodiversity.</p> <p>Objectives in Plan:</p> <p>Policy UD1 Chapter 10 Urban Design.</p>	Amounts of green field development.	LCCC	Annual	Concentrate development in town centre and on opportunity sites.	Enforcement, where necessary.

Air and Climate					
Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Body	Frequency	Targets	Remedial Action
<p>AC1: to increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy efficiency generated from renewable sources.</p> <p>Objectives in Plan:</p> <p>S7.7 Energy efficiency</p>	Numbers of buildings being upgraded and insulated.	LCCC	Ongoing	Increase in upgrades sources of energy production from renewable sources	Non-attainment of targets set out in LCEA energy audit.
Cultural Heritage					
<p>C1 Protect and conserve features of archaeological heritage and their settings.</p> <p>Objectives In Plan:</p> <p>S8.3 EH3.</p>	<p>Number of Monuments in the RMP and areas of archaeological potential which have been recorded or subject to exploration as a result of development.</p> <p>Number of archaeological monuments and their</p>	<p>LCCC</p> <p>National Monuments Service</p>	Ongoing	<p>To maintain and increase the number of archaeological features recorded and protected.</p> <p>No damage occurring to structures or monuments and their settings due to</p>	Damage to or loss of area of recorded monuments or their setting would result in enforcement actions being taken.

	settings damaged due to development.			development	
C2 Protect and conserve and promote the sustainable reuse of architectural heritage. Objectives in Plan: 8.2 and Objectives EH1 and EH2.	Number and conservation status of structures in RPS Number of buildings conserved and re-used for new development Number of protected structures damaged due to development.	LCCC DAHG NIAH	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	To increase the number and maintain the conservation status of Protected Structures	Damage to or loss of Protected Structures, to be dealt with by enforcement.
Landscape					
Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Body	Frequency	Targets	Remedial Action
L1: Protect and conserve the quality, character and distinctiveness of the townscape of Newcastle West and minimise negative visual impacts. Objectives in Plan; Chp 10 and Objective H4 and 5.	Quality of urban environment and halt in dereliction. Building height and design in the town	LCCC	Ongoing	Increase in quality of individual application.	Enforcement through planning legislation and Derelict Sites Act.
Material Assets					
MA1: Maintain the quality of and access to assets such as open spaces, water resources and all other physical and social infrastructure. Objectives in the plan: S9.2 and Objectives C1-3.	Access to public amenities and facilities..	LCCC and NCW area office.	Ongoing	Increase in area of amenity space within the town plan area Increased usage of River Arra as a public amenity. Increased visitor numbers to cultural heritage sites.	Enforcement where necessary and modification of objectives s if they are not judged strong enough.

Appendix 1

Proposed Amendments to Proposed Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014-2020 taken from the Second Chief Executives report. Please note an addition has been made to this to reflect changes made at a Council Municipal District meeting held on the 7th July 2014.

Omit wording ~~struck through~~ and insert wording underlined. Where policies or objectives are proposed to be included or amended the policy / objective numbers of those existing may need to be revised.

Amendments to Chapter 5

amendment to second paragraph on page 41:

Uses such as retail warehousing which were not permitted on industrial zoned land in the 2008 LAP will ~~not~~ be permitted on enterprise and employment zoned land in this plan.

SEA Implications: typing error corrected - this is not considered significant.

Amendments to Chapter 6

Section 6.2 Movement and Accessibility (page 47)

In accordance with national road policy ~~as determined by the NRA~~ direct access or intensification of direct accesses onto the N21 where the 100kpm speed limit applies shall not be permitted in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.5 of the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines 2012 and Policy IN P 9 of the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.

SEA Implications: text change included for clarity- this is not significant.

Amendments to Chapter 11 Land Use Zoning

Table 11.1 Total Zoned Lands (page 79)

Zoning	Total Area proposed 2014 LAP - ha	Area designated in 2008 LAP – ha	% change
Agriculture	45.6	8.3	+449
Enterprise and employment	71.32 <u>66.88</u>	74.6*	-10
Education and community facilities	21.15	20.2	+4.7

Utilities	1.4	1.4	0
New residential Phase 1	63.45	32.5	+ 95
New residential Phase 2	40.98	18.8	+117
Existing residential	124.8	137.78	-9.65
Residential Serviced Sites – Phase 1	24.907	17	46.5
Residential Serviced Sites – Phase 2	15.013	13.8	+8.879
Open space and Recreation**	79.79	8	+910
Town centre	10.46	11.58	-9.67
Mixed Use	13.21	38.34	-68.1
Tourism development*** related	0	2.48	-100
Total	507.64	384.78	+31.88

*Refers to Industrial 1 and Industrial 2 in the 2008 LAP

** Includes greenways as referred to in 2008 LAP

***Zoned in 2008 Lap. Considered sufficiently provided for under mixed use zoning in 2014 LAP.

**** Note 24.47% was a miscalculation. The correct calculation was +32.33%. The revised percentage change is +31.88%

percentage change is +31.88%

SEA Implications: this updates the zoning areas for clarity. It does not mark an expansion of development boundaries. This is not significant.

Opportunity Area 6 - Nash Backlands, The Square and Castle Demesne Backlands, The Square

Remove figure 35:



~~Figure 35: Castle Demesne Site (south)~~

SEA Implications: this is removed for clarity reasons and is not significant.

Change to zoning map:

Comments on Amendments to eastern most plan boundary and de-zoning of Enterprise and Employment use (Material Alterations) put forward at Municipal meeting on 7th July 2014:

Changes to zoning and re-addition of Enterprise and Employment (4.44ha) zoned land on the eastern plan boundary.

SEA Implications: This is an increase in the zoned plan area and is the re-establishment of Enterprise and Employment zoning at **the edge** of the plan area. This had been removed during earlier drafts of the plan. In environmental terms while the addition is not significant given the overall area of the plan and the modified nature of the site, this is contrary to the idea of sequential development and the re-addition of this zoning on the plan edge will take from efforts to develop the town at areas closer to its centre. This is not compliant with both the newly issued Local Area Plan Guidelines 2013 and Development Plan Guidelines 2007. The Retail Guidelines also emphasise the importance of sequential development for the purposes of retail development.

Amendments to Flood risk Assessment in volume 2:

Add following text to end of flood risk assessment:

2.3 Conclusion

The zoning system has been updated to reflect flood risk mapping, local consultations and site visits.

Objective IN4 Flood risk Management has been included in the plan (S7.4 Surface water drainage) which takes into account the content of the 2009 Flood Risk Guidance and the need for adequate assessment of flood risk.

Objective IN3 Surface Water Disposal is included as it stresses the need for Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions and the need to carefully plan development in order to promote the use of permeable surfaces to reduce run off.

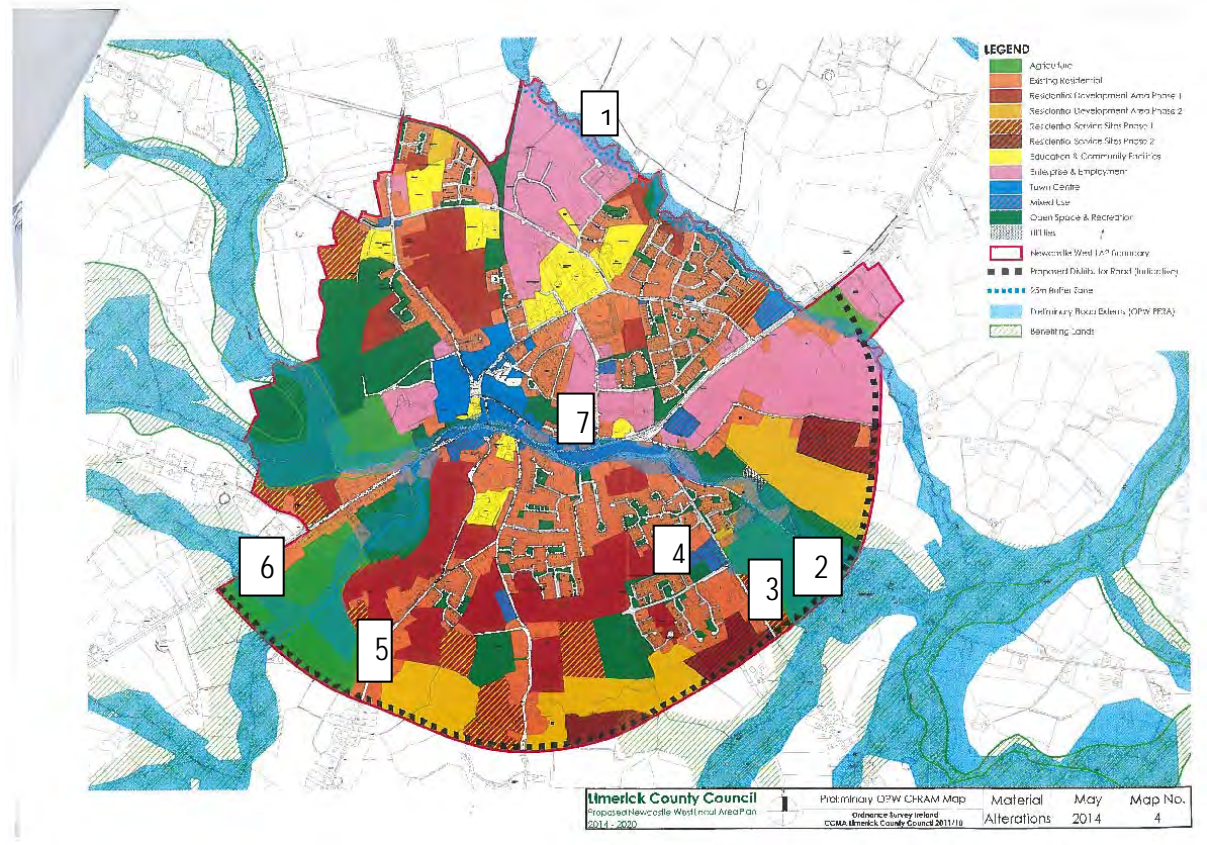


Figure 7: zoning map with comments, these are listed below in numerical order.

1 Taking into account both JBA flood maps, the PFRA maps, draft CFRAMS in addition to local sources and walk-over to assess vegetation types and local topography it was determined that the industrial zoning was appropriate. The vegetation survey did not show any signs of flooding and in places the river ran through a ravine up to 4m below the levels of the zoned land.

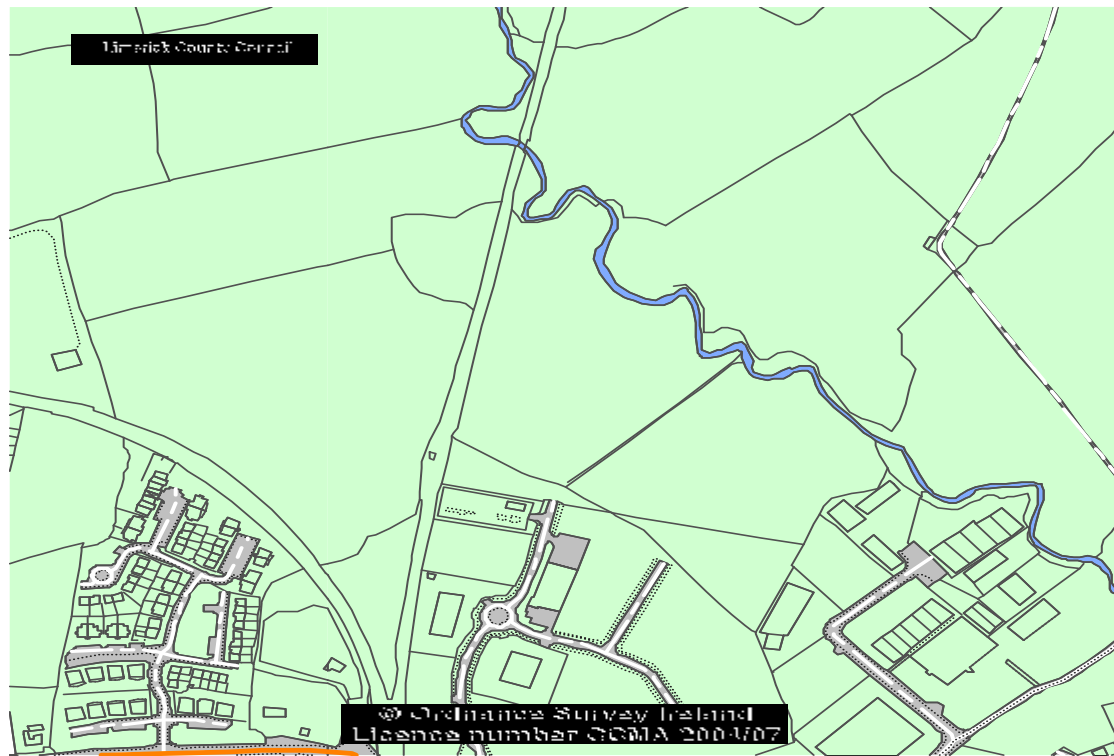


Figure 8: Industrially zoned lands in north east of plan area- they are mid picture with the river forming the northern boundary.

2 This was not shown on PFRA or draft CFRAM maps but was shown on the JBA flood maps as being at risk of flooding. In this case it was decided to de-zone for a number of factors. Vegetation indicating wetter conditions persisted in the improved grassland and the topography was low lying which accentuated flood risk.

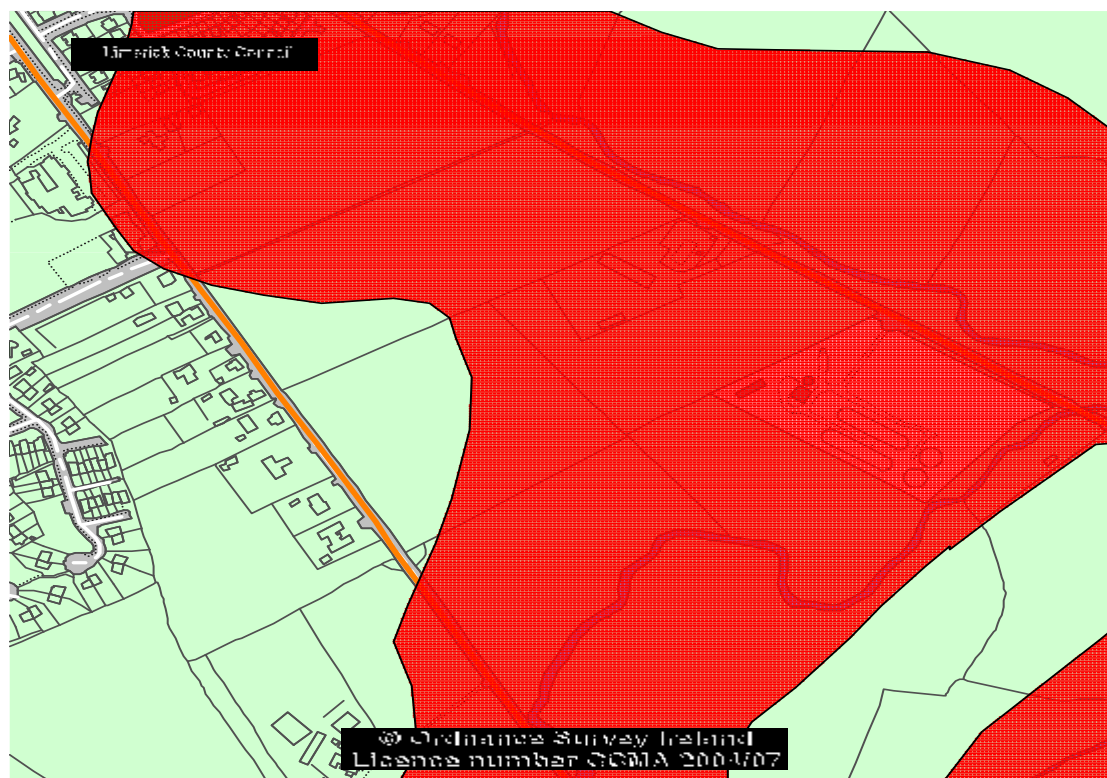


Figure 9: the lands were re-zoned from residential to agricultural based on a number of factors including local topography and the benefiting lands status.

3 Site shown as subject to flood risk on PFRA mapping and shown as benefiting land was de-zoned from serviced site following site inspections. The zoning was changed to agricultural.

4 Low-lying open space area within mixed use development, has been changed in zoning from mixed use to open space. This area had been shown as prone to flooding on the JBA flood maps. It is also of use as in formal open space area for the nearby residents.

5 This area is zoned for agriculture. Both local sources, JBA and PFRA maps indicated flood risk. This conclusion is supported by the benefiting lands map shown in Figure 1 of this report.

6 Area at risk of flooding as shown on PFRA maps changed from serviced sites to agriculture at material alterations stage of the plan process.

7 The zoning in the town centre represents long established land uses and has to be viewed in this context. The central core of the two is medieval in origin and the subsequent growth of the town centre took place around the medieval settlement.

Appendix 1.2 International Conventions & Agreements

Topic	Policy, Plan or Programme	Objectives
Biodiversity	UN Convention of Biological Diversity (1992)	Maintain and enhance biodiversity.
	The Ramsar Convention The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1971 and amendments)	Objectives include protection and conservation of wetlands, particularly those of importance to waterfowl as Waterfowl Habitat
	European Union Directive (92/432/EEC) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna	Lists certain habitats and species that must be given protection.
	European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, SI 94/1997, as amended SI 233/1998 and SI 378/2005 SI 584/2011	These Regulations give effect to Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (Habitats Directive) and the Minister to designate special areas of conservation (endangered species and habitats of endangered species) as a contribution to an EU Community network to be known as NATURA 2000.
	EU Directive (EU/79/409) on the Conservation of Wild Birds	Designation of Special Protection Areas for birds.
	Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland Guidance for Planning Authorities (2009)	Guidance on carrying out AA on plans and Projects as required under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive
	National Biodiversity Plan 2011	To secure the conservation, including where possible the enhancement and sustainable use, of biological diversity in Ireland
	European Communities Environmental Objectives (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) 2009	Measures to protect the conservation status of Freshwater Pearl Mussel

	Irish National Forest Standards (2000)	Aims to ensure sustainable forest management
	Ospar Convention (1992) The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic	Protection of the Marine Environment
	EU Marine Strategy Framework Regulations 2011	Aims to achieve good environmental status of the EU's marine waters by 2021 and to protect the resource base upon which marine-related economic and social activities depend.
	EU Freshwater Fish Directive (78/659/EEC)	Objectives seek to protect those freshwater bodies identified by Member States as waters suitable for sustaining fish populations. For those waters it sets physical and chemical water quality objectives for salmonid waters and cyprinid waters.
Water	EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) 2000	Establishes a framework for community action in the field of water policy. Aims to prevent any deterioration in the status of any waters and to achieve at least "good status" in all waters by 2015.
	The Groundwater Directive (1980/68/EC) 1980	Seeks to maintain and enhance the quality of all ground waters in the EU.
	EU Urban Waste Water treatment directive (91/271/EEC) 1991	Sets targets dates for the provision of specified waste water treatment infrastructure and services.
	EU Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	The Floods Directive applies to river basins and coastal areas at risk of flooding and provides for the prevention and management of flood risk and preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans
	DoEHLG Guidelines on Flood Risk Management	Seeks to prevent development that is

	and the Planning System (2009)	sensitive to the effects of flooding in flood prone or marginal areas. Must not reduce the flood plain or restrict flow across floodplains.
	The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)	This Directive has the objective of reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and preventing further such pollution.
	Drinking Water Directive (80/778/EEC) as amended by Directive 98/83/EC	The primary objective is to protect the health of the consumers in the European Union and to make sure drinking water is wholesome and clean.
	The Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977 (Water Quality Standards for Phosphorous) Regulations, 1998	Rivers of good quality to be retained as such, rivers of poor quality to be improved
	European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations, 2009	Transposes into Irish law the measures needed to give effect to Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive relating to the protection of surface waters including the requirements of Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards.
	Managing Ireland's Rivers and Lakes: Catchment based Strategy Against Pollution (1997)	This document details a strategy to protect water quality against pollution by phosphorus from all sources.
	River Basin Management Plans for River Basin Districts (RBDs)	Seeks to establish an integrated monitoring and management system for all waters within an RBD, to develop a dynamic programme of management measures and to produce a River Basin Management Plan, which will be continually updated.

	Bathing Water Directive EC Directive 2006/7 EC Repeals existing Directive (71/160/EEC) with effect from 31 December 2014	Sets out standards for bathing water quality to protect health and the environment
Human Health	WHO Air Quality Guidelines (1999) and Guidelines for Europe (1987) Non Statutory	Seeks to eliminate or minimise certain airborne pollutants for the protection of human health.
	The Stockholm Convention (2001)	Objectives seek to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants (POPs).
	The EU CAFÉ Programme Commission communication of 4 May 2001 "The Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) Programme: Towards a Thematic Strategy for Air Quality".	Seeks to prevent and reduce air pollution and impacts on human health from air pollution.
	EU Shellfish Directive (79/923/EEC)	Objectives seek to maintain those coastal and brackish waters, which need protection or improvement, in order to allow shellfish to develop and to contribute to the high quality of shellfish products intended for human consumption.
	Pollution Reduction Programme for, Waterford Harbour,	To ensure compliance with standards and objectives of the 2006 Quality of Shellfish Waters Regulations
	The EU Environment and Health Strategy 2004- 2010	Seeks to prevent and reduce the impacts pollution on human health.
	Environmental Noise Directive (2002/49/EC) Environmental Noise Regulations 2006	Establishes a framework for environmental noise planning including environmental noise maps for designated areas and appropriate noise action plans.
Climate / Air	Kyoto Protocol (1997)	Aim of the UN Protocol is to combat climate change. Industrialised countries will have to reduce their combined greenhouse gas emissions by a minimum

		of 8% by 2012.
	Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II) 2005	Seeks to develop the necessary elements of a strategy to implement the Kyoto protocol.
	White Paper on 'European transport policy for 2010', COM (2001) 370	Seeks to develop a modern sustainable transport system.
	"The IPPC Directive" Directive 96/61/EC concerning integrated pollution, prevention and control	Seeks to minimise pollution and maximize resource efficiency in industry through licensing and guidance.
	Ozone in Ambient Air Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 53 of 2004).	Objectives include the reduction of certain airborne pollutants for the protection of human health and the environment.
	"Air Framework Directive" Directive on Air Quality Assessment and Management (Framework Directive) (1996/62/EC)	Seeks the prevention and/or reduction of airborne pollutants for the protection of human health and environment.
	Directive on national emission ceilings for certain atmospheric pollutants (2001/81/EC)	Seeks to limit the national emissions of certain airborne pollutants for the protection of human health and the environment.
	EC Directive 2008/50/EC on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe	Replaces the air framework directive and the first three daughter directives. Sets standards and target dates for reducing concentrations of fine particles, which are among the most dangerous pollutants for human health.
	Adopting to climate change in Europe – options to EU action {SEC(2007) 849}	Seeks to initiate a Europe-wide public debated and consultation on developing responses to climate change at EU level
	National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012	Established measures by which Ireland can meet its 2008-2012 targets in respect to green house gas emissions
	Delivering A Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland	Government Energy Policy Framework 2007-2020 to deliver a sustainable energy future for Ireland.
Cultural	European Landscape	Encourages public

Heritage (Landscape Architecture Archaeology)	Convention 2000	authorities to adopt policies at local, national and international level to protect and manage landscapes.
	Policy Paper on Ireland's Landscape and the National Heritage, The Heritage Council, (2002)	Policy paper sets out a vision for the Irish landscape to allow people to harness the landscape for economic benefit whilst acknowledging that in the long run such benefits can only be sustained through an appreciation and awareness of the contribution of that landscape to our quality of life.
	Landscape and landscape and Assessment, Guidelines for Planning Authorities -2000	Sets out how a landscape character assessment should be conducted.
	Granada Convention for protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe 1985	Established common principles and strategy, informed Part IV of the 2000 Planning and Development Act 2000-2004
	European Convention on protection of the Archaeological Heritage 1992	Requires that appropriate consideration be given to archaeological issues at all stages of the planning and development process
	Architectural Heritage Protection- Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2004	The protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest, and; the preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas.
	National Heritage Plan 2002	Plan forms the basis of a strategic approach to the protection and management of heritage up to 2007
	National Inventory of Architectural	To establish inventory of buildings of value

	Heritage	
	Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (1999)	This document sets out the archaeological policies and principles which should be applied by all public bodies when undertaking or authorising development.
Soil	2006 Proposal for an EC Directive establishing a framework for the protection of soil	Still under discussion. Proposes to establish a common strategy in Europe for the protection and sustainable use of soil.
	Sewage Sludge Directive (86/278/EEC)	To encourage the use of sewage sludge in agriculture and to regulate its use in such a way as to prevent harmful effects on soil, vegetation, animals and man
	Directive 2004/35/EC on Environmental Liability with regard to the prevention and remedying environmental damage	Prevention and remediation of environmental damage
Sustainable Development	Agenda 21 (1992). Action for Sustainable Development	Aims to promote sustainable development at a local and regional level by taking into account environmental protection in the development process.
	"The Gothenburg Strategy" Communication from the Commission on Sustainable Europe for a Better World" 2001	Seeks to make the future development of the EU more sustainable.
	The Sixth Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the European Community 2002- 2012 Statutory	Seeks to make the future development of the EU more sustainable.
	The SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)	Objective is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption

		of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
	Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Rural Housing 2005	To address the issue of sustainable rural housing
	Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas 2008	Addressing sustainable design and services in urban areas
	Wind Energy Guidelines 2004	To ensure a consistency of approach in the identification of suitable locations for wind farm development and the treatment of planning applications for wind farm developments
	Draft Framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012	The Framework will form a central element of Ireland's contribution to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) which takes place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012
	Transport 21 (2005)	Seeks to develop an integrated transport system across Ireland
	Traffic Management Guidelines (2003)	Provides guidance on a number of traffic management issues including public transport
	Smarter Travel- A Sustainable Transport Future, A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020	Promotion of sustainable transport
	Delivering A Sustainable Energy Future For Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework 2007 – 2020	Seeks to reduce energy demand and energy related emissions
	Directive 2004/35/EC on Environmental Liability with regard to the	Seeks to establish a common framework for the prevention and

	prevention and remedying environmental damage	remediation of environmental damage
Waste	The Waste Framework Directive” Council Directive 75/442/EEC of 15 July 1975 on waste “the Waste Framework Directive” and amending acts.	Seeks to minimise the quantities of waste production in the EU, reduce the environmental impacts from the management of these wastes and defines what constitutes a waste or hazardous waste.
	“The Landfill Directive” Council Directive 99/31/EC of 26 April 1999 on the landfill of waste	Seeks to reduce the environmental impact from the landfilling of waste & divert certain quantities and types of waste from European landfills.
	“The WEE Directive” Directive 2002/96/EC of 27 January 2003 on waste electrical and electronic equipment	Seek more environmentally sensitive management of waste electric and electronic equipment.
	National Waste Prevention Programme	Seeks to decouple waste generation from economic activity in Ireland
Major Accidents	EU Major Accident (Seveso) Directive (96/82/EC) 1996	Seeks to avoid and minimize the effects of major accidents

Appendix 1.3 Plan Objectives with assessment of their effects

The policies and objectives are listed as they are outlined in the plan chapters are then assessed in the tables that follow. Environmental effects are categorised as being positive +, negative – or neutral =, together with comments.

Chapter 3: Plan Strategy

Policy /Objective	Chapter 3	Effects +	Effects -	Effects =
S1	It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of Newcastle West.	+		
S2	Compliance with the Limerick County Development Plan It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 and the objectives of this Plan.	+ ensures compliance with higher tier plans.		

Chapter 4:

Policy /Objective	Chapter 4	Effects +	Effects -	Effects -
Policy H1	It is the policy of the Council to provide appropriately zoned lands to cater for the sustainable growth of Newcastle West town and to ensure that all residents can enjoy a safe and accessible environment.	+ follows the guidance laid down in regional and local housing strategies.		

Objective H1	<p>Objective H1: New Housing</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council, on serviced land that is zoned 'Residential Development Area' to:</p> <p>a) Facilitate residential development in accordance with the principles and guidelines of the 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' (May 2009), the accompanying Urban Design Manual, 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities' (DEHLG, 2007) and the policies, objectives and Development Management Standards contained in the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 and any subsequent county development plan.</p> <p>b) Promote the provision of community and other facilities such as childcare as an integral part of new developments.</p>	+ updates the plan in line with latest guidance		
Objective H2	<p>Objective H2: Residential density, design, mix and phasing</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <p>a) Ensure that proposals for residential development are planned coherently through the use of design briefs, master plans for larger landholdings where proposals involve the partial development of landholdings if appropriate, sustainability statements and social infrastructure assessments and any other supplementary documents deemed</p>	+ ensures that latest good practice is used in developments		

	<p>necessary by the Council.</p> <p>b) Promote the concept of a 'compact district' by encouraging appropriate densities in suitable locations and by resisting sporadic isolated developments.</p> <p>c) Require an average gross density of 35 units to the hectare on 'New Residential' zoned sites within the plan area.</p> <p>d) Ensure that the density of housing in any one location is appropriate to the housing type.</p> <p>e) Ensure a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures are provided to meet varying population requirements and needs.</p>			
H3	<p>Objective H3: Serviced and low density sites</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <p>a) Promote lower density serviced sites in specified edge of town locations zoned 'Residential Serviced Sites', of no less than 0.1 hectares each. Larger sites than these will generally be required for houses exceeding 250 square metres or where the sites are of awkward configuration.</p> <p>b) Require a master plan/design brief for all serviced and low density sites and encourage within this, a high standard of design. The masterplan will show the overall layout, infrastructure, services and landscaping for the</p>	+ ensures that development is carried out in an orderly fashion.		

	<p>whole of the serviced site development.</p> <p>c) The development of land zoned serviced sites phase 2 can only proceed when 50% of phase 1 serviced sites has been completed to the satisfaction of the Council. This will be monitored during the plan.</p>			
H4	<p>Objective H4: Infill Development, Restoration and Town Renewal</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <p>a) Encourage living in the town centre by the promotion of residential uses over businesses.</p> <p>b) Promote sensitive infill developments on sites in the town centre that are not developed and are not required for access to backlands.</p> <p>c) Ensure that in any proposed alterations to the streetscape of the town centre, adequate consideration is given to conservation, restoration and reconstruction, where it would affect the settings of protected structures, or the integrity of the eighteenth and nineteenth century streetscapes</p> <p>d) Consider on their merits proposals for residential development of rear plots where they can be adequately accessed, and where they would not affect existing</p>	+ designed to encourage the development of brown field sites, consistent with SEA guidance 2004.		

	<p>or proposed private amenities, storage or parking requirements. Such proposals should in general be part of larger masterplans involving contiguous plots.</p> <p>To implement the guidance on the Opportunity Areas in Chapter 10 of this plan</p>			
H5	<p>Objective H5: Unfinished Housing Estates</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to monitor and to encourage the completion of unfinished housing developments in the plan area in accordance with the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government guidance manual 'Managing and Resolving Unfinished Housing Developments.'</p>			= effects are difficult to quantify as resources for this task are omitted and the overall effects of this policy is expected to be small.
H6	<p>Objective H6: Social Housing and Joint Housing Strategy</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council in compliance with Objective HOU O2 of the County Development Plan, to</p> <p>a) Require that developers comply with Part V of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2013.</p> <p>b) Require developers to provide social housing on all lands zoned for residential use, in accordance with the 'Joint Housing Strategy for the Administrative Areas of Limerick City and County Councils and Clare County Council' and any subsequent document</p>			= while not significant from an environmental perspective it does help to ensure housing availability to wider demographic.
H7	<p>Objective H7: Joint Traveller Accommodation Programme</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to provide appropriate housing accommodation for the Traveller Community</p>			= while not significant from an environmental perspective it does guarantee greater access to minority groups for housing.

	in accordance with the Joint Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014 – 2018 and any subsequent programme formally adopted by the Council.			
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Chapter 5 Economic Development

Policy/Objective	Chapter	Effects +	Effects -	Effects =
Policy ED1	Policy ED 1 It is the policy of the Newcastle West LAP to zone dedicated areas for economic development recognising Newcastle West as a key settlement in the County, and as an important local and regional employment and service centre in County Limerick, and the wider Midwest region, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy of the County Development Plan.			= it is the objectives that provide the teeth in this regard, this is the aspiration.
Objective ED 1	<p>Objective ED 1: Economic Development Proposals</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to permit proposals for new enterprise development or extensions to existing development in appropriately zoned areas, where it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal:</p> <p>(a) is located on appropriately zoned land;</p> <p>(b) is appropriate to the respective area in terms of size and the type of employment generating development to be provided;</p>	+ Consistent with latest S28 Guidance.		

	<p>(c) would not result in adverse transport effects;</p> <p>(d) would have no significant detrimental effect on the surrounding areas or on the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupiers; and can be serviced efficiently and economically</p>			
ED2	<p>Objective 2: Boundary Treatment</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to ensure that where industrial, enterprise or distribution activities are proposed sufficient land shall be reserved around site boundaries, in both individual sites and business/enterprise parks to accommodate landscaping to soften the visual impact and reduce the biodiversity loss of the development thereby improving the quality of the environment.</p>	ED	+ expected to improve screening and visual appearance of developments on enterprise zoned lands.	
ED3	<p>Enterprise and employment zoned lands on the N21. It is the objective of the Council that any future application(s) on the lands on the N21 shall be accompanied with an overall master plan and include a buffer of screen planting along the boundary with the national road. A high quality design of signage and entrance treatment will be expected of any proposal as the design should</p>			+ see comments on such zoning earlier in the report.

	<p>contribute to the approach to the town. The Council would envisage that development of these lands would serve as a 'landmark', reflecting arrival in the town and would contribute to a 'sense of place' and enforcing a positive image of the town. A Strategic Transport Assessment will also be required as part of any proposed master plan to safeguard the strategic function of the national road network</p>			
ED 4	<p>Objective ED 4: Retail Development It is the objective of the Council to enhance the vitality and viability of Newcastle West as a retail service centre and to improve the quantity and quality of retail provision in the town by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Emphasising the town centre area as the primary shopping location. (b) Encouraging the upgrading and expansion of existing retail outlets and the development of new outlets within the town centre. (c) Ensuring that proposals with significant retail development elements comply with the provisions of the 	+ consistent with both county and regional retail guidelines.		

	<p>County Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines in reference to site suitability and the sequential approach.</p> <p>(d) Ensure that proposals at ground floor level within the town centre are generally restricted to shopping and closely related uses such as banking. Residential use may also be appropriate depending on the site location. Storage use will not be permitted as the primary use in this location.</p> <p>(e) Encouraging the use of upper floors in retail premises for commercial or residential use.</p> <p>(f) Enhancing the physical environment of the town centre as a location for shopping and business through measures aimed at improving conditions for pedestrians.</p>			
	<p>Encourage the retention of traditional shop fronts to enhance the streetscape. Shop front signage shall not, by reason of its scale, form or size, be visually detrimental to the appearance and</p>			

	character of the building or streetscape. Internally illuminated signs will not be permitted			
ED5	<p>Objective ED 5 Small-business in residential areas</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to support small scale self employed business operating from peoples own home provided that:</p> <p>a) The business activity is subsidiary to the use of the dwelling as the applicants principal home.</p> <p>b) Existing residential amenity is not negatively impacted upon in terms of noise, parking and other relevant planning considerations.</p> <p>Note the conversion of houses for the sole purpose of commercial or retail use shall not be permitted, or the 'retention' of same due to the negative impact on existing residential amenity.</p>			=
ED 6	<p>Objective ED 6: Tourism</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to</p> <p>a) Enhance the tourism potential of the town including the</p>	+ required for the coherent management of the tourism resource in the town.		

	<p>promotion of new tourism products in an environmentally sustainable manner in partnership with other agencies and the local community.</p> <p>b) Encourage new development for the tourist industry to be located within the LAP boundary to maximise existing services.</p> <p>Protect and enhance where possible any biodiversity / natural environment, built and cultural heritage features from unwarranted encroachment of unsuitable development.</p>			
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Chapter 6 Transport

Policy/Objective	Chapter 6	Effects +	Effects -	Effects +
Policy T1	Policy T1: It is the policy of the Council to improve accessibility; reduce dependence on private car transport and encourage the use of energy efficient forms of transport and alternatives to the private car in accordance with national transport policy as set out in Smarter Travel.	+ consistent with traffic guidelines		
Policy T2	Policy T2: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all proposals shall comply with			+ ensures that higher tier plans are referenced.

	the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010 – 2016, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Street (DoECGLG and DTTS, March 2013), and the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines (DoECLG and DTTS, 2013) in relation to transport and infrastructure and the objectives outlined below.			
Objective T1	<p>Objective T1: Network of pedestrian and cycle facilities</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Newcastle West through supporting the recommendations of the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West(2013).</p>	+ also useful for health benefits.		
Objective T2	<p>Measures in support of public transport</p> <p>(a) It is an objective of the Council to facilitate measures to improve public transport</p>	+ designed to promote public transport and lessen car dependence .		

	<p>infrastructure within Newcastle West and networks to adjacent settlements and Limerick City.</p> <p>(b) All future development proposals shall incorporate the relevant objectives of the Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP 2012-2030), Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West (2013), and the promotion of enhanced public transport facilities and services</p>			
T3	<p>Car parking and traffic management</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to encourage the provision of off-street public parking areas as part of any application for development.</p>			+ but should help with traffic movement in the town.
T4	<p>Objective T4: Safeguard of the capacity of the R521 Limerick – Foynes Road and the N21 Limerick – Killarney Road</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to safeguard the capacity of the R521 and the N21 and ensure that any future developments do not compromise the strategic functions of these roads in</p>			+ but should retain the effectiveness of these roads as transport corridors.

	accordance with the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines, 2013 by the DoECLG and DTTS			
T5	<p>Objective T5: Development of Enterprise and Employment land adjoining the N21</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council that any future development proposal for the lands zoned for Enterprise and Employment shall include a Traffic and Transport Assessment in accordance with Objective IN O2: Traffic and Transport Assessments of the County Development Plan, to ensure that the local road network and associated junctions with the regional road have sufficient capacity to facilitate the extent of the development planned. Furthermore, the costs of implementing mitigation measures arising from the traffic impact shall be borne by the developer.</p>			= see earlier comments re zoning of such lands.
T6	<p>Objective T6: Southern Distributor Road</p> <p>It is the objective</p>	+ would greatly help with traffic congestion in the town should it be constructed.		

	<p>of the Council to;</p> <p>a) promote the delivery of a southern distributor road to allow for improved accessibility and a more efficient local road network. The phasing of zoned lands adjoining the indicative road will be concurrent with the construction of the road.</p> <p>b) Any proposals on the indicative distributor road should ensure that the frontage of buildings address the road as 'frontage-free' roads to prevent hostile environment for both pedestrian and cyclist in terms of safety.</p>			
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Chapter 7 Infrastructure

Policy/Objective	Chapter	Effects +	Effects -	Effects =
Policy IN 1	IN 1 It is the policy of the Council in co-operation with Irish Water to provide for adequate water, and sewerage facilities in Newcastle West; and in general to raise awareness of energy efficiency, and waste management in the town, including the prevention, minimisation, re-use, recycling/recovery of waste.	+ will hopefully result in less leaks.		

Objective IN1	<p>Objective IN 1 Water supply and storage It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <p>(a) Facilitate any improvements required to the existing water supply system to cater for the needs of an expanding population.</p> <p>(b) Ensure that development proposals provide adequate water infrastructure to facilitate proposed developments and the Newcastle West Local Area Plan.</p>			= would benefit from addition of section on water conservation.
IN2	<p>Objective IN 2: Sewerage facilities It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <p>(a) Ensure that adequate and appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided for prior to further development to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters. In this regard account shall also be taken of existing outstanding permissions in assessing impact.</p> <p>(b) Ensure that development proposals provide adequate waste water infrastructure to facilitate the proposed development.</p>	+ should help to avoid water pollution.		

	<p>This includes the separation of foul and surface water through the provision of separate sewerage networks.</p> <p>(c) Ensure that discharge meets the requirements of the Water Framework Directive</p>			
IN3	<p>Objective IN 3: Surface water disposal</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <p>(a) Require that all applications for development demonstrate that appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are examined and where feasible provided.</p> <p>(b) Require the submission of surface water design calculations establishing the suitability of drainage between the site and a suitable outfall in order to establish whether the existing surface water drainage system can accommodate an additional discharge generated by a proposed development(s).</p> <p>(c) Require applicants to investigate the potential for the</p>			

	<p>provision of porous surfaces where car parking and hard landscaping is proposed.</p> <p>(d) 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 were deemed necessary.</p> <p>(e) Surface water runoff to be designed to agricultural runoff rates, subject to agreement with the local authority.</p>			
IN4	<p>Objective IN 4: Flood Risk Management</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <p>a) Implement the recommendation of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works Guidelines on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidance Documents (November 2009)', and any</p>	+takes into account Flood risk guidance and JBA mapping.		

	<p>subsequent guidelines.</p> <p>b) Require any development proposal in a location identified as being subject to flooding to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry out a flood risk / catchment analysis for the development to assess the likely level of flood hazard that may affect the site to the satisfaction of the Council; 2. Design the development to avoid flood levels, incorporating building design measures and materials to assist evacuation and minimise damage to property from flood waters; 3. Demonstrate that the proposal will not result in increased risk of flooding elsewhere, restrict flow across floodplains, where compensatory storage / storm water 			
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	<p>retention measures shall be provided on site and will not alter the hydrological regime up stream or down stream or at the development location so as to pose an additional flood risk or to increase flood risk;</p> <p>4. Proposals should have provision to reduce the rate and quantity of runoff i.e. minimisation of concrete surfaces and use of semi permeable materials and include adequate measures to cope with the flood risk, e.g. sustainable drainage systems.</p> <p>c) Implement the Planning and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) in the design and consideration of development proposals; and</p> <p>d) Preserve riparian strips free of</p>			
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	<p>development and ensure adequate width to permit access for river maintenance</p> <p>All flood risk assessments should have regard to national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the River Shannon Catchment Flood Risk and Management Plan Studies (CFRAM) when completed by the OPW and the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan. The 'development management justification test' and the 'plan - making justification test' as detailed in The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidance document will guide Council responses to development proposals in areas at moderate or high risk of flooding.</p>			
IN 5	<p>Objective IN 5: Promotion of waste recycling</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council promote and support the development of waste management and recycling in Newcastle West.</p>	+ in line with best practice.		
IN6	<p>Objective IN 6: Provision of composting</p>	+ should reduce volumes of waste to land		

	<p>facilities</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to ensure developers provide new housing with effective composting facilities by applying suitable planning conditions to new residential development.</p>	fills.		
IN 7	<p>Objective IN 7: Shared bin spaces</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to require all commercial and residential developments to be provided with adequate internal and external space for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials. This is particularly important in relation to shared bin spaces such as apartment developments. In such cases the following must be provided for:</p> <p>(a) Adequate space must be given for waste to be segregated and stored in an appropriate manner.</p> <p>(b) A multi-occupancy development will require a designated, ventilated waste storage area of sufficient size which allows for the segregation of waste.</p> <p>(c) New and redesigned commercial buildings and apartment complexes should have</p>			=

	waste facilities designed in a manner that waste can be collected directly from them and where possible waste and recyclables should not have to be collected on the street or at the front of the premises.			
IN8	Objective IN 8: Broadband It is the objective of the Council to ensure that all new development proposals where relevant, incorporate broadband service infrastructure on an open access basis.			=

Chapter 8 Environment and Heritage

Policy/Objective	Chapter	Effects +	Effects -	Effects -
Policy EH1	It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the archaeological, architectural, natural and built heritage of Newcastle West is protected in the interest of sustainable development.	+		
Policy EH2	It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016.	+ should ensure compliance with relevant DAHG and OPW guidance.		
Objective EH1	<i>Objective EH 1: Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)</i> It is the objective of the Council to protect, conserve and where appropriate, enhance the ACA as identified in Map 3.	+ consistent with s28 and OPW guidance.		

	<p>Proposals for development within the ACA shall;</p> <p>a) Reflect and respect the scale and form of existing structures within the ACA in proportioning, overall scale and use of materials and finishes, particularly with reference to the street frontages and seek to contribute to or enhance the character and streetscape of the ACA;</p> <p>b) Seek to retain/incorporate/replacate exterior features which contribute or enhance the character and streetscape of the ACA such as shop fronts, sash windows, gutters and down pipes, decorative plasterwork etc;</p> <p>c) Ensure priority is given to the pedestrian, to inclusive access, and to facilitating the improvement of the quality of the public realm: the latter will include for consideration of the planting of trees in the wider public open spaces, benches for sitting and the articulation of uses through appropriate paving.</p>			
Objective EH2	<p>Objective EH 2: Protected Structures</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to protect structures entered onto the Record of protected structures, or listed to be entered onto the Record and to encourage their appropriate re-use and restoration. The Council shall resist;</p> <p>a) Demolition of</p>	+		

	<p>protected structures, in whole or in part;</p> <p>b) Removal or modification of features of architectural importance;</p> <p>c) Development that would adversely affect the setting of the protected structure.</p>			
EH3	<p>Objective EH 3: Archaeology</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council:</p> <p>(a) to seek the preservation (in situ, or at a minimum, preservation by record) of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest. This is to include all the sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994.</p> <p>(b) to protect and preserve (in situ, or at a minimum, preservation by record) all sites and features of historical interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.</p> <p>(c) to ensure that any proposed development shall not have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument.</p> <p>(d) that the area of a monument and the associated buffer area shall not be included as part of the open space requirement demanded of a</p>	+		

	<p>specific development, but should be additional to the required open spaces, and if appropriate, where such a monument lies within a development, a conservation and/or management plan for that monument shall be submitted as part of the landscape plan for that development.</p>			
EH4	<p>Objective EH4: Tree Protection and Nature Conservation It is the objective of the Council to protect natural stone boundary walls and mature trees. Development that requires the felling or harming of such trees shall not normally be permitted unless otherwise supported by a tree survey report establishing that the subject trees are of no ecological or amenity value. Such report shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and competent person.</p>	+ important in the context of the Castle Demesne- see also below in Chapter 9.		
EH5	<p>Objective EH5: Designated Sites and Nature Conservation It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Protect the integrity of the downstream Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation site, through the establishment of buffer zones around the river. b) Ensure that appropriate waste water infrastructure is provided in advance of new developments thus ensuring that discharges to the river are within correct 	+ important in ensuring that there are no ex-situ effects.		

	<p>environmental limits.</p> <p>No projects which will be reasonably likely to give rise to significant adverse direct, indirect or secondary impacts on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites having regard to their conservation objectives arising from reduction in species diversity, shall be permitted on the basis of the plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).</p> <p>In terms of general nature conservation the Council will protect undesignated habitats such as notable trees and hedgerows and ponds/wetlands and other natural features of local importance.</p>			
EH6	<p>Objective EH6: Compliance with Water Framework Directive</p> <p>All development activities governed by the plan shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the EU Water Framework Directive and associated regulations and guidance documentation including the Shannon International River Basin Management Plan 2009 – 2015 and any subsequent documents.</p>	+ emphasised by IFI and EPA.		
EH7	<p>Objective EH 7 : Compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive</p> <p>Any developments that fall within the ambit of the EU EIS directive 2011/92/EU and associated regulations will be subject to the contents of the revised directive and the updated regulations.</p>	+		
EH8	<p>Objective EH 8:</p>	+		

	Adaptation to Climate change. It is the objective of the Council to promote responsible development and management of land, drainage systems and natural habitats and to encourage development at appropriate locations, which minimise the use of fossil fuels and maximises the use of local or renewable resources.			

Chapter 9 Community and Recreation

Policy/Objective	Chapter 9	Effects +	Effects -	Effects =
Policy C1	Policy C1: Community and Recreational Facilities It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the education, health facilities, recreation, open space and community needs of residents, both new and existing, can be provided for by suitably zoning lands for these purposes. The Council will require future development in Newcastle West to be accompanied by a corresponding expansion of these facilities and amenities	+ should ensure that such facilities keeps pace with development.		
Objective C1	Objective C1: Community and civic facilities It is the objective of the Council to seek where practicable and appropriate, that community facilities are located within the town, in the interest of	+		

	sustainable development. The proposal should demonstrate that the principles of accessibility for all and Irelands Age-friendly Cities and Counties Programme' were incorporated.			
C2	<p>Objective C 2: Open space hierarchy</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to seek the provision of well designed, high quality, accessible and usable open space in all residential development in accordance with the development management standards of the County Development Plan.</p>	+ should ensure that open space provision meets minimum standards to ensure its utility.		
C3	<p>Objective C 3: New amenity areas and walkways/ cycleways</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to:</p> <p>a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways/cycle ways as indicated on the Amenity Map, in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated</p>	+ Acknowledges the Cycle strategy.		

	<p>walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties overlook proposed walkways.</p> <p>b) Co-operate with other agencies to enhance, promote and provide recreational and amenity facilities in the town.</p> <p>c) Future development proposals shall incorporate the relevant recommendations of the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West.</p>			
C4	<p>Objective C 4: Allotments and Community Gardens</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations</p>	+ local contribution to reducing food miles.		
C5	<p>Objective C 5: Special Control Area – Demesne Parklands</p> <p>It is the objective of the Council to protect the integrity of the Demesne parkland which is considered to be an area of high natural, ecological,</p>	+ identified by the public as the most environmental issue during the plans preparation.		

	<p>historical and recreational value. Any proposals shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to or enhance the environment and character of the Demesne; • Protect any natural features or landscape elements that contribute to the area's special character including the tree-lined approach avenue, the ha-ha, and • Ensure preservation in situ of any potential subterranean archaeological remains. 			
C6	<p>Objective C 6: Educational Facilities</p> <p>It is the objective of the County Council to:</p> <p>a) Ensure that there are sufficient educational places to meet the needs generated by proposed residential developments by requiring the completion of a Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment for residential developments of 5 or more dwellings.</p> <p>Ensure that all proposals for childcare facilities shall comply with</p>	+ hugely important from a social perspective as much of the town population is young.		

	the development management standards of the County Development Plan and due consideration given to principles of proper planning and sustainable development			
C7	<p>Objective C 7: Provision of Healthcare Facilities</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <p>Support the Health Service Executive (West) and other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of appropriate healthcare facilities and the provision of community based care facilities, at appropriate locations, subject to proper planning considerations and the principles of sustainable development.</p>	+ in conjunction with C1 this is designed to help the vulnerable parts of the community.		
C8	<p>Objective C8: Emergency Services</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to:</p> <p>(a) Facilitate the redevelopment of the emergency services in the town at appropriate locations, subject to consideration demonstrated by the proposal to the principles of proper planning and sustainable development</p>			=