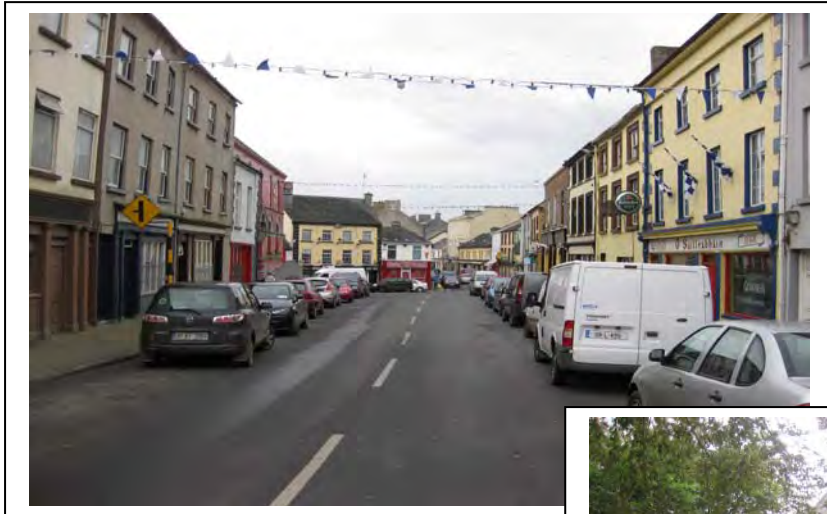


Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2012-2018



November 2012



Limerick County Council
Comhairle Chontae Luimnigh

Forward Planning
Pleanáil Chun Tosaigh

In accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2011, Section 20 (4A), this Local Area Plan came into effect on 19th November 2012, four weeks from the date of its adoption by elected members of Limerick County Council on the 22nd October 2012.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	7
1.1 What is the Rathkeale Local Area Plan (LAP)?	7
1.2 Plan Area	7
1.3 The Review Process	8
1.3.1 Steps involved in the preparation of the LAP	8
1.3.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	9
1.3.3 Appropriate Assessment	9
1.3.4 Flood Risk Assessment	9
1.4 Planning Context	9
1.4.1 National Planning Context	10
1.4.2 Regional Planning Context	10
1.4.3 County Planning Context	11
1.4.4 Other Planning Guidelines	11
Chapter 2: Context	12
2.1 Geographical Context	12
2.2 Historic Evolution	12
2.3 Natural and Built Environment	15
2.4 Function	16
2.5 Demographic and Socio-economic Context	16
2.5.1 Population	16
2.5.2 Age Profile	18
2.5.3 Employment	18
2.5.4 Education	20
2.5.5 Travel Patterns	20
Chapter 3: Plan Strategy	22
3.1 Policy Context	22
3.2 Vision Statement	22
3.3 Strategic Policy	22
3.4 Evaluation of 2007 Rathkeale LAP	23
3.5 SWOT Analysis	24
3.6 Population Targets and Zoning Requirements	25
3.6.1 Population Targets	25
3.6.2 Land Currently available for housing development	27
Chapter 4: Housing	28
4.1 Introduction	28
4.2 Residential density, design, mix and phasing	28
4.3 Serviced and low density sites	29
4.4 Infill Development - Residential	30
4.5 Social Housing	31
4.6 Traveller Accommodation	32
Chapter 5: Economic Development	34
5.1 Introduction	34
5.2 Enterprise and Employment zoned land	35
5.3 Small-scale business in residential areas	36

5.4	Retail and commercial development	36
5.5	Mixed use zoned land	38
5.6	Tourism	38
Chapter 6: Transport		41
6.1	Introduction	41
6.2	Development of the residential zoned lands at Enniscouch	42
6.3	Movement and accessibility	43
Chapter 7: Infrastructure		45
7.1	Introduction	45
7.2	Water Supply	45
7.3	Foul Sewerage	45
7.4	Surface Water Drainage	46
7.5	Flood Risk Management	46
7.6	Waste Management	48
7.7	Energy and Electricity	48
7.8	Access to Broadband and Telecommunications	48
Chapter 8: Environment and Heritage		50
8.1	Introduction	50
8.2	Built Environment	50
	8.2.1 Protected Structures	50
	8.2.2 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA)	51
	8.2.3 Rathkeale Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)	51
8.3	Archaeological Heritage	53
8.4	Natural Environment	54
8.5	Climate Change	56
Chapter 9: Community and Recreation		57
9.1	Introduction	57
9.2	Community and Recreation	57
9.3	Education and Childcare Facilities	58
9.4	Health Facilities	59
9.5	Emergency Services	59
Chapter 10: Urban Design		60
10.1	Introduction	60
10.2	Derelict and Vacant sites	61
10.3	Rathkeale Opportunity Areas	63
Chapter 11: Land Use Zoning		78
11.1	Purpose of Land Use Zoning	78
11.2	Non Conforming Uses	79
11.3	Land Use Zoning Categories	79
11.4	Land Use Matrix	80
Appendices		
Appendix 1: Maps		
Map 1	Zoning Map	

Map 2	Amenity Map
Map 3	Protected Structures Map
Map 4	Predictive Flood Zones
Map 5	Special Development Area for Temporary Private Sites for Mobile Homes/Caravans (page 33)

Appendix 2:	Flood Risk Assessment
Appendix 3	SEA/AA Screening Report
Appendix 4	Protected Structures and List of Traditional Building Materials found in County Limerick
Appendix 5	Recorded Monuments
Appendix 6	Glossary and Abbreviations

List of Tables

Table 2.1	Total Population, Rathkeale	17
Table 3.1	SWOT Analysis of Rathkeale	24
Table 3.2	Population targets, total residential units and zoned land requirements	26
Table 3.3	Residential units and land requirements by 2018	26
Table 3.4	Residential land required and zoned	27
Table 11.1	Total Zoned Lands	78
Table 11.2	Rathkeale Land Use Zoning Matrix 2012 – 2018	81

List of Figures

Figure 1.1	Location of Rathkeale	8
Figure 1.2	Hierarchy of Spatial Planning Policies	9
Figure 2.1	Map of Rathkeale, 1839	13
Figure 2.2	Map of Rathkeale, 1923	13
Figure 2.3	Aerial Photograph of Rathkeale, 2006	14
Figure 2.4	Map of Rathkeale OSI 2010	14
Figure 2.5	Example of Protected Structures	16
Figure 2.6	Population trend experienced by Rathkeale Rural and Urban ED's 1996 – 2011, CSO	17
Figure 2.7	Age Profile of Rathkeale ED's, Census 2006	18
Figure 2.8	Persons at work by sex and occupation, Census 2006	19
Figure 2.9	Persons aged 15 years and over by economic status	19
Figure 2.10	Persons aged 15 years and over by education completed	20
Figure 2.11	Persons aged 5 years + by distance travelled to work/school	21
Figure 2.12	Persons aged 5 years + by means of travel to work/school	21
Figure 4.1	Infill development at the small square	31
Figure 5.1	Part of Rathkeale town centre – Main Street	37
Figure 5.2	Section of Great Southern Trail	39
Figure 5.3	Existing signage for the Great Southern Trail	39
Figure 5.4	Palatine Museum	39
Figure 5.5	Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway	40
Figure 6.1	Council owned car park	42
Figure 6.2	An Seabhac Public House	43
Figure 6.3	Existing Residential Access Road	43
Figure 8.1	Part of ACA Main Street	52

Figure 8.2	Matrix Way River Walk along Deel River	56
Figure 9.1	Rathkeale Sports Complex	58
Figure 10.1	Derelict Site on Main Street	62
Figure 10.2	Cinema building	62
Figure 10.3	Map showing location of Opportunity Areas	63

Structure of the Plan

Chapter 1 Introduction

This section introduces the proposed Rathkeale LAP 2012 – 2018, and the statutory context which informs the LAP.

Chapter 2 Context

This Chapter describes the geographical location of the town: its historical evolution, present day function and an overview of the socio-economics and demographics of the town, specifically population, age profile, employment, education and travel patterns.

Chapter 3 Plan Strategy

This Chapter outlines the Councils vision statement for the development of the town, and the consequent strategic objective to achieve the vision statement. A SWOT analysis of the town is undertaken bearing in mind the issues identified by the various stakeholders who made submissions during the non-statutory pre-draft stage. Importantly, this Chapter sets out the reasoning behind the allocation of zoning and objectives of the proposed LAP based on population projections. These population projections are detailed in Variation No. 1 to the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.

Chapter 4 Housing

Chapter 4 sets out the requirements of the Council regarding any proposed residential development. This discussion includes the requirements of the Limerick County Development Plan, residential density, design, housing mix and phasing, infill development, social housing and traveller accommodation.

Chapter 5 Economic Development

This Chapter outlines the labour market in Rathkeale based on the most up to date census figures, skills, and education which effects employability. The Chapter discusses lands zoned for enterprise and employment, mixed use, small-scale businesses in residential areas and commercial and retail development in the town and tourism.

Chapter 6 Transport

This Chapter briefly describes national and regional transport policy and how it informs the Councils local transport objectives for the town.

Chapter 7 Infrastructure

This Chapter briefly deals with water services infrastructure including water supply, waste water treatment, storm water drainage, flood risk management, waste management, energy and electricity and access to broadband and telecommunications.

Chapter 8 Environment and Heritage

This Chapter deals with archaeological, architectural, the natural and built heritage. Topics discussed include Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), the natural environment and climate change.

Chapter 9 Community and Recreation

Chapter 9 looks at provisions made by the Plan for education, health facilities, open space and community infrastructure.

Chapter 10 Urban Design

Chapter 10 gives a brief overview of the Council's requirements for the design of future buildings and places. Eleven opportunity areas are identified as having potential for development.

Chapter 11 Land Use Zoning

This Chapter describes the purpose of the various land use zones of the Plan.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 What is the Rathkeale Local Area Plan (LAP)?

The Rathkeale Local Area Plan (LAP) is a legal document consisting of a public statement of Limerick County Council's planning policies for the town of Rathkeale. This plan, when adopted will replace the Rathkeale LAP 2007 - 2013. The review of the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2007 has been brought forward as there is a statutory obligation on the Council to ensure that its contents and population projections are in line with those of the core strategy of the County Development Plan 2010-2016, as varied in 2011 and the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022.

The aim of the LAP is to establish a framework for the planned, coordinated and sustainable development of the town of Rathkeale, including the conservation and enhancement of its natural and built environment over the next six years and beyond. The LAP provides guidance as to how this development can be achieved, what new developments are needed, where public and private resource inputs are required, and guidance for development proposed in the plan area.

The proposed plan builds on the review of the Rathkeale LAP 2007 - 2013, taking into account recent key development trends and national, regional and local policy developments.

All planning applications in the town of Rathkeale will be measured against the contents of this LAP and the current Limerick County Development Plan. The current Rathkeale LAP was formally adopted by elected members of the Council on May 2007 and will remain in force until this proposed LAP is adopted.

The Rathkeale LAP must be read in conjunction with the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 and any variation thereof. Unless otherwise stated, the general development plan policies, objectives and development management standards still apply to the area.

1.2 Plan Area

The Rathkeale LAP covers approximately 2.93 square kilometres (293 hectares) in area and falls into the Rathkeale Urban and Rathkeale Rural Electoral Divisions (ED's). It contains parts of the townlands of Kyletaun, Wolfeburgess East and Wolfeburgess West, Castlematrix, Enniscouch, Ballywilliam North, Abbeylands, Rathkeale and Englishtenements. It is located approximately 31km south west of Limerick city.

Figure 1.1 Location of Rathkeale



Not to scale

1.3 The Review Process

1.3.1 Steps involved in preparation of the plan

The review of the Local Area Plan commenced on the 21 January 2012 with the publication of an issues paper entitled 'Proposed Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2012 – 2018 – First Issues'. Its intention was to prompt discussion on local issues at pre draft stage. Copies of the issues paper and an invitation to make a submission were sent to local community and voluntary agencies in the area. A public meeting was held in the area in the Rathkeale Community Centre on the 24th January 2012.

The LAP went on public display at County Buildings, area offices, libraries and on the internet at www.lcc.ie for a period of six weeks from 14th April 2012 – 28th May 2012. Again, written submissions were invited. At the end of the public consultation period a Manager's Report was prepared on any issues arising during the public consultation period and was submitted to the Members of the Council for their consideration. Following the elected members consideration of the Manager's Report, the Council decided to materially amend the proposed local area plan and a further period of four weeks public consultation took place from the 28th July to 27th August 2012 on these material alterations only. A further Manager's Report on the submissions received regarding the proposed amendments was then prepared for the Councillors who having considered the report, made the new local area plan on the 22nd October 2012.

Responsibility for making a local area plan rests with the elected members of the Planning Authority.

1.3.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requires all European Union member states to systematically evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing a plan or programme prior to its adoption. The Plan does not fall within the thresholds for which a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is mandatory. The Plan was screened in line with “Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment - Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities” to determine whether or not a SEA would nevertheless be appropriate. After consultation with the Environmental Authorities it was determined by the Planning Authority that a full Environmental Report was not required. See Appendix 3 for SEA Screening – Executive Summary.

1.3.3 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

In accordance with Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive the Planning Authority undertook an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report of the proposed plan which found that the plan would have no significant effects on Natura 2000 sites.

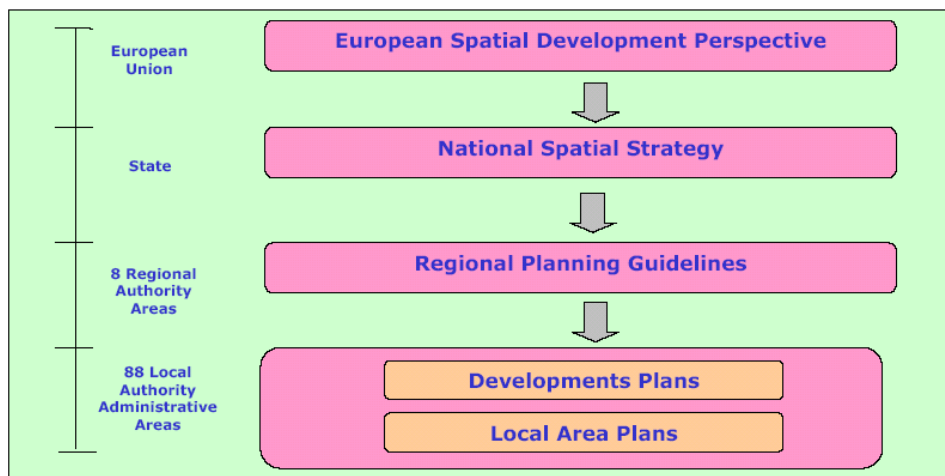
1.3.4 Flood Risk Assessment

A Stage One Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken in support of the Rathkeale LAP. See Appendix 2 – Flood Risk Assessment. The information gathered has informed the Land Use Zoning Map included in this LAP. The LAP has adopted the precautionary approach and lands which have been identified as potentially at risk to flooding have been zoned for uses which are not considered vulnerable.

1.4 Planning Context

In accordance with the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2011 the proposed LAP has been informed by a hierarchy of national, regional, and local spatial planning policies. See Figure 1.2 below.

Figure 1.2 Hierarchy of Spatial Planning Policies



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

1.4.1 National Planning Context

1.4.1.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002 - 2020

The National Spatial Strategy for Ireland (NSS) is a twenty year planning framework designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development and population growth between regions. Its focus is on people, on places and on building communities. The National Spatial Strategy concentrates on a number of specific regions and their development by identifying Gateway settlements throughout the country which are to be used to support geographically balanced growth in the regions outside of the Greater Dublin Area. Rathkeale is considered to play a complementary role to the development of the Limerick – Ennis - Shannon Gateway as outlined in the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines.

1.4.1.2 National Development Plan 2007-2013

The National Development Plan (NDP) identifies investment funding for significant projects in sectors such as health services, social housing, education, roads, public transport, rural development, industry, and water and waste services. The NDP is designed to strengthen and improve the international competitiveness of the Country so as to support continued, but more balanced, economic and social development in line with the NSS.

1.4.2 Regional Planning Context

1.4.2.1 Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 - 2022

This document has been prepared in accordance with the overall policy frameworks established by the National Spatial Strategy and the National Development Plan 2007-2013. It sets clear objectives and targets to guide County Development Plans and Local Area Plans within the region, specifically in relation to future population, settlement strategy, development distribution and infrastructure investment priorities in line with the NDP 2007-2013. The Regional Planning Guidelines provide a wider area approach to the development of County Limerick. These guidelines look at Limerick in its regional context and identifies sub-regions or 'zones', with the core area of the region incorporating the Limerick Shannon Gateway. Rathkeale is located in zone 1.

1.4.2.2 Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP)

A strategic planning, land use and transportation strategy for the Mid-West region has been prepared and was adopted by the elected members of Limerick County Council in September 2012. Its preparation is overseen by the County Councils of Limerick, North Tipperary, Clare and Limerick City Council. MWASP provides for a comprehensive integrated plan for Land Use Planning and Transportation in the Mid-West Region over the next 30 years.

1.4.2.3 Retail Strategy for the Mid West Region 2010 - 2016

This strategy was prepared in 2010 on behalf of Counties Limerick and Clare and Limerick City Council. It addresses the retail needs, opportunities and issues of the Mid-West region and sets out an integrated strategic framework for retail planning in the Mid West over the period to 2016.

1.4.2.4 Joint Housing Strategy 2010 – 2017

The Housing Strategy has been prepared in accordance with Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011 and covers the functional areas of Limerick County Council, Limerick City Council and Clare County Council.

A critical objective of the Housing Strategy is to ensure the provision of housing for the existing and projected future populations in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The housing strategy also aims to provide an equitable level of social housing and social integration.

1.4.3 County Planning Context

1.4.3.1 Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016, as varied

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, as varied is the 'parent' document for this proposed Rathkeale LAP, and thus the proposed LAP is made in accordance with the policies and objectives as set out in the County Development Plan.

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016, as varied sets out the Council's policy to steer future development in the County based on a settlement hierarchy reflecting settlement function. It outlines population targets and zoning requirements for settlements for the years 2016 and 2022 which must be incorporated into LAPs.

The settlement structure for County Limerick which is set out in the County Development Plan designates Rathkeale as a Tier 3 settlement. Tier 3 settlements are generally located on major transport corridors and are promoted as secondary development centres for significant future development. They provide a wide range of services and their functions are complementary to the Limerick Gateway, the Key Service Centres and each other. They also have an important regional employment function within their surrounding catchment areas.

Objective SS O11 in the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016, as varied states that it is an objective of the Council to address the unique development patterns within the town of Rathkeale and stem the existing decline.

1.4.4 Other Planning Guidelines

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

Chapter 2 Context

2.1 Geographical Context

Rathkeale is located approximately 31km south west of Limerick city and is 12km from Newcastle West and 11km from Askeaton. Its hinterland is the rural area defined by the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016, as varied, as an area of Strong Agricultural Base. The town is bypassed by the Limerick to Tralee National Primary Road (N21), which is the main tourist and traffic route serving the Southwest. The R523 Regional Road runs in an east to west direction through the town to form part of the Main Street. The R518 regional road also traverses the town serving Askeaton to the north and Ballingarry to the south.

Situated between the towns of Newcastle West and Adare, Rathkeale is located on a relatively flat plain within a large agricultural hinterland. The River Deel flows through the town in a southeast to northwest direction before entering the Shannon Estuary at Askeaton.

2.2 Historic Evolution

Rathkeale is a bridging point on the River Deel. The town derived its name from the Irish *Rath Gaela* meaning Caola' or Gaela's fort which suggests that there was a pre-Norman settlement here. Rathguala fort is named in the "Book of Rights", before 900¹.

The town of Rathkeale was granted to various individuals during the thirteenth century. The Augustinian priory of St. Mary was founded in the early thirteenth century. In 1300 the community in Rathkeale paid 5 marks towards the subsidy for the Scottish war. This subsidy shows that Rathkeale had grown to an important economic centre over a short period of time. After 1380 the Desmonds held the town. In 1463 a grant was awarded to Rathkeale towards a town wall. During the 16th and 17th century, it was the primary regional centre for the dispensation of justice and an important market town. In 1709 Sir Thomas Southwell, a local landlord, brought 200 German Palatine families to his estate. They were committed to growing flax and hemp, and contributed to the linen industry and trade of the town.

Rathkeale witnessed a surge in industrialisation throughout the eighteenth century. In 1717 a factory for hempen sailcloth and a linen market were established. By 1820 the town had as many as 31 occupational categories, three tan yards, a brewery, a distillery, a bleachyard, and was manufacturing soap candles, shoes and salt.² In 1836 Rathkeale was the largest town in the county. It had a large constabulary barracks, a courthouse, a gaol, a flour mill and a fever hospital. The 1820-30's saw the end of this economic boom.

¹ Westropp, T.J. 1904/05 'Ancient Churches of Limerick', *PRIA* XXV, 389.

² O'Connor, P. 1996 *All Ireland is in and about Rathkeale*, Newcastle West, 64.

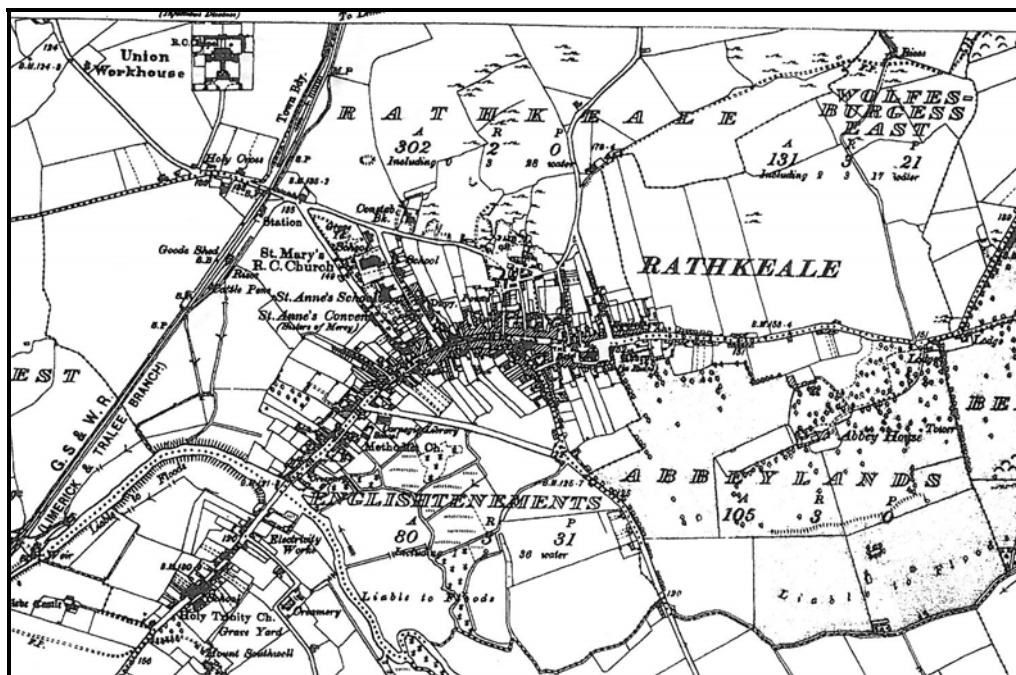
Throughout the 19th century the prosperity of the town declined through the lack of an active landlord, competition with foreign products and the effects of the famine.

Figure 2.1 Map of Rathkeale, from the first Ordnance Survey edition in 1839.



Not to scale

Figure 2.2 Map of Rathkeale, from O.S 2nd Edition 25 inch map 1923

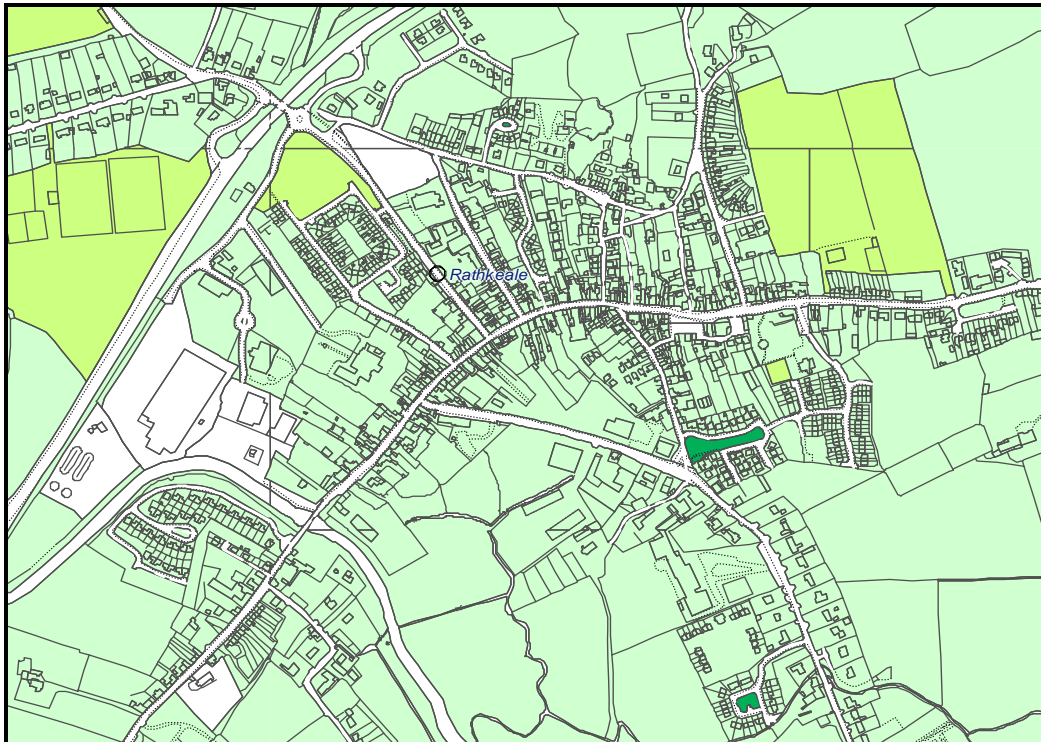


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Figure 2.3 Aerial Photograph of Rathkeale, 2006



Figure 2.4 Map of Rathkeale OSI December 2010



Not to scale

Since the adoption of the Rathkeale LAP in 2007 the town has developed along the Ballingarry Road with the construction of 25 houses at Ballywilliam north. Also an additional 7 dwellings have been constructed in Orchard Avenue housing estate located on Church Street, immediately south of the Deel River. Infill/backland development is taking place at Well Lane with the construction of 18 dwellings and also at Monkshill, adjoining the N21 with the construction of 16 dwellings. All of these developments remain unfinished and are at various stages of construction.

2.3 Natural and Built Environment

Rathkeale is located in the Agricultural Lowlands as designated by the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016, as varied. This lowland farming landscape is defined by regular field boundaries with a developed hedgerow system and the primary farming activity is pastoral or dairy farming. Consequential to its hinterland Rathkeale developed as a market town.

Rathkeale is essentially a linear town with development having taken place off the side roads to the north and south of Main Street. The Square, the River Deel and the traditional streetscape are all important elements in the makeup of the town's physical appearance. Rathkeale is typical of an urban settlement located in a predominantly rural area. The town performs an important civic and service function with a concentration of civic amenities including churches and schools. These provide services not only for the resident population but also for a much wider rural and parish based population. The town provides a relatively high concentration of urban dwellings in a compact area, and services such as pubs, small retailers and local economic activity concentrated along Main Street. The majority of the town's building stock is of nineteenth and early twentieth century origin. The town displays a number of notable buildings, including the Courthouse (now Community Centre), the two bank buildings, and the two Churches. On the edge of the town there are two notable castle buildings – Castle Matrix and Glebe Castle – both situated to the southwest. The prominence of these buildings makes them important local landmarks. The Catholic Church on New Road commands an elevated position, which makes it visible from most of the approach roads into the town and represents one of the more important townscape features.

Main Street is dominated by nineteenth century architecture of terraced buildings, two and three storey, some with retail uses on the ground floor. However a large number of premises in the town centre are either vacant or used for storage purposes which impact on the physical appearance of the town and contribute to its neglected appearance. Ground floor commercial vacancy is particularly acute on the upper part of Main Street, south of the Square.

There are 51 Protected Structures within the LAP boundary and an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) extending along much of Main Street and the Boherboy area of town and the southern part of Thomas Street. All of the Protected Structures are entered in the National Inventory of Architectural

Heritage. There are ten recorded archaeological monuments within the LAP boundary.

Figure 2.5 Examples of a Protected Structures, Church Street, Rathleale



2.4 Function

The town performs an important civic, trade/market and service function for the resident population and for the surrounding hinterland. This is evident by the diverse range of services and businesses operating in the town.

Most of the local economic activity is located on Main Street. Rathkeale has a credit union, two banks, a large convenience retailer (Eurospar) located on Main Street, a number of smaller convenience shops/newsagents, seven comparison retailers, three pharmacies, a number of pubs, five restaurant/takeaways, six hair dressers/barbers/beauty salons, a funeral home, a service station, a bookmakers, a post office, a farm supply store, a car repair service, furniture and home interior store, professional services including accountancy, auctioneering and a veterinary clinic. Educational, health and community facilities include a health clinic, three primary schools, a secondary school, community pre-school, a traveller training centre and a Garda station.

Reflecting the increasing importance of the towns tourist function, a tourist office has been developed in the community centre and is combined with a community information centre. Also the Rathkeale House Hotel has recently reopened and the development of the Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway linking Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale has recently been completed.

2.5 Demographic and Socio-economic Context

2.5.1 Population

The total population of Rathkeale town according to the 2011 census was 1550. This represented a 3.7% increase in population from the 2006 figure which was 1494. The rate of population increase in the town has slowed

considerably in recent years when compared to the previous census which showed an increase in population of nearly 10% between 2002 and 2006. However the town is unique with an estimated 40% of the population from the Travelling Community. Therefore the population of the town fluctuates due to the nomadic lifestyle of the trader-travellers who spend much of the year trading in Britain and in Europe.

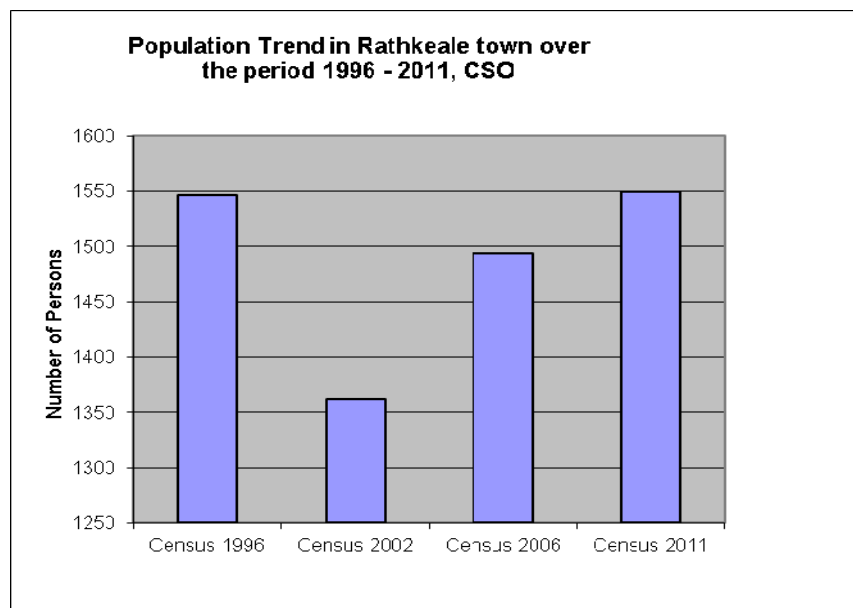
Table 2.1 Total Population of Rathkeale town

Year	Population	Population change %
1996	1546	
2002	1362	-11.9%
2006	1494	+ 9.7%
2011	1550	+ 3.7%

Source: CSO Census

The graph below indicates the total population trend experienced by Rathkeale town over the period 1996 to 2011. The town experienced a significant decrease in population between 1996 and 2002 and an increase in population between 2002 and 2011. In the past two censuses carried out the population of the town has increased, however the rate of increase has slowed considerably in the latest census.

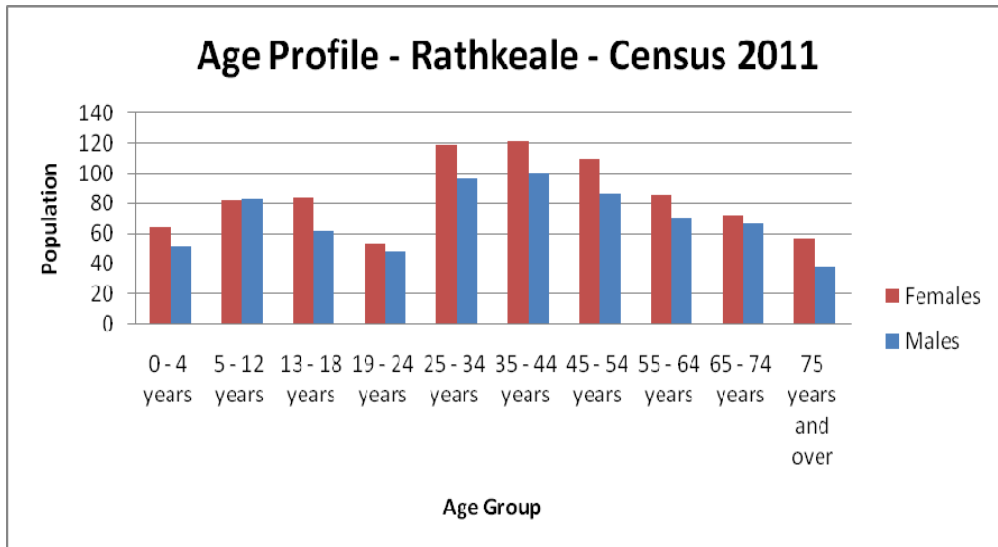
Figure 2.6 Population trend experienced in Rathkeale town, 1996 – 2011, CSO



2.5.2 Age profile

The graph below depicts the age structure in Rathkeale town in 2011. This demonstrates that Rathkeale has a relatively young population with 426 persons under the age of 18 (27% of the total population). At 28% of the total population the 25 - 34 and 35 - 44 age groups account for a significant proportion of the overall population. This has implications in terms of housing provision, the size of the workforce, demand for education and recreation amenities and demand for health services.

Figure 2.7 Age Profile, Rathkeale town, Census 2011



2.5.3 Employment

Figure 2.8 depicts the employment in different industrial groups in 2006. The greatest numbers were employed in manufacturing and commerce/trade, while professional services and construction also absorbed a considerable amount of the local workforce at the time. However, it is envisaged that the 2011 Census will indicate that employment has decreased as many jobs have been lost since 2006 in these and other sectors. On a local level the Golden Vale Mart, located close to the centre of the town closed in December 2009 with both direct and indirect job losses. Figure 2.7 indicates that the greatest numbers employed in manufacturing and construction sectors in the Rathkeale Rural and Urban electoral divisions were male according to the 2006 Census. Thus, it can be deduced that the male workforce has been considerably negatively affected in terms of unemployment due to the downturn in the economy in recent years. According to the 2006 Census the unemployment rate in Rathkeale was 11% of the total workforce.

Figure 2.8 Persons at work by sex and occupation, Rathkeale Rural and Urban ED, Census 2006

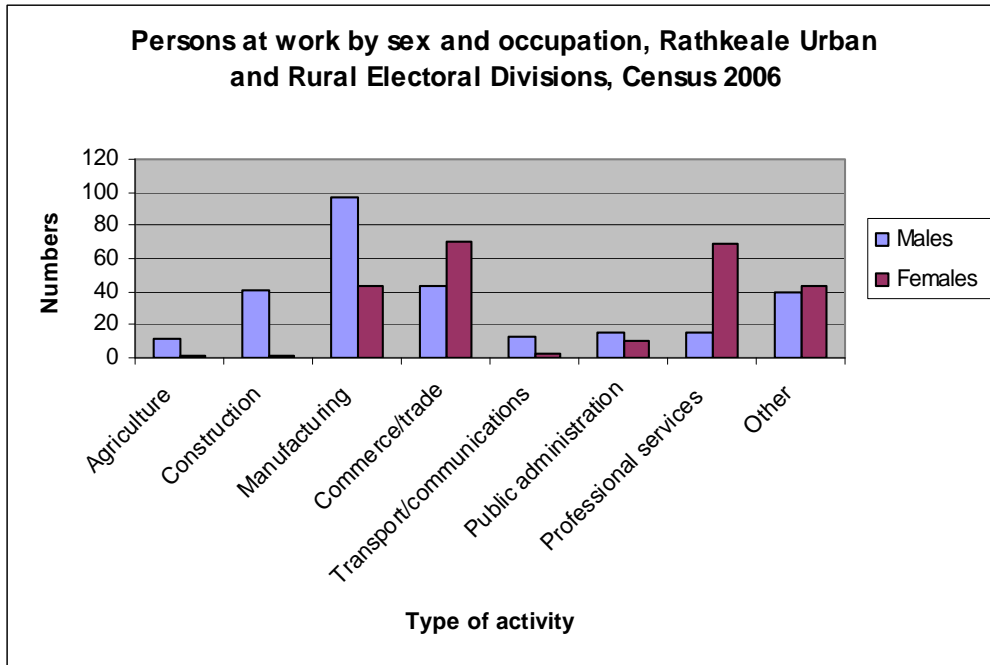
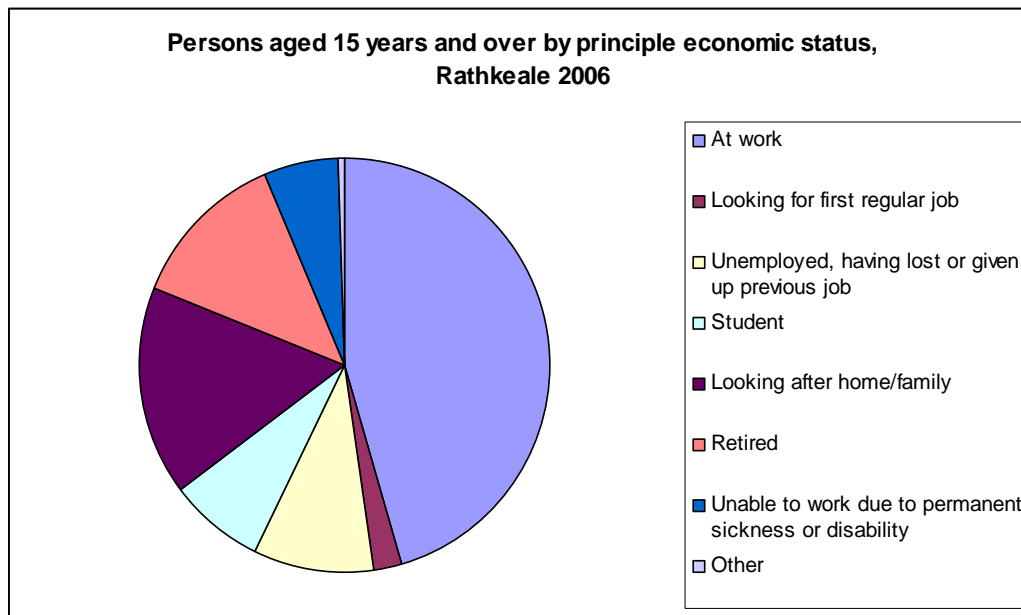


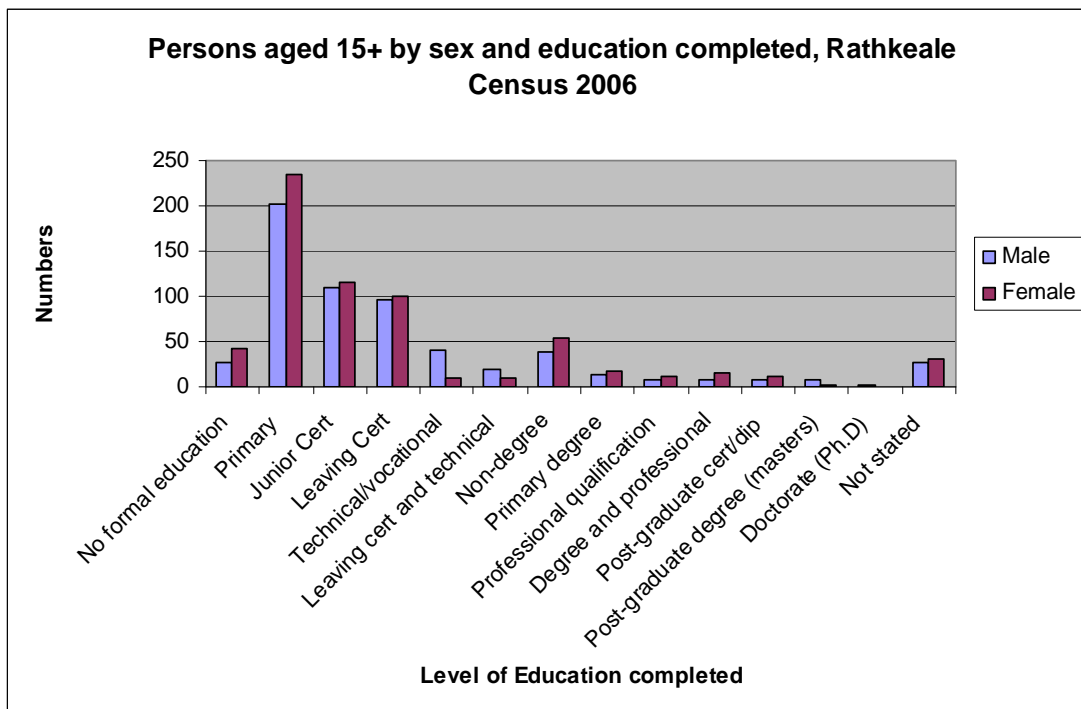
Figure 2.9 Persons aged 15 years and over by principal economic status, Rathkeale Rural and Urban ED's, Census 2006



2.5.4 Education

Analysis of the 2006 census indicates a relatively poor standard of education. 15% of those over 15 years of age have completed the leaving cert while only 8% have a degree or post graduate qualification. A greater number of males completed technical/vocational education which may reflect the number of males that entered into apprenticeships in the construction sector.

Figure 2.10 Persons aged 15 years and over by sex and education completed, Rathkeale Urban and Rural ED's, Census 2006



2.5.5 Travel Patterns

Given its central location in County Limerick, Rathkeale is within commuting distance of Limerick City, its environs and the towns of Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale and Kilmallock. Figure 2.11 shows the distances travelled by people living in the Rathkeale Rural and Urban electoral divisions. According to the 2006 census there is a noticeable peak at 25km to 49km, which would be largely accounted for by those commuting to Limerick City and its environs. Thirty eight percent of those aged 5+ travelled less than 4km. A considerable amount of this is accounted for by traffic associated with schools. Figure 2.12 below shows that nearly 50% of people use the car as the means to get to work, school or college.

Figure 2.11 Persons aged 5 years and over by distance travelled to work, school or college, Rathkeale Urban and Rural ED's, 2006

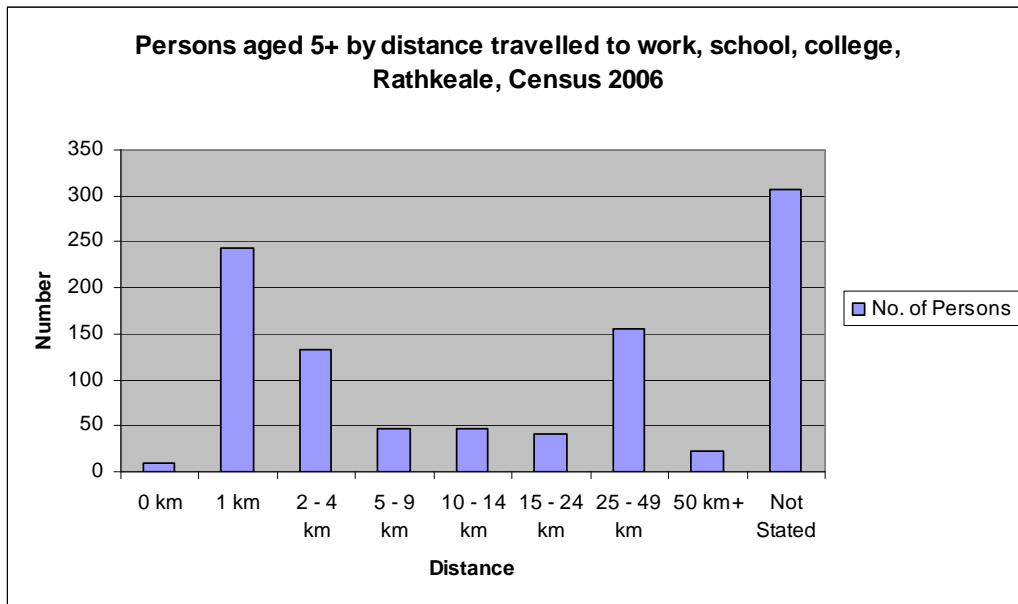
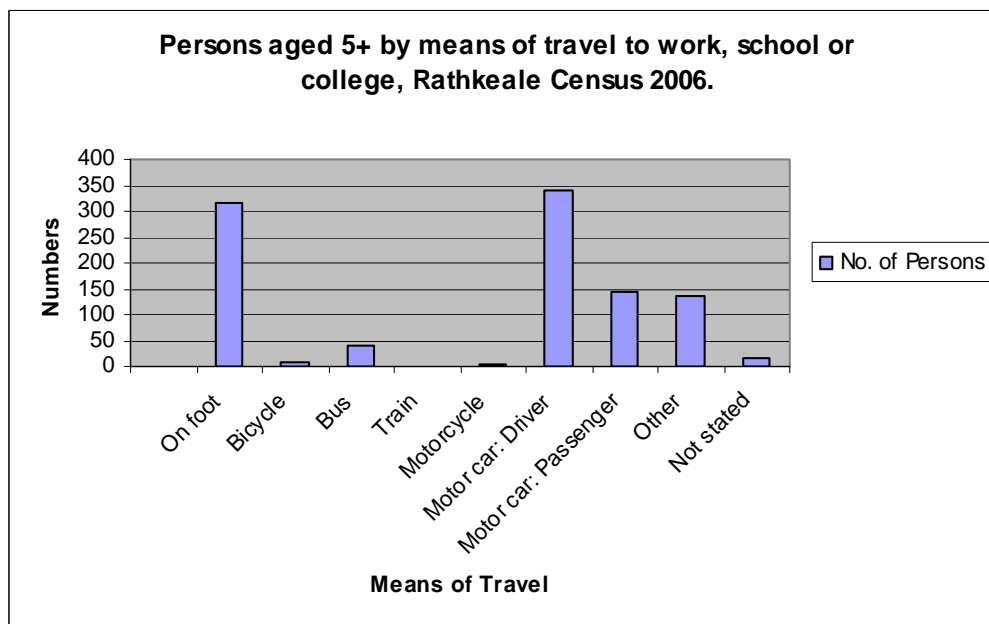


Figure 2.12 Persons aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work, school or college, Rathkeale Urban and Rural ED's, 2006



Chapter 3 Plan Strategy

3.1 Policy Context

The proposed Rathkeale LAP 2012 – 2018 is made in accordance with the objectives as set out in the Limerick County Development Plan (CDP) 2010 - 2016, as adopted by the Councillors in November 2010 and varied in December 2011.

The CDP contains the Council's policy to guide future development in County Limerick. This guidance includes placing settlements, towns and villages in a settlement hierarchy determined by the population of the settlement, and existing public and private services. The settlement hierarchy reflects the development role of each settlement within the county. Rathkeale is a Tier 3 settlement providing a wide range of services for its inhabitants and its hinterland. The County Development Plan also outlines the population projections for Rathkeale town up to 2018 and 2022. These projections are referred to as the core strategy in the CDP³.

3.2 Vision Statement

It is the long term vision of the Council that Rathkeale functions efficiently as a place where people can and want to live, work, and visit, and which fosters an authentic sense of place.

To achieve this vision Rathkeale must develop in a manner that protects its rich cultural and natural heritage, accommodates a vibrant and balanced community, and provides good employment opportunities and quality local services and amenities. Good transport links are important, including improvements to public transport services to provide a genuine alternative to the car. Building on the existing strengths of the settlement it is imperative that all stakeholders maximise any development opportunities in the town to secure progression and improved quality of life.

3.3 Strategic Policy

S1 Sustainable Development

It is the policy of the Council to support the sustainable development of Rathkeale.

S2 Compliance with the Limerick County Development Plan

It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010 – 2016 as varied and the objectives of this Plan.

³ Refer to Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 as varied, Chapter 2, Core Strategy and Chapter 3, Urban and Rural Settlement Strategy.

In order to achieve strategic policy S1 this proposed LAP focuses on:

- (a) Rationalising the residential land use in the town to comply with the population targets as set out in the County Development Plan core strategy.
- (b) Ensuring development accommodates envisaged housing need and diversity to sustain vibrant, socially balanced communities;
- (c) Ensuring that land use zones and objectives provide for adequate social and recreational facilities, in tandem with the growth of Rathkeale.
- (d) Enhancement and development of the town centre.
- (e) Ensuring that the town develops in a way that protects and enhances the richness and integrity of the town's natural, built and cultural heritage.
- (f) Ensuring that the growth of the town is accompanied by adequate infrastructure.

3.4 Evaluation of the 2007 Rathkeale LAP

It is important to assess the strengths and limitations of the 2007 – 2013 Rathkeale LAP and to determine what planning policies are relevant to the future development of the town.

There have been some significant developments by the public, private and voluntary sector since the adoption of the 2007 LAP.

Amenities have been improved through the development of a mini pitch for soccer and basketball at Abbeylands adjacent to the Rathkeale Sports Complex and the development of the Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway linking Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale has recently been completed. The local voluntary sector with the support of other agencies has implemented a number of initiatives since 2007 including the refurbishment of the town's community centre and the opening of a tourist office in the community centre which is combined with a community information centre. The erection of a new playground at St. Mary's Park in the town is currently under construction and the development of the Mick Neville Park into a regional 'centre of excellence' for GAA is ongoing.

Since the adoption of the Rathkeale LAP in 2007 a number of relatively large housing developments have commenced and are yet to be completed. These include the construction of 33 houses at Ballywilliam North. These dwellings commenced in 2009 and a 12 month extension of duration for the completion of works was permitted in October 2011. At the moment approximately 25 of these dwellings are constructed to roof level. A development of 7 dwellings commenced in 2008 at Orchard Avenue estate located immediately south of the Deel River and these dwellings are completed. However site works including road surfacing and landscaping are yet to be completed. The remainder of this planning permission which consisted of an additional 14 dwellings has now expired. At Monkshill, adjacent to the N21, 16 houses are completed to roof level. The remainder of this planning permission which consisted of an additional 31 dwellings has also expired. A development of 18 dwellings of which 14 are partially complete at Baker Place, Well lane is

currently stalled as there are a number of current planning enforcement issues regarding the non compliance with the permission permitted. Works have recently commenced at Wolfes Burges adjacent the Mick Neville Park, where permission has been permitted for 5 no plots and outline permission for 5 dwellings.

Since May 2007 permission has been permitted for a number of residential developments not yet commenced, namely for 20 dwellings at Lower Main Street and 4 dwellings at Old Road. Other smaller residential developments permitted since May 2007 and not yet commenced include 2 no. dwellings at Ballywilliam North, 2 no. semi-detached dwellings at Main Street and New Line Rd and 3 dwellings at Well Lane.

There are also a number of respects in which no progress has been made on the objectives in the 2007 Local Area Plan.

1. There has been very little development of the 13 design briefs for key sites throughout the town that were identified by the 2007 LAP as having redevelopment potential. Permission has been permitted on two of the design brief sites but no development has taken place as of yet.
2. There has been no progress on the enterprise and employment objectives of the Plan.
3. Ground floor vacancy of retail/commercial units remains a very serious issue and is a particular problem on Main Street from the square at the eastern end of the town to the junction with Newline Road to the west.

3.5 SWOT Analysis

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

Table 3.1 SWOT Analysis of Rathkeale

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position at centre of County in respect to Limerick City and Environs, and main county towns of Newcastle West, Abeyfeale and Kilmallock • Accessible to national primary road • Has a number of key 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad image of Town • Illegal caravan parking in the town • Reliance on Limerick city for employment and associated commuting issues on quality of life • Flood risk identified in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land available adjacent national road for small and medium size employment and development activity. • Green field sites available • Further development of community initiatives with the experience of a strong voluntary sector in the town, and a history of co-operation and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of unfinished housing estate in the town • High vacancy rate and associated neglect of buildings in the town centre • Employment losses associated with the downturn in the economy

<p>community services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a strong history of community development and a vibrant local voluntary sector • Upgraded sewage facilities • Rich built fabric and traditional streetscape • Location on the Great Southern Trail walkway • Relatively compact town 	<p>town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited quality public spaces • Lack of employment opportunities in the town • Increasing unemployment • Illegal car parking and resultant traffic congestion in town centre 	<p>partnership with a wide range of agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively young population with 28% of the population under 19 • Development of a playground • Redevelopment of mart site in town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in public service provision due to minimising costs • Uncertainty regarding the release of zoned lands • Closure of mart site and associated spin-off effect on the town
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3.6 Population Targets and Zoning Requirements

3.6.1 Population Targets

The core strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, as varied outlines population targets for county Limerick, which were allocated by the DoECLG at national level and distributed at regional level by the Mid West Regional Authority. The Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 have allocated a population target of an additional 32,800 people for county Limerick up to the year 2022.

Based on the population and housing targets contained in the Core Strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, as varied targets for 2018 and 2022 have been allocated for Rathkeale. According to the Core Strategy 211 additional housing units are required in Rathkeale up to 2022. The 2018 additional housing requirement for the town is based on the 2022 additional housing figure applied on a pro-rata basis as follows:

211 additional housing units / 16 {the number of years 2006 – 2022} x 12 {the number of years 2006 – 2018} = 158 additional housing units required by 2018.

The hectares required to accommodate the 158 additional units by 2018 at a percentage allocation of 20% serviced sites and 80% as new residential is determined as follows:

20% of 158 units = 32 units applied at a density of the 10 units per hectare = 3.2 hectares + 50% {headroom to allow for element of choice} = 4.8 hectares

80% of 158 units = 126 units applied at a density of 22 units per hectare = 5.72 hectares + 50% {headroom to allow element of choice} = 8.58 hectares

The total area required for additional units in Rathkeale as serviced sites and new residential areas is 13.38 hectares by 2018

The housing land requirement was calculated by allocating 20% of housing units as serviced sites at a density of 10 units per hectare in accordance with the guidance contained in 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities'. A density of 22 units per hectare has been applied for the remaining 80%. The amount of zoned land required includes an additional 50% to allow for an element of choice.

Table 3.2 Population Target, total residential units and zoned land requirements

Year	2006	2018	2022
Total population	1494	1789	1888
Additional Population	0	295	394
Additional housing units required	0	158	211
Zoned land required to accommodate additional housing units (including additional 50%) - hectares	0	13.38	17.84

Table 3.3 Residential unit and land requirements by 2018

	A Residential development areas	B Serviced sites	Total required by 2018 (A+B)
Additional Units required	126	32	158
Additional area required including headroom (ha)	8.58	4.8	13.38

3.6.2 Land Currently Available for Housing Development

This proposed LAP proposes a reduction in the amount of land zoned for residential development from that contained in the 2007 Rathkeale LAP in order to accommodate the population targets set out in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Mid West Region, 2010-2022 and the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 as varied. Under the 2007 Rathkeale LAP there are approximately 72 hectares of undeveloped land zoned for residential purposes.

Table 3.4 outlines the amount of land in hectares that is zoned in the proposed plan in each phase. A total of 15.34 hectares are zoned as phase one, which is expected to meet the population target for the proposed plan period.

Table 3.4 Residential land required and zoned

	Required by 2018	Required by 2022	Zoned Phase 1	Zoned Phase 2	Zoned Phase 3
Residential development area - hectares	8.58	11.52	9.82	9.39	12.81
Serviced Sites- hectares	4.8	6.30	5.52	1.59	0
Total hectares	13.38	17.82	15.34	10.98	12.81

Chapter 4 Housing

Strategic Policy for Housing

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

Policy H 2 It is the policy of the Council that quality shall underpin all new development by creating and maintaining a sense of place and local distinctiveness in established and new development areas.

4.1 Introduction

Based on the population and household projections in Chapter 3, 13.36 hectares of land zoned for residential use is required to accommodate the population target of 1789 persons by 2018. 9.11 hectares of land has been zoned 'Residential Development Area – Phase 1' in this Plan. 4.87 hectares of land is zoned for 'Residential Serviced Sites – Phase 1' which will accommodate 10 units to the hectare while the 'Residential Development Area' zoned land is envisaged to accommodate a density of 22 units to the hectare. Phase two will only be permitted when at least 50% of the housing in phase 1 has been completed. Similarly phase 3 residential development shall only commence on the completion of 50% of the combined phase 1 & 2 residential lands.

Chapter 3, Objective SS O1 in the County Development Plan outlines the Council's requirements for development within tier 3 settlements. The Council's objective is to ensure that development is in proportion to the pattern of existing development as close to the town centre as possible. It also requires that the town grows in a sequential, compact manner and avoids leap frogging of development. Within tier 3 settlements generally no one proposal for residential development shall increase the existing housing stock by more than 15% within the lifetime of this LAP.

4.2 Residential density, design, mix and phasing

Future residential development is required to be of a good quality design, accommodate a mixture of house types and integrate with the existing town. To assess future proposals for residential development, developers will be required to submit as part of the planning application, detailed design briefs, sustainability statement and social infrastructure assessment (SSSIA) as required by the County Development Plan. Metal grills or railings of any kind shall not be placed on the exterior of windows or doors at any time.

Objective H1: New Housing

It is an objective of the Council, on serviced land that is zoned 'Residential Development Area', to 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 as varied.

Objective H2: Residential Density, design, mix and phasing

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Ensure that proposals for residential development are planned coherently through the use of design briefs, masterplans for larger landholdings, sustainability statements and social infrastructure assessments and any other supplementary documents deemed necessary by the Council.
- b) Promote the concept of a 'compact district' by encouraging appropriate densities in suitable locations and by resisting sporadic isolated developments.
- c) Require an average gross density of 22 units to the hectare on 'New Residential' zoned sites within the plan area.
- d) Ensure that the density of housing in any one location is appropriate to the housing type.
- e) Ensure a wide range of house types, sizes and tenures are provided to meet varying population requirements and needs.
- f) Ensure compliance with the objectives of the County Development Plan SSO1 to SSO7 inclusive.
- g) Ensure development of sites in Phase 2 can only proceed when at least 50% of all development in New Residential zoned Areas Phase 1 is completed. Similarly Phase 3 will only be permitted on the completion of 50% of development in phase 2.

4.3 Serviced and low density sites

Residential serviced sites offer an alternative to the option of un-serviced sites in the open countryside for those wishing to build and design their own houses. Their urban setting reduces the cost of servicing these sites and also means that residents have more convenient access to shops and other facilities. The sites should be large enough to offer the advantages commonly associated with rural sites, namely the capacity to have control over the design of one's own house and to have generous private amenity space. The size of sites, their location and number are dictated by the over-riding need to keep the town compact. Serviced sites should be no less than 0.1 hectare each in size, but may be larger depending on the site configuration or the house size.

Objective H3: Serviced and low density sites

It is an objective of the Council to:

- 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.
- b) Require a masterplan/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 whole of the serviced site development.

4.4 Infill Development – Residential

The Council will encourage infill development in the town centre, and the adaptation of existing vacant and under-used buildings for residential use.

Objective H4: Infill Development, Restoration and Town Renewal

It is an objective of the Council to

- a) Promote the appropriate restoration of existing buildings for residential, office, workshop, or retail uses in the town centre that are vacant or underused.
- b) Encourage living in the town centre by the promotion of residential uses over businesses and rehabilitation of vacant properties for residential purposes.
- c) Promote sensitive infill developments on sites in the town centre that are not developed and are not required for access to backlands.
- d) Ensure that 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 nineteenth century streetscape.
- e) Consider on their merits proposals for residential development of rear plots where they can be adequately accessed, and where they would not affect existing or proposed private amenities, storage or parking requirements. Such proposals should in general be part of larger masterplans involving contiguous plots.
- f) Have regard to the guidance on the Opportunity Areas in Chapter 10 of this plan.

Figure 4.1 Infill development at the Small Square



4.5 Social Housing

The Council seeks to provide social housing to meet the needs identified in the Joint Housing Strategy for the administrative areas of Limerick City and County Councils and Clare County Council (2010-2017). All relevant lands zoned for residential development or a mix of uses including residential will be subject to the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2011 in relation to the provision of social housing. The Council will engage in discussions with developers prior to the formal planning process to negotiate details of the operation of Part V of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2011. It will ensure that there is proper balance and integration of tenures in any given area. In this regard the Council will take into account the needs and preferences for housing in this area, but will ensure there is not an over-preponderance of social housing in any one development area.

Objective H5: Social Housing and Joint Housing Strategy

It is an objective of the Council in compliance with Objective HOU O2 of the County Development Plan, to

- a) Require that developers comply with Part V of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2011.
- 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.

4.6 Traveller Accommodation

Limerick County Council has prepared and adopted a Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2009-2013 to meet the existing and projected needs of travellers in the County. Objective HOU O9 of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 as varied outlines Limerick County Councils objective to provide housing accommodation for the Traveller Community in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme and any subsequent document.

One of the unique features of Rathkeale is that it contains a large, well established traveller community particularly in the Roches Road and Fair Hill areas of the town. The traveller community in the town fluctuates due to the nomadic lifestyle of the trader-traveller who spend much of the year trading in Britain and Europe. According to the 2006 Census, travellers represent 27% of the total population living in Rathkeale town. However it is acknowledged that this figure is a conservative count of traveller numbers in the town and particularly over the Christmas period this number is significantly increased when there is a large influx of travellers into the town. It is estimated that the traveller community accounts for approximately 40% of the total population. Due to the nomadic lifestyle of the trader-travellers there has been a long history of unauthorised parking of mobile homes and caravans on the public road and private lands in Rathkeale. The placing of mobile homes and caravans on the public road and on unsuitable private lands is creating a public health hazard due to traffic and pedestrian conflicts, lack of proper sewage and water supply, substandard electrical power line connections, gas cylinders and piping for cooking and heating, parking of cars, waste disposal, fire risk etc. To address this issue the Council will seek to provide a Special Development Area in the Roches Road and Fair Hill areas of the town to facilitate a limited number of temporary private sites for mobile homes/caravans. It is envisaged that a total maximum of 50 mobile homes/caravans will be permitted over the 6 year period of the local area plan. This will be reviewed at the time of the next local area plan review.

Objective H6: Special Development Area for Temporary Private Sites for Mobile Homes /Caravans

It is an objective of the Council in compliance with Objective SS O11 of the County Development Plan, to

- a) Provide a Special Development Area as outlined in Map 5 to facilitate a limited number of temporary private sites for mobile homes/caravans in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Accommodating Transient Traveller Families' and the policies, objectives and Development Management Standards contained in the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 as varied.
- b) Ensure that proposals for Temporary Private Sites for Mobile Homes /Caravans are planned coherently and in accordance with the following conditions:
 - i) In general a maximum of 5 mobile homes/caravans to be permitted on any one site.

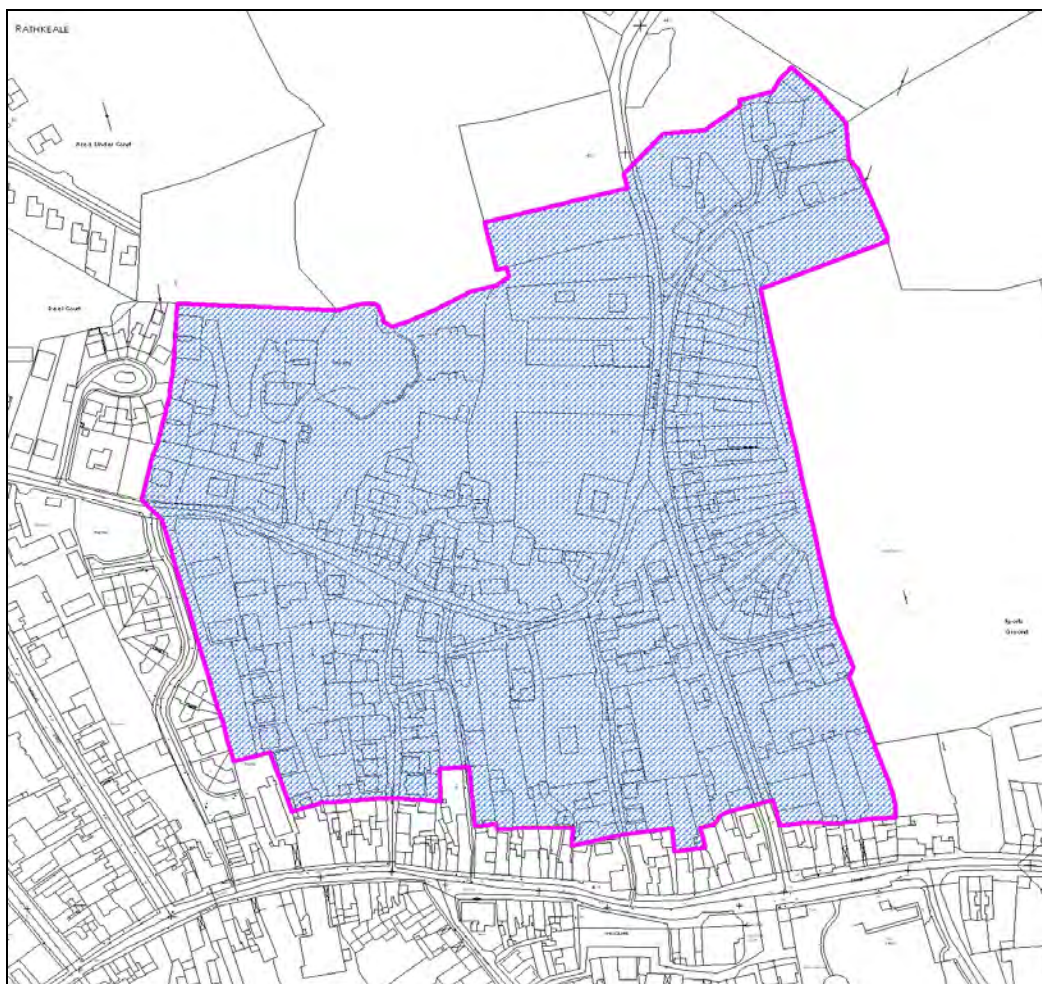
ii) Planning permission to be permitted for a maximum period of 10 years for any site.

iii) Layout and construction of sites to comply with DoECLG Guidelines including issues relating to:

- Spacing of mobile homes /caravans
- Provision of services (electricity, water, waste, public lighting, etc)
- Provision of children's play area
- Car/vehicle parking
- Fire safety requirements
- Landscaping and screen planting proposals

iv) All site works and construction of all services to be completed and certified in accordance with the planning permission prior to any mobile home/caravan being placed on the site.

Map 5 - Special Development Area for Temporary Private Sites for Mobile Homes/Caravans



Chapter 5 Economic Development

Strategic Policy for Economic Development

Policy ED 1 It is the policy of the proposed Rathkeale LAP to zone dedicated areas for economic development recognising Rathkeale as an important local employment and service centre, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy of the County Development Plan.

5.1 Introduction

Rathkeale town is a service centre for its own community and the hinterland. There is a diverse range of businesses and services in the town as detailed previously in section 2.4 of this Plan. Services include retail, food and drink sectors, accommodation, and the banking and professional services.

Apart from the main commercial core, employment is concentrated in two large manufacturing outlets, Andersons Ireland Ltd and Allied Irish Beef Processors Ltd. Both these have a significant role in terms of local economic activity. Other businesses located in the Rathkeale Industrial Estate include Daly's Tyres, All Star Logistics, Sean Hennessey Electrical Warehouse and Plassey Foods and Distribution. Shannon Development does not have any lands in Rathkeale at present.

Rathkeale does not have the range and number of retailing facilities that is expected for a town of its size. A significant number of premises in the town centre are either vacant or used for storage purposes. A preliminary assessment has found that from the square at the eastern end of the town to the bridge over the River Deel at the western end of the town, there are approximately 35 vacant commercial buildings (ground floor) and 15 vacant residential buildings. This high level of vacant and derelict buildings impact on the physical appearance of the town and contribute to an impression of neglect.

Policies and objectives in the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016, as varied of relevance to land use planning in relation to economic activity in Rathkeale, include:

- a) a general policy to compliment the aims of the settlement strategy by facilitating a hierarchy of employment centres;
- b) a commitment to work pro-actively with development agencies to secure an adequate range of locations for enterprise at key locations throughout the County.
- c) an objective to support small manufacturing businesses through the Business Support Unit, a development company set up by the County Council and County Enterprise Board for this purpose, and
- d) an objective to assist in area based renewal projects in urban and rural areas selected for their potential for renewal and sustainable development.

In relation to retail, the County Development Plan is committed to the implementation of the Joint Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016, as amended by the elected members.

There is adequate scope in the existing town centre, including the former Golden Vale Mart site located on New Line Road, to meet the envisaged convenience retail needs of the community. Priority should be given to the town centre as a location for retail business, but this must be coupled with improvements in loading/drop off bays for businesses and the promotion of the council owned car park as an alternative to the illegal on street parking which is happening at present. It is important that sufficient land is zoned within the town to strengthen the service function of the town.

5.2 'Enterprise and Employment' Zoned Land

A total of 23.68 hectares of land was zoned for 'industry' in the 2007 Rathkeale LAP. These lands were located in two sites, the existing Rathkeale Industrial Estate and also on lands adjacent to the N21 national road. The Rathkeale Industrial Estate site is 8.38 hectares in size and is fully developed with a number of established industries including Andersons Ireland Ltd, Daly's Tyres, Sean Hennessy Electrical Superstore and Plassey Foods.

The remainder of the lands zoned for 'industry' in the 2007 Rathkeale LAP are located adjacent the N21 national road. These lands have an overall area of 15.30 hectares and have so far not been released for the purposes of enterprise and employment. They remain in agricultural use. This zoning is to remain in the proposed Rathkeale LAP. Any future application on these lands shall include an overall masterplan and the area shall be served by a gravity foul sewer if possible. However if required only one pumping station for the entire industrial zoned land will be permitted. Also as part of any proposal to develop these lands a buffer of screen planting shall be provided along the boundary with the N21. The existing AIBP plant and surrounding lands currently zoned for 'Mixed use' in the 2007 LAP is to be rezoned for enterprise and employment uses. This site including the land on which the AIBP Plant is located is 16.8 hectares in size.

Overall lands zoned for enterprise and employment are envisaged to facilitate such economic development uses as outlined in the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines for rural areas, such as internationally traded services and ICT including software; small workshop type enterprises, such as food, furniture or crafts that can use local resources and exploit niche markets. Developments at these locations should refer to the Development Management Guidelines for Industrial/Commercial Development in Section 10.6 of the Limerick County Development Plan. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location having regard to surrounding land uses and scale.

Objective ED 1: Economic Development Proposals

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

- (a) is located on appropriately zoned land;
- (b) is appropriate to the respective area in terms of size and the type of employment generating development to be provided;
- (c) would not result in adverse transport effects;
- (d) would have no significant detrimental effect on the surrounding areas or on the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupiers; and
- (e) can be serviced efficiently and economically.

Objective ED 2: Boundary Treatment

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 industrial parks to accommodate landscaping to soften the visual impact and reduce the biodiversity loss of the development thereby improving the quality of the environment.

5.3 Small-scale businesses in residential areas

Proposals for planning permission for small-scale business from people working in their own homes will be considered based on the scale and nature of operations. Uses which might negatively impact on residential amenity such as the repair of vehicles will not be permitted in a residential area. The level of customers/callers will also be taken into account. Any proposals for small scale businesses in residential areas shall comply with Section 10.6.2 of the County Development Plan.

5.4 Retail and Commercial Development

In 2010 a retail strategy for the Mid West Region, 2010 – 2016 was prepared on behalf of counties Limerick and Clare and Limerick City Council. The Limerick County Development Plan, 2010 - 2016 as varied, incorporates the policy recommendations from the Retail Strategy as they apply to County Limerick.

The Strategy's primary purpose is to ensure that adequate provision is made for new retail development in the most appropriate locations and that excessive provision of retail space is avoided in the county. The central key objective arising from the Retail Strategy is to support the "town centre first" approach in the context of the retail hierarchy, and to promote the vitality and viability of existing centres. Rathkeale is identified in the Mid West Retail Strategy as a tier 3 level 2 centre, whose primary function is the provision of convenience goods and everyday services.

Policy ED 15 of the County Development Plan is applicable to Rathkeale. The policy seeks 'to support the provision of modern convenience goods

stores...which enable these centres to meet the day to day needs of their local catchment population.'

Rathkeale town centre has a limited range of retail services that provide for the basic needs of the town and surrounding catchment area. The enhancement of the local shopping facilities in both the convenience and comparison arena is a key ingredient in maintaining and enhancing the vitality of the town. The development at ground floor level in the core retail area will be restricted to shopping and other related uses to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre to avoid 'dead frontage' on the buildings fronting onto the Main Street. Rathkeale has significant potential for retail expansion by occupying vacant units in the town centre as well as the potential redevelopment of the former Golden Vale Mart site. Permission was previously permitted on this site for a significant retail development in 2004. This permission has since expired. Overall in order to enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre new retail developments will only be permitted on lands which are zoned as town centre.

Objective ED 3: Retail Development

It is the objective of the Council to enhance the vitality and viability of Rathkeale as a retail service centre and to improve the quantity and quality of retail provision in the town by:

- (a) Emphasising the core retail/commercial area is 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 County Retail Strategy and the Retail Planning Guidelines in reference to site suitability and the sequential approach.
- (d) Ensure that proposals at ground floor level within the town centre are restricted to shopping and closely related uses such as banking. Storage use will not be permitted as the primary use in this location.
- (e) Encouraging the use of upper floors in retail premises for commercial or residential use.
- (f) Enhancing the physical environment of the town centre as a location for shopping and business through measures aimed at improving conditions for pedestrians.
- (g) Encourage the retention of traditional shop fronts to enhance the streetscape.

Figure 5.1 Part of Rathkeale town centre – Main Street



5.5 Mixed use zoned land

This zoning is intended to facilitate renewal of these areas, which are on the edge of the town but which are on the main approach roads. Sites are zoned mixed use to reflect their existing uses. It is important that any redevelopment of these sites should not result in undermining of the town centre's primacy as a retail centre.

Objective ED 4: Development of Mixed use lands

Any development on mixed use zoned lands shall demonstrate that the proposal:

- (a) Would have no significant adverse affects on the amenities of adjacent occupiers.
- (b) Would not result in adverse transport impacts.
- (c) Would respect the prevailing development grain, scale and built form in the design and scale of development.
- (d) Would not result in any significant negative impact on the conservation value of the Deel river.
- (e) Would comply with the terms of the retail objectives in this Plan and in particular would not undermine the town centre's primacy as a retail centre.

5.6 Tourism

Rathkeale has potential for tourism with many important resources in close proximity including: its location on the N21 within proximity to Limerick city and the heritage village of Adare, its location on the Great Southern walkway/cycleway, its local heritage including Castle Matrix, the Palatine Museum, the Deel River and the towns traditional streetscape with many fine traditional shop fronts. As a resource that is underdeveloped this plan seeks to ensure that the potential of tourism to contribute to Rathkeale's economy be harnessed.

The Great Southern Trail offers enormous potential for tourism related activities in the town. The Great Southern Trail starts/finishes at the Palatine Museum at the western edge of the town and links with the well established Matrix Way River Walk which brings pedestrian and cyclist right into the town centre. Greenways such as the Great Southern Trail are major tourist attractions and have the potential to generate expenditures on lodging, food, and recreation related services. Also potential business and commercial opportunities related to the trail such as recreation equipment rentals and sales, lessons, and other related businesses will be encouraged at appropriate locations in the town. There are future plans for improved signage on the Great Southern Trail and the potential exists to possibly extend the trail northward to the junction at Ballingrane.

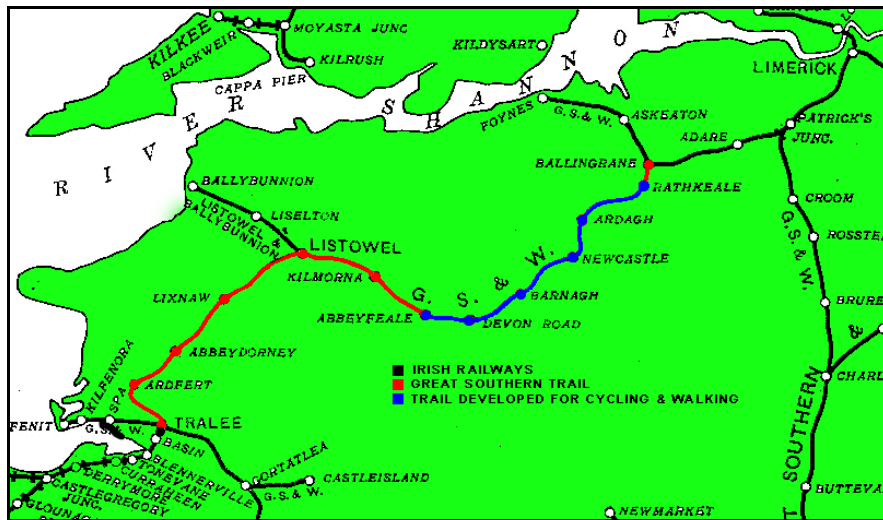
Figure 5.2 Section of Great Southern Trail



Figure 5.3 Existing signage for the GST at the Palatine museum

Figure 5.4 Palatine Museum

Figure 5.5 Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway



Overall this Plan encourages the growth of the tourism sector while safeguarding the local natural and built environment and local cultural heritage for the benefit of both tourism and the local community.

Objective ED 5: Tourism

It is the objective of the Council to

- a) Enhance the tourism potential of the town including the promotion of new tourism products in an environmentally sustainable manner in partnership with other agencies and the local community.
- b) Encourage new development for the tourist industry to be located within the proposed LAP boundary to maximise existing services.
- c) Protect the natural, built and cultural heritage features from unwarranted encroachment of unsuitable development.

Chapter 6 Transport

Strategic Policy for Transport

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.

Policy T2: It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010 – 2016 as varied, in relation to transport and infrastructure and the objectives outlined below.

6.1 Introduction

The Government's policy 'Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future', the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines, the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2022, and the daft 30 year Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) all point in the direction of improving existing transport infrastructure and designing new infrastructure that will make non-car transport modes more attractive.

At a national level, 'Smarter Travel' has as a target that by 2020 the percentage of those traveling to work by car will decrease from 65% to 45%. It recommends a range of actions, many to be implemented through the National Development Plan. This is a particular challenge in Rathkeale where, as noted in Chapter 2 of this Plan, a significant number of workers with fixed places of work and not working from home travel to Limerick city. Bus Eireann runs a daily service from Limerick to Tralee and Limerick to Killarney which stops in Rathkeale town. Rural Bus, the community bus company operates a weekly service in the Rathkeale and the wider west Limerick area.

There are other issues relating to the effectiveness and uses of the existing transport infrastructure in the town. Traffic congestion is often an issue in the town mainly due to the illegal parking of cars and delivery vehicles on double yellow lines outside shops etc. Because the street narrows considerably in the very centre of the town a few cars or trucks parked illegally in front of shops means there is little or no room to allow two-way traffic. It is important that the Council address the causes of congestion by providing designated loading bays/drop off bays on the Main Street as well as promoting/upgrading the council owned car park to the south of Main street which is not widely used at present as an alternative to on street parking.

As part of any redevelopment of the former Golden Vale Mart site a through road, from the junction of New Road and Main Street to the R518 Ballingarry Road should be provided. This road would run through part of the council owned car park and part of the former mart site, thus relieving the existing congestion at the junction of Newline Road and Main Street, which is particularly bad during peak school run times. This development would also

open up the existing under-utilised backland areas to the Main street as well as promote the council owned car park and make it more amenable to visitors to the town.

Figure 6.1 Council owned car park to the south of Main street which is not widely used



6.2 Development of the residential zoned lands at Enniscouch

Any potential development of the residential zoned lands at Enniscouch, south of Mount Southwell House will be subject to the upgrading of the existing access road and the provision of adequate sightlines at the junction onto Church Street. Currently sightlines in a northeastern direction at this junction are severely restricted. The provision of adequate sightlines will involve the demolition of An Seabhac public house and setting back of the roadside wall onto Church Street. While An Seabhac public house is designated as a 'protected structure' under section 51 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2011 its demolition in this case for the achievement of adequate sightlines would be acceptable. The existing access road which currently serves a number of existing residential houses is an area where the concept of a home zone could be introduced. A home zone is a residential street or area, which is designed so as to ensure that pedestrians, cyclists and residents have priority over the car. The existing access road could be redesigned through the appropriate use of materials, street furniture, public lighting and a variation of road widths, to force motorists to drive with more care at lower speeds.

Objective T1: Development of the residential zoned lands at Enniscouch

It is the objective of the County Council that any development of the residential zoned lands at Enniscouch, south of Mount Southwell House will be subject to the upgrading of the existing access road and the provision of adequate sightlines at the junction onto Church Street. The provision of adequate sightlines will involve the demolition of An Seabhac public house and setting back of the roadside wall onto Church Street.

Figure 6.2 An Seabhac Public House



Figure 6.3 Existing Residential Access Road



6.3 Movement and accessibility

The Council is committed to the development of a network of access routes reflecting the requirements of personal safety, choice, and convenience to services and amenities. The access network should facilitate access for all, and should be socially inclusive. These requirements and the desire to minimise dependence on the car for short journeys, means that a matrix type network is preferable to a network with long cul-de-sacs.

Objective T2: Movement and accessibility

It is the objective of the County Council to facilitate access to backlands by seeking the provision of new roads and improvement of roads and junctions as part of the planning application process as outlined on Map 1.

It should be noted that the alignment of the new roads in the plan is indicative only and they shall definitely be aligned as part of the detailed design and development process. Similarly, the location of junctions is indicative only and the exact position for construction purposes will be dependent on detailed design.

Objective T3: Network of pedestrian and cycle facilities

It is an objective of the Council to encourage walking and cycling as more convenient, popular and safe methods of movement in Rathkeale, and facilitate the provision of an attractive and coherent network of off-road footpaths and cycle facilities. This will be achieved by:

- (a) Secure cycle parking facilities will be sought at appropriate locations as opportunities arise.
- (b) Combined off-road footpath and cycleway links will be encouraged along the proposed distributor road and along the Deel river

(c) A pedestrian/cycle network will be encouraged where identified in Appendix 1, map 2 linking existing and proposed residential areas to each other and to amenity areas and to provide connections to the town centre.

Objective T4: Measures in support of public transport

It is an objective of the Council to facilitate measures to develop public transport infrastructure within Rathkeale and networks to adjacent settlements and Limerick City.

Objective T5: Car parking and traffic management

It is an objective of the Council to encourage the provision of off-street public parking areas as part of any application for development.

Objective T6: Safeguard the Capacity of the N21

It is the objective of the Council to safeguard the capacity of the adjoining N21 and ensure that any future developments do not compromise the strategic function of this road.

Objective T7: Development of Enterprise and Employment land adjoining the N21

Any future development proposal for the lands zoned for Enterprise and Employment adjoining the N21 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 national road have sufficient capacity to facilitate the extent of the development planned. The costs of implementing mitigation measures arising from the traffic impact shall be borne by the developer.

Chapter 7 Infrastructure

Water services, energy, telecommunications and waste

Strategic policy for Infrastructure

Policy IN 1 It is the policy of the Council to provide for adequate water, and sewerage facilities in Rathkeale; and raise awareness of energy efficiency, and waste management including the minimisation, re-use, recycling/recovery of waste.

7.1 Introduction

A key consideration for the development of the town is the availability and quality of infrastructure. Infrastructure and land use should be managed and developed together while protecting the environment for future generations.

7.2 Water Supply

Rathkeale's public water supply is currently provided from existing groundwater sources to the south of the town and there is a sufficient groundwater resource available to supply the existing needs and predicted needs of the area.

Objective IN 1 Water supply and storage

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Facilitate improvements to the existing water supply system to cater for the needs of an expanding population.
- (b) Ensure that development proposals provide adequate water infrastructure to facilitate proposed developments.

7.3 Foul Sewerage

The Rathkeale Wastewater Treatment Plant was constructed and commissioned in 1992/1993 and is located adjacent to the River Deel on the western edge of Rathkeale. The design capacity of the plant is 4000 Population Equivalent (PE). Based on the census data from 2006 the population equivalent reaching the plant is conservatively estimated to be 1,617. Thus, there is sufficient capacity in the treatment plant at present to cater for the projected population to 2022. The plant discharges to the River Deel which is classed as having poor status under the Water Framework Directive. However this is due primarily to agricultural pressures in the upstream catchment and they are being addressed through a programme of farm surveys.

Objective IN 2: Sewerage facilities

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Ensure 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.
- (b) Ensure that development proposal provide adequate waste water infrastructure to facilitate the proposed development. This includes the separation of foul and surface water through the provision of separate sewerage networks.

7.4 Surface Water Drainage

The surface water system in the town was upgraded in the mid 1990's and in general is working well.

Objective IN 3: Surface water disposal

It is the objective of the council to:

- (a) Require that all applications for development demonstrate that appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are examined and where feasible provided.
- (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).
- (c) Require applicants to investigate the potential for the provision of porous surfaces where car parking and hard landscaping is proposed.
- (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 where deemed necessary.

7.5 Flood Risk Management

The Council is committed to managing flood risk in accordance with the principles set out in Government guidance 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management' (DEHLG and OPW, Nov.2009).

A stage 1 flood risk assessment has been prepared for Rathkeale and is included as appendix 2 of this proposed LAP. OPW preliminary flood risk indicative maps are available for Rathkeale under the OPW's CFRAM study. Maps and additional analysis were available from JBA, a company that specialises in flooding matters. These indicate that the south western part of the town along the Deel River is in Flood Zone A. Most development is considered vulnerable to flooding. As a response to this issue the proposed LAP designates any lands located in Flood zone A as open space or agricultural use. This zoning will provide a buffer between development and

the river. Planning permissions are extant in these areas. This plan re-zones a large area of land in the townlands of Ballywilliam North, Englishtenements, Rathkeale and Enniscoush from residential to open space and agriculture.

The Planning Authority will require applications in areas at risk of flooding to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment. 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.

Objective IN 4: Flood Risk Management

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Implement the recommendations of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works Guidelines on 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidance Documents (November 2009)', and any subsequent guidelines.
- b) Require any development proposal in a location identified as being subject to flooding to:
 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 minimum flood levels, incorporating building design measures and materials to assist evacuation and minimize 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 retention measures shall be provided on site; and
 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.
- c) Have regard to the Office of Public Works Planning Policy Guidance in the design and consideration of development proposals; and
- d) Preserve riparian strips free of development and ensure adequate width to permit access for river maintenance.

The 'development management justification test' and the 'plan - making justification test' as detailed in The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidance document will guide Council responses to development proposals in areas at moderate or high risk of flooding.

7.6 Waste Management

In Rathkeale there is one waste recycling facility, which is located on New Line Road adjacent to the County Councils Area Office. The nearest civic recycling centre is located in Newcastle West providing recycling facilities for a comprehensive range of waste materials.

Objective IN 5: Provision of composting facilities

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.

Objective IN 6: Shared bin spaces

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

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

7.7 Energy and Electricity

Rathkeale is served by the ESB distribution network and the town itself is served by 38KV overhead electricity lines. The nearest 110kv substation serving Rathkeale is located in the townland of Ardgoulsbeg, just north of Rathkeale town.

The Council will work with Limerick-Clare Energy Agency to improve energy conservation and renewable energy use.

7.8 Access to Broadband and Telecommunications

The town of Rathkeale benefits from access to Broadband. It is important that adequate broadband service infrastructure is installed at the appropriate time into new development schemes

Objective IN 7: 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.

The Planning Authority's goal is to achieve a balance between facilitating the provision of mobile telecommunications services in the interests of social and economic progress and sustaining residential amenities, environmental quality and public health. When considering proposals for telecommunication masts, antennae and ancillary equipment, the Council will have regard to the DEHLG document 'Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures' (DEHLG 1998) and any subsequent advisory document issued by the DECLG.

Chapter 8 Environment and Heritage

Strategic policy for Environment and Heritage

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

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

8.1 Introduction

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

8.2 Built Environment

8.2.1 Protected Structures

In the interests of safeguarding the cultural and built heritage, several structures 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- 2011. These structures are included within the Record of Protected Structures (R.P.S.) set out in Appendix 4 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. As the Planning Act allows a Planning Authority to make additions to or deletions from the RPS the most recent edition of the RPS contained in the County Development Plan should be consulted. Exempted development regulations are not applicable to such structures where proposed development would materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to the architectural heritage.

In the past funds were available from Limerick County Council in the form of Conservation Grants to ensure the restoration and conservation of these buildings in an appropriate manner that reflects and respects the original detailing and construction. Information on any future funding available can be received from the Conservation Officer, Limerick County Council.

8.2.2 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA)

The collective arrangement of buildings within the town centre is considered of significance to the built heritage of the town and contributes to the character and established street and townscape. It is the objective of the Council to preserve the character of this area and therefore it is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA). The ACA is defined in the Protected Structures and ACA Map 3. The designation of the ACA does not preclude future development, but the carrying out of works to the exterior of structures within the ACA shall not be considered as exempted development where those works would materially affect the character of the ACA. In assessing development proposals within the ACA, the Council shall take into account the material effect that the proposed development would be likely to have on the character of the ACA.⁴

8.2.3. Rathkeale Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

In the 16th and 17th century the Main Street was developed and the town became an administrative centre for the counties of Limerick, Clare and Kerry. In 1709 Sir Thomas Southwell, a local landlord, brought 200 German Palatine families to his estate. They were committed to growing flax and hemp, and contributed to the linen industry and trade of the town. Rathkeale witnessed a surge in industrialisation throughout the eighteenth century and in 1717 a factory for hempen sailcloth and a linen market were established. Rathkeale was also a major market town for the area and held seven fairs throughout the year. However throughout the 19th century the prosperity of the town declined through the lack of an active landlord, competition with foreign products and the effects of the famine.

The River Deel, flows through the town and most of the traditional village settlement has developed to its north and east, though some more recent developments extends south and west of the River towards the Church of Ireland and the Rath from which the town derives its name. It wasn't until 1862 that the town was connected with Limerick and Newcastle West by railway. By and large, this was to define the town's western limit and the modern day N21 by-pass runs alongside a portion of its length today. The 1918 Ordnance Survey Map shows a southern street connection, the New Line Road, linking the Well Lane in the east to Main Street in the west – thus creating a large urban block to the south side of Main Street. Much of this area formed the old Cattle Mart site which is now closed and remains vacant.

The building lines found in Rathkeale are the normal found in many Irish towns. Each individual building, be it for commercial or residential purposes, tended to have its own distinct plot of land. The buildings tended to be constructed in terraces, though this was not adhered to in all instances. In the centre of Rathkeale's historic core the buildings, be they residential or commercial, tend to address the footpath directly, while on the approaches to the centre of the town the structures are set back slightly with small gardens

⁴ Refer to section 7.6.4, Chapter 7 of the Limerick County Development Plan, page 7-26 to 7-28.

bounded by dwarf walls, all invariably supporting cast iron or wrought iron railings. At the extremities of Rathkeale's historic main thoroughfare are single storey dwellings, these rise to two-storeys as the principle thoroughfare is formed and in the core of the town are found buildings of up to three-storeys in height.

In undertaking repairs or maintenance works to buildings in the Rathkeale Architectural Conservation Area, property owners and their contractors should be aware of the materials traditionally used in the county, and more specifically, in the town itself and its immediate surrounds. Refer to Appendix 4.

Works in Conservation Areas must retain existing surviving elements, aim to re-instate lost elements or character, with new build complementing the original streetscapes, building lines and open areas. Proposals for new buildings should not seek to dominate the historic core and should respect the historic fabric of the buildings and the morphology of their plots.

Where original or early surviving elements, such as windows and doors, rainwater goods of rolled mild steel or cast iron (or a combination of both), natural slate roofing and lime renders, and so forth, then these should be repaired sensitively. The guidance here is to "do as much as necessary, as little as possible". If replacement proves necessary, then they must be replaced on a "like-for-like" basis.

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

Figure 8.1 Part of the ACA on Main Street



Objective EH 1: Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)

It is the objective of the Council to protect, conserve and where appropriate, enhance the ACA as identified in Map 3.

Proposals for development within the ACA shall;

- 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;
- b) Seek to retain/incorporate/replicate 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;
- 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.

Objective EH 2: Protected Structures

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;

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

8.3 Archaeological Heritage

Rathkeale is a bridging point on the River Deel. The town derives its name from the Irish *Rath Gaela* meaning Caola' or Gaela's fort which suggests that there was a pre-Norman settlement here. Rathguala fort is named in the "Book of Rights", before 900⁵. Rathkeale is classified as a historic town (LI029-031001) in the Record of Monuments and Places. There are a further 10 individual monuments within the town as well as another 3 which are historically documented but whose precise location has been lost. All of these monuments are contained within the boundary of the historic town as shown on the accompanying map in Appendix 5. The location of each archaeological monument is provided in the Record of Monuments and Places which is maintained and up-dated by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, a branch of the National Monuments Service. The 1994 amendment to the National Monuments Act established the Record of Monument and Places on a statutory basis with a set of maps and a catalogue of sites, Copies are available for public consultation in the Council's Planning Department and in all the county libraries. Under the provisions of the National Monuments Act Section 12, 1994 Amendment any person proposing any works (this includes exempted development) 'at or in relation to such a monument' has to give two month's notice to the National Monuments Service. Sites continue to be

⁵ Westropp, T.J. 1904/05 'Ancient Churches of Limerick', *PRIA* XXV, 389.

discovered, some of those found subsequent to the publication (1997) have been included in the Site and Monuments Database which is available on the website www.archaeology.ie.

Limerick County Council is committed to protecting the archaeological heritage including the preservation of unrecorded or newly discovered archaeological material. Consequently, the planning authority has a policy of archaeological monitoring on developments whose scale and nature may have an impact on previously unknown archaeological materials.⁶

Objective EH 3: Archaeology

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) 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.
- (b) protect and preserve (in situ, or at a minimum, preservation by record) all sites and features of historical interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.
- (c) ensure that any proposed development shall not have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument.
- (d) the area of a monument and the associated buffer area shall not be included as part of the open space requirement demanded of a specific development, but should be additional to the required open spaces, and
- (e) 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

8.4 Natural Environment

Rathkeale is set within the Agricultural lowlands Landscape Character Area as determined by the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, as varied. The pastoral nature of the agricultural landscape around Rathkeale reflects the function of the town as a service centre for the agricultural sector. By the 1820's the town had as many as 31 occupational categories, three tan yards, a brewery, a distillery, a bleachyard, and was manufacturing soap candles, shoes and salt.⁷

The river remains of central importance to the town and is recognised as an important amenity and is valued as a natural habitat. The designation of lands by the river as open space and recreation recognises the importance of the natural habitat of the river. Indicative Walkways have been indicated on the zoning maps in the plan. These contribute to the role of the river as an

⁶ Refer to section 7.5.2, Archaeological heritage, of the Limerick County Development Plan, page 7-23.

⁷ O'Connor, P. 1996 *All Ireland is in and about Rathkeale*, Newcastle West, 64.

amenity and can also help to reinforce the idea of a buffer zone between the river and any form of development.

It is important that existing open space is preserved around the Deel River as open space and recreation. There are also a number of impressive tree groups and freestanding trees that exist on either end of the town – to the east in the townland of Abbeylands, associated with the grounds of Abbey House and to the southwest in the vicinity of Southwell House, the Church Of Ireland and nearby Rath (ringfort). These are particular landscape features which future development patterns should have regard to. A number of field boundaries within the plan area, while lacking mature impressive trees, nonetheless form an essential part of the natural fabric of the area.

Objective EH4: Tree Protection and Nature Conservation

It is the objective of the Council to protect 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.

Objective EH5: Designated Sites and Nature Conservation

It is the objective of the Council to:

- 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 environmental limits.

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).

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.

Objective EH6: Maintenance and Access of River Deel

It is an objective of the Council to provide a 7m wide strip along the River Deel (Channel C1) and a 5m wide strip along its tributary (Channel C5) for maintenance and access. These strips should be accessible to mechanical plant and should not be landscaped, paved or otherwise developed in a manner that would prevent access.

Figure 8.2 Matrix Way river walk along the Deel River



8.5 Climate Change

Promoting land use patterns and economic activity that minimises effects on climate change is an objective of Limerick County Council. As part of this objective the Council will endeavour to promote local delivery of energy, efficiency and adaptation to climate change in Rathkeale.

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

Objective EH7: Adaptation to Climate Change

It is the objective of the Council to encourage development, which minimise the uses of fossil fuels and maximises the use of local or renewable resources.

Chapter 9 Community and Recreation

Strategic Policy for Community and Recreation

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 Rathkeale to be accompanied by a corresponding expansion of these facilities and amenities.

9.1 Introduction

In recent times greater emphasis has been placed on the importance of community infrastructure in national policy as reflected in many guidance documents published since 2005. These include policy documents on recreation for children and young people, provision of schools, green travel, and residential design guidelines. The Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016, as varied includes a requirement for future development proposals to submit a supplementary social infrastructural assessment with planning applications to determine if the community and its existing facilities have the capacity to cater for the proposal. Prospective developers are advised to consult with the Limerick County Development Plan, Chapter 6 Community and Recreation referring to general policy and objectives on these topics, and Chapter 10, Development Management Guidelines specifically section 10.3 regarding the Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment.

9.2 Community and Recreation

Rathkeale has a vibrant voluntary community with over 30 local community groups involved in a wide range of activities including sports, arts and culture, local history and heritage, youth, environmental and local development. It also has a number of important features and amenities that offer both active and passive recreational opportunities and provide important wildlife habitats. The Matrix Way rail and river walk located to the west of the town and the recently completed Great Southern Trail cycleway/walkway linking Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale are important contributors to the quality of life of the residents of the town and surrounding areas. The development of a new playground on an area of existing open space in St Mary's Park is currently nearing completion. The Council supports such proposals and will endeavor to work with the local community in the future in relation to community and recreational requirements. The identification of possible amenity walkways and cycle routes throughout the town forms an important part of the plan.

Figure 9.1 Rathkeale Sports Complex



Objective C 1: Open space hierarchy and playground provision

It is the objective of the Council to seek the provision of well designed, high quality, accessible and useable open space in all residential development in accordance with the development management standards of the County Development Plan.

Objective C 2: New amenity areas and Walkways

It is the objective of the Council to:

- a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on the Amenity Map in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties over look proposed walkways.
- b) Co-operate with other agencies to enhance and provide recreational and amenity facilities in the town.

There is local interest for community gardens/allotments on the strip of land adjoining the rear entrance serving the Rathkeale House Hotel to the west of St. Mary's Park. While this land is zoned 'Enterprise and Employment' the Council would look favorably on such a proposal. This area should be accessed through St Mary's Park estate.

Objective C 3: Allotments and Community Gardens

It is the objective of the Council to facilitate opportunities for food production through allotments or community gardens at appropriate locations

9.3 Education and Childcare Facilities

The town is currently served by a community crèche operating at Well Lane. The three primary schools, Rathkeale No 2 National School, St Joseph's Boys

National School and St Anne's Primary School have an overall enrollment of 407 students. Secondary level education is provided by Colaiste na Trocaire who have an enrollment of 426 students. Also County Limerick VEC runs the Riverside Education Centre located in the Rathkeale Industrial Estate. The centre caters for adult travellers who wish to return to full time education.

Based on the envisaged population projections to 2018 outlined in Chapter 3, demand for educational facilities will continue to rise in Rathkeale in the lifetime of this Plan.

Objective C 4: Educational Facilities

It is the objective of the County Council to:

- a) Ensure that there are sufficient educational places to meet the needs generated by proposed residential developments by requiring the completion of a Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment for residential developments of 5 or more dwellings.
- b) Ensure that any proposals for a change of use of the secondary school incorporates a community gain.
- c) Require the provision of childcare facilities in suitable locations in the town, in particular in residential areas (existing and proposed), and adjacent to community facilities.
- d) All proposals for childcare facilities shall comply with the development management standards of the County Development Plan.

9.4 Health Facilities

There is a part time HSE clinic located at the eastern end of the town at Wolfesburgess East. The primary role of the Planning Authority with regard to healthcare is to ensure that (a) there is an adequate policy framework in place inclusive of the reservation of lands, should additional services be required and (b) healthcare facilities would be permitted subject to good planning practice. The Council will continue to support further economic and social progress with regard to health services including capital investment in community and continuing care services at the HSE (West) Health Clinic in Rathkeale.

Objective C 5: Provision of Healthcare Facilities

It is an objective of the Council to:

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.

9.5 Emergency services

There is an existing fire station located at the eastern end of the town at Wolfesburgess East.

Strategic Policy for Urban Design in Rathkeale

Policy UD1:

It is the policy of the Council to promote high quality design throughout the Plan area and ensure that future development in Rathkeale is guided by principles of best practice and sustainability.

10.1 Introduction

Good urban design is essential in creating attractive places for people to live in, work in and relax in. It is achieved by the arrangement of streets and spaces, the scale, and design of buildings, the materials used, the colour scheme and finishes of buildings, and the layout of roads and footpaths. A well designed urban area has a clear and distinct sense of place instilling a sense of community and pride with a clearly defined centre which is desirable to walk around and feels safe. A successfully designed urban area would generally take the following into consideration:

1. Context: How does the development respond to its surroundings?
2. Connections: How well is the new site connected?
3. Inclusivity: How easily can people use and access the development?
4. Variety: How does the development promote a good mix of activities?
5. Efficiency: How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
6. Distinctiveness: How do the proposals create a sense of place?
7. Layout: How does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces?
8. Public realm: How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?
9. Adaptability: How will the buildings cope with change?
10. Privacy/amenity: How do the buildings provide a decent standard of amenity?
11. Parking: How will the parking be secure and attractive?
12. Detailed design: How well thought through is the building and landscape design?

This Chapter provides general guidance to assist prospective applicants by outlining the aspects of planning and design that the planning authority will be taking into account when assessing applications for future development.

Since the adoption of the Rathkeale Local Area Plan in 2007 there has been a number of guidance documents issued which deal with urban design. These are as follows:

- DEHLG (2009) 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' and the accompanying 'Urban Design Manual',
- DEHLG (2009) 'Government Policy on Architecture 2009 – 2015,
- DEHLG (2009) 'Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment', and

- DEHLG (2007) Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities – Best Practice Guidelines fro Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities.

The DEHLG also recommends using the UK's "Manual for Streets" (Dept of Communities and Local Government, 2007) in designing residential streets. Other influential documents effecting the design of proposals include the guidelines on flood risk management published by the DEHLG in 2009, and the governments policy on transport 'Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020', published by the Department of Transport.

On a local level the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016, as varied has placed greater emphasis on appropriate design in its development management guidelines. It is a requirement that a design statement is submitted as part of a planning application. A 'Design Statement' is a short document which enables the applicant to explain why a particular design solution is considered the most suitable for a particular site.⁸

10.2 Derelict and Vacant sites

Currently, there are 11 buildings/sites in Rathkeale town on the Derelict Sites Register. Six of these are located on Main Street, two are located on Church Street and there is one derelict site located at Ballywilliam, Abbeylands and Boherboy respectively. In regard to these derelict sites the council will fully enact its powers regarding the Derelict Site Act and process all derelict sites expeditiously. There are 13 other sites/buildings that the council is in consultation with the site/building owner seeking improvement works to be carried out. These sites/buildings are mainly located on Main Steet, the Square, Boherboy, Thomas Street and Roches Road.

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

- a) outstanding planning permissions,
- b) evidence of efforts to address vacancy and dereliction;,,
- c) security, safety to the public and condition of the site,
- d) the conservation value of the building and requirement for remedial restoration works, and
- e) the feasibility of various actions to make good the site, and find viable uses for the site.

Overall there are many buildings in the town which are vacant, neglected, dilapidated and of poor appearance. Also a significant number of buildings in the town are used for storage purposes. Vacancy is generally dispersed throughout the town but is a particular concern in the core retail area on Main Street. A preliminary assessment has found that from the square at the eastern end of the town to the junction of Main street and Old Road, there are approximately 35 vacant commercial buildings (ground floor). Main Street is

⁸ Refer to Limerick County Development Plan 2010-1016, section 10.4, Design Statement.

also suffering from a number of unsightly frontages consisting of blocked up windows and doors, hoardings and security shutters. A number of these buildings are focal buildings and are visually prominent in the town.

Figure 10.1 Derelict Site – disused commercial/residential development on Main Street



Figure 10.2 Below shows the improvement works recently carried out at the Cinema building. This building is a protected structure.

Before



After



10.3 Rathkeale Opportunity Areas

The purpose of the opportunity sites identified by this Plan is to encourage the restoration, consolidation and improvement of these sites. The appropriate development of these sites could provide for significant improvements in the town. This Plan identifies 11 opportunity areas. These are:

Area 1 - East side of 'The Square' – Corner Infill Site with frontage onto The Square and Main Street/Boherboy

Area 2 - North side of 'The Square' – Infill onto Street

Area 3 - Corner Site on the junction of Chapel Lane and Fair Hill

Area 4 - Backland development of plot with access from Fair Hill

Area 5 - Corner Plot on Peppard's Lane and Fair Hill

Area 6 – Infill Development on multiple plots in the backland of Old Road and New Road.

Area 7 – Corner infill development on junction of Main Street and Old Road, in addition to backland development potential on multiple plots

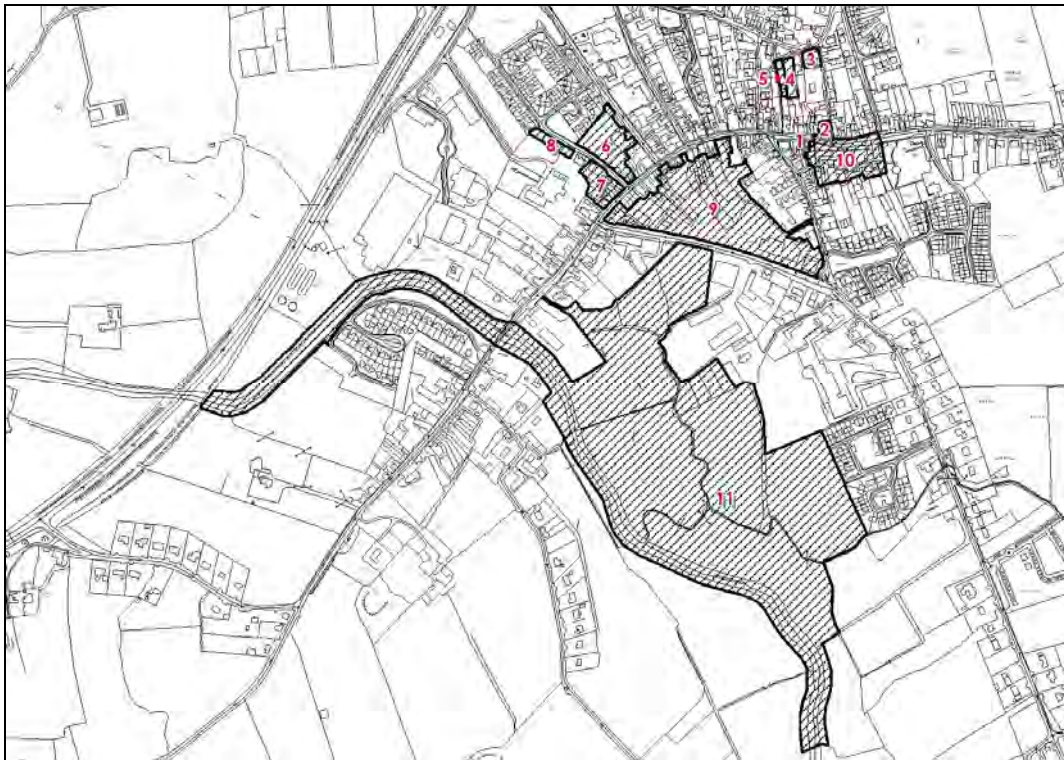
Area 8 – Rebuilding street frontage on west side of Old Road

Area 9 – Centre Block – Large Urban Block bounded by Main Street, Well Lane and New Line Road

Area 10 – The Square

Area 11 – Riverside

Figure 10.3 Map showing location of Opportunity Areas



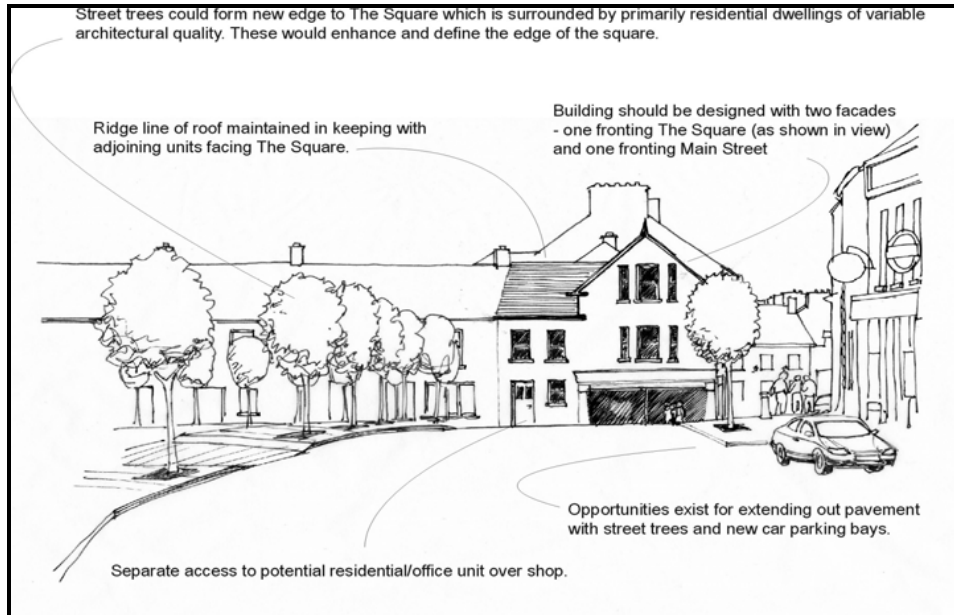
Opportunity Area 1: East side of 'The Square' – Corner Infill Site with frontage onto The Square and Main Street/Boherboy

The site is located on the west side of 'The Square' and represents a corner infill opportunity with dual frontage onto The Square and Main Street. The site is zoned town centre. The site presents the opportunity for the development of corner/focal building, which would be in full view when approaching the town centre from the eastern side of Rathkeale. Generally focal sites are strategic sites and can give an important 'first impression' on entering a town or village. Design quality is therefore essential on these sites and they require a more sensitive design solution.



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Opportunity Area 2 - North side of 'The Square' – Infill onto Street

The site is located on the north side of 'The Square' and represents an infill opportunity on Main Street. The site is currently used as the side yard to the dwelling shown on the right. The site is zoned town centre. Overall any proposed building while introducing modern architectural elements should be in keeping with the traditional streetscape.



Infill development on North side of The Square
 Current use: - Side yard to dwellings shown on the right
 Proposal: - Maintain scale of adjoining properties
 - Two storeys appropriate
 - Subtle variation in ridge line is in keeping with patterns elsewhere on street
 - Set back from property on east side due to presence of windows
 - Traditional vertical emphasis of streetscape is incorporated through fenestration and pediments
 - Commercial, retail or residential use is permitted (residential shown, as predominant use at The Square is now residential)
 Materials: - Cement rendered plaster finish is appropriate; colour should be muted, in keeping with predominant colour of The Square



Opportunity Areas 3 to 5

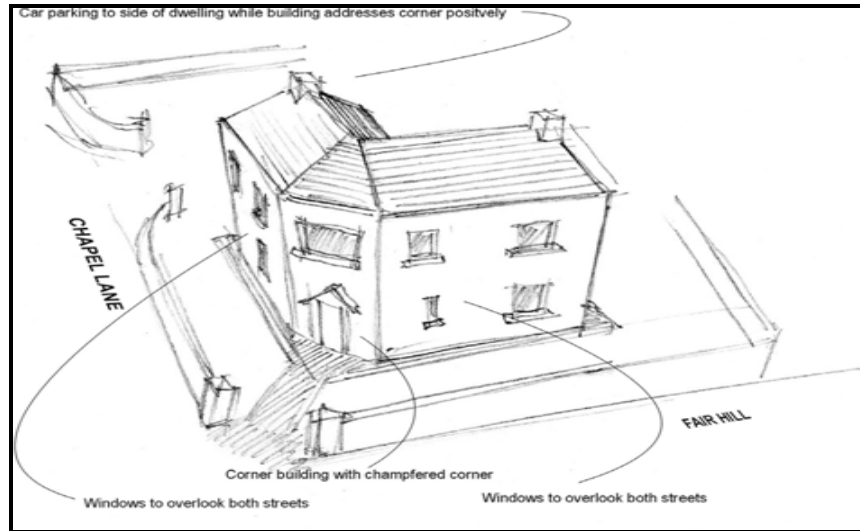


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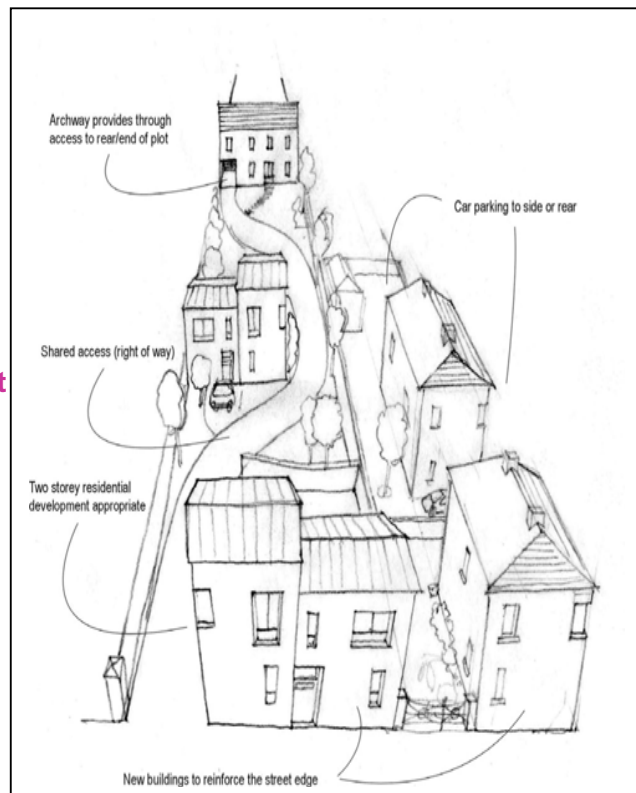
Opportunity Area 3 - Corner Site on the junction of Chapel Lane and Fair Hill

The site is a corner site located on the junction of Chapel Lane and Fair Hill. Corner sites, like focal buildings, generally tend to hold a more prominent position in the streetscape and therefore require a more sensitive design solution. On important corner sites, the buildings play an important pivotal role in the streetscape – turning the corner – and therefore they should ideally be designed with a façade that addresses both street fronts. Blank facades with no window openings should generally be avoided on such buildings.



Opportunity Area 4 - Backland development of plot with access from Fair Hill

Opportunity Area 5 - Corner Plot on Peppard's Lane and Fair Hill



Opportunity Area 6 – Infill Development on multiple plots in the backland of Old Road and New Road

Opportunity Area 7 – Corner infill development on junction of Main Street and Old Road, in addition to backland development potential on multiple plots

Apart from the buildings fronting onto Main Street which have a town centre zoning the remainder of the site is zoned residential. On the southern side of Old Road permission has recently been granted for the demolition of the existing funeral home building and storage shed and the construction of a terrace of 4 dwelling houses fronting onto Old Road. Opportunity Area 6 is the area to the north of Old Road and consists of a vacant plot and private storage sheds. This area represents a significant residential infill opportunity.



View along Old Road.

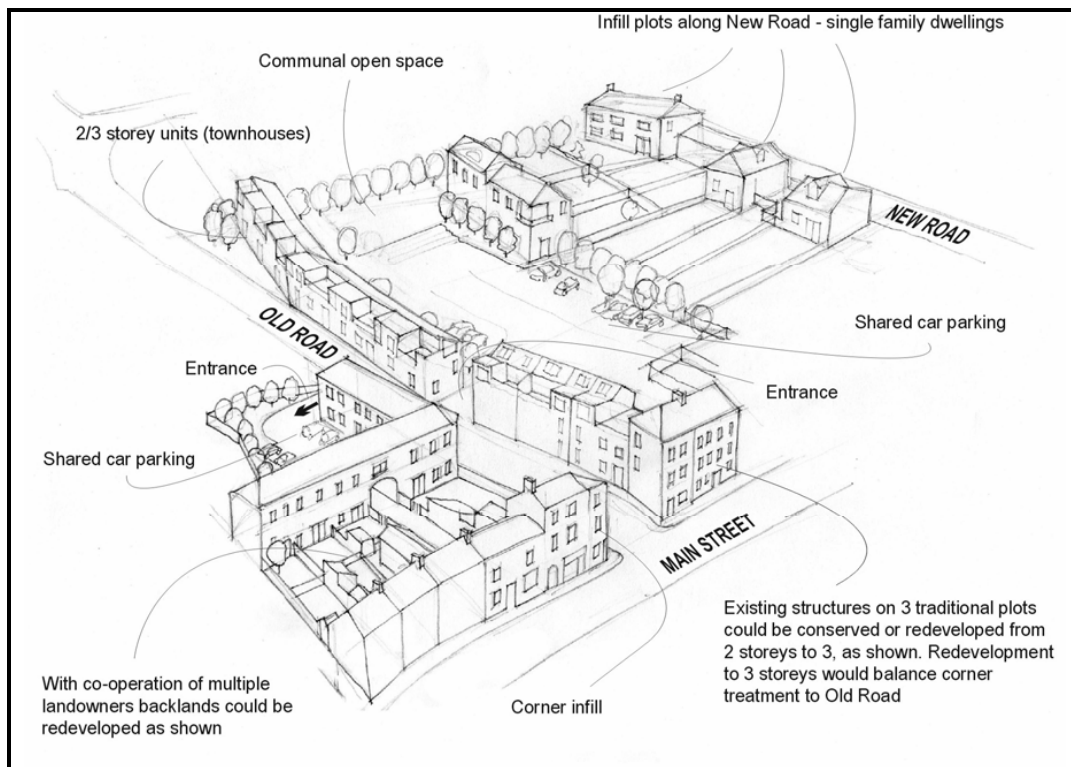


Vacant plot adjoining Old Road

Ordnance Survey Ireland Permit no. 8231 © Ordnance Survey Ireland and Government of Ireland Photo top left—View along New Road.

Development potential for Opportunity Area 6 and 7

- A comprehensive masterplan will be required to demonstrate a planned, integrated scheme for the re-development of the site.
- New building lines should be created to form a new street along Old Road
- There is a presumption towards terraced developments or new urban blocks (perimeter developments enclosing private open space).
- Car parking should be provided within courtyards to the rear of the new building line and should generally not be provided on Old Road.
- Two – three storey developments are generally acceptable, Corner buildings could step up in height to three storeys.
- The area fronting onto New Road represents opportunity for infill plots for residential family dwellings.
- A modern innovative architectural style using new materials and technology would be appropriate for this site.



Opportunity Area 8 – Rebuilding street frontage on west side of Old Road.

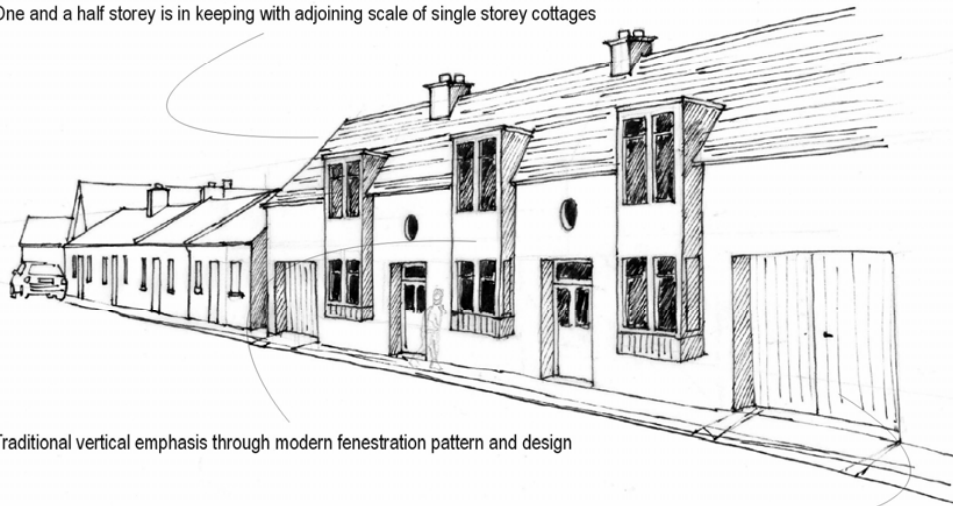


Location: Old Road (west side)

Proposal: Residential terrace of 1 and a half to two storeys in height;

- Scale of proposal respects existing single storey cottages
- In light of plot depth restrictions, consideration should be given to wider plot subdivisions, with scope for car ports of garages to side of units as shown

One and a half storey is in keeping with adjoining scale of single storey cottages



Traditional vertical emphasis through modern fenestration pattern and design

Garages/car ports

Opportunity Area 9 – Centre Block – Large Urban Block bounded by Main Street, Well Lane and New Line Road

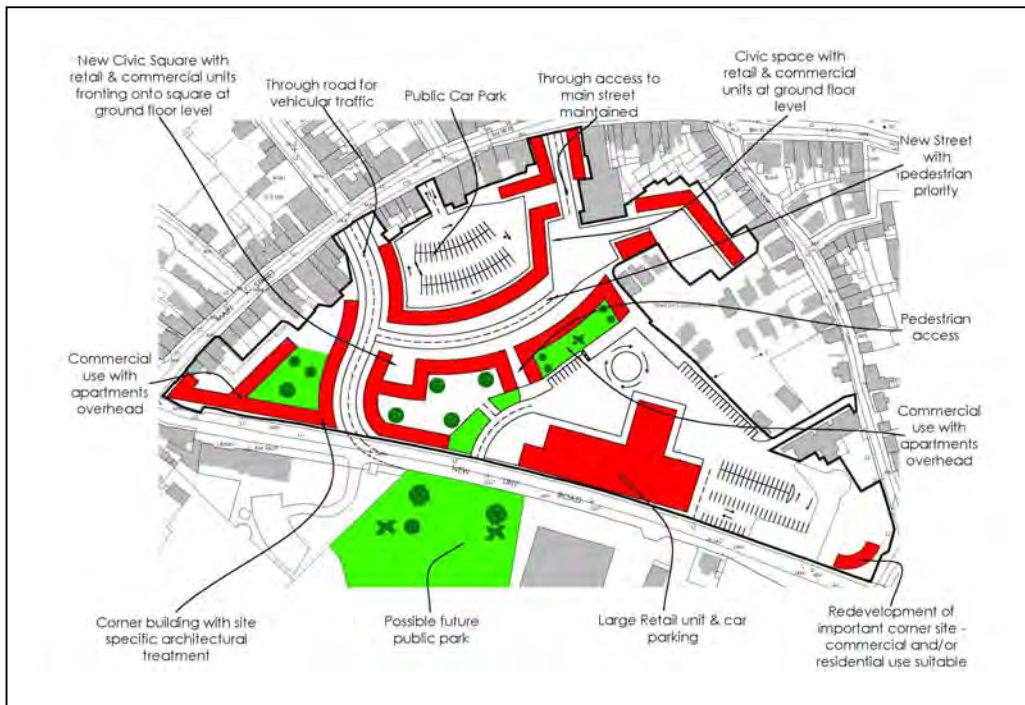
Current Use: Mostly under-utilised backland areas to the Main Street; a council owned public car park is also provided serving Main Street; a private car park serves the Eurospar supermarket with dual frontage (from Main Street and from the car park to the rear); lands adjoining the New Line Road are the former Golden Vale cattle mart site and now lie vacant. Vacancy, dereliction and brownfield sites are found throughout the block. A residential scheme off Bank Lane/Well Lane is partially constructed and a community crèche and Telephone Exchange building occupy the southeastern corner of the site.

Proposed Use: As part of any redevelopment of this opportunity area a through road for vehicular traffic, from the junction of New Road and Main Street to the R518 Ballingarry Road should be provided. This road would run through part of the council owned car park and part of the former mart site, thus relieving the existing congestion at the junction of Newline Road and Main Street, which is particularly bad during peak school run times.

This development would allow for town centre expansion and the redevelopment of backland areas to the Main Street. New commercial uses, with a focus on a new urban civic square, fronted by retail development and over the counter commercial services where possible. A pedestrian street is proposed linking the new urban civic square and the existing Eurospar car park. In addition, it is proposed to permit larger commercial uses and/or convenience stores along New Line Road (including discount foodstores). Residential developments in the form of apartments and/or townhouses are proposed to front the through street and other fringe areas. Pedestrian links through the site from the Main Street to a possible future public park located beside the existing council offices and linking to the River Deel are to be encouraged.



Below is an indicative layout and the purpose of this zoning is to promote town centre uses with retail and commercial uses at ground floor level fronting streets and civic spaces.



Opportunity Area 10 – The Square – The following concept is an adaptation of the original proposed by Shaffrey Associates Architects in the ‘Integrated Urban Design Scheme for the Square (2000)’

It is the building edge that defines the Square. However, much of the traditional building fabric has been altered or rebuilt with modern structures and the area has lost much of its original character. The result is that the edge of the Square is of variable architectural quality. The buildings on the east side of the principal Square (sometimes referred to as the East Square) do not face onto the space. The need to provide for vehicular access and car parking on a portion of the square also detract from the amenity value of the space - as a public space for meeting and gathering. For these reasons it is felt that in order to properly define the layout and form of the square, consideration should be given to formal tree planting around the Square as illustrated in the sketch below. In addition, it is proposed to extend out the pavement along Boherboy in the vicinity of the Square with delineated parking bays to be provided in between street trees (refer to sketch for example). Lime trees are proposed because they have a good shape and form and are suitable for urban contexts such as this.

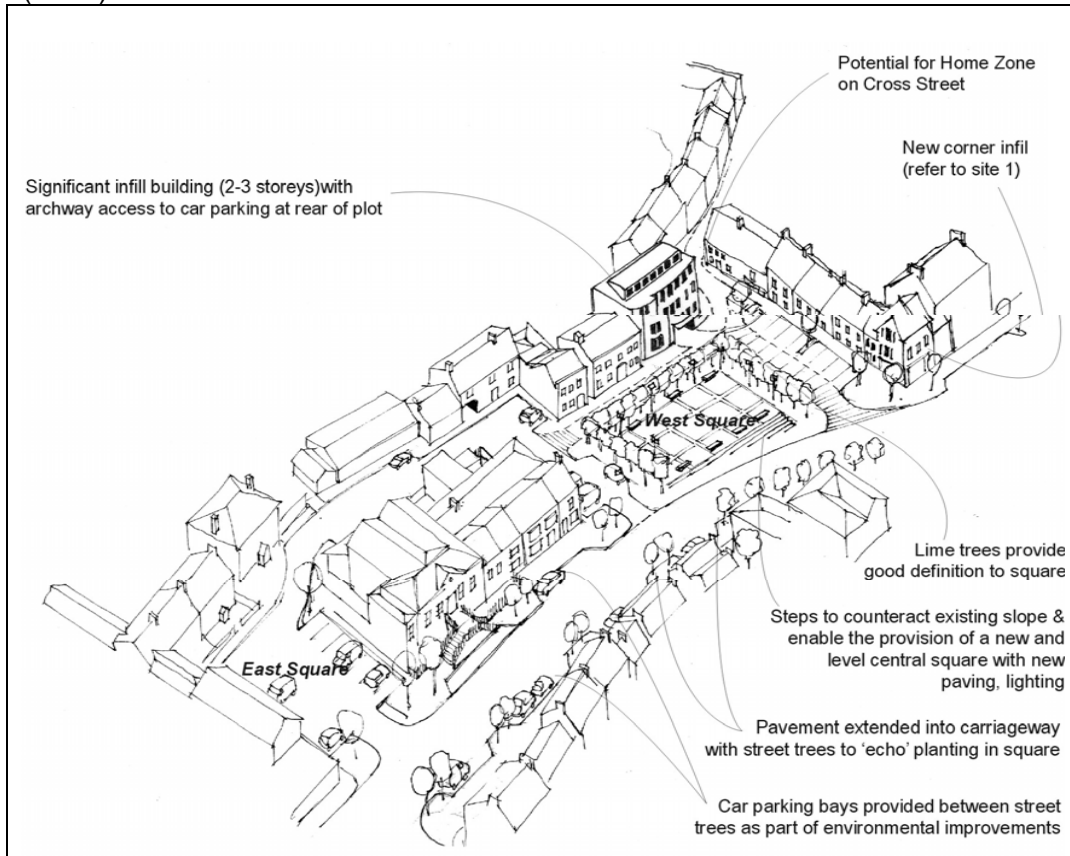
Cross Lane - the lane that connects the Square with Well Lane—could be maintained for through access and is a short street that would be suitable for

the Home Zone Concept giving pedestrians, cyclists and residents priority over the car. Within home zones, the streets are designed through the appropriate use of materials, street furniture and a variation of road widths, to force motorists to drive with more care at lower speeds. The other principal elements of the Shaffrey Report are maintained.

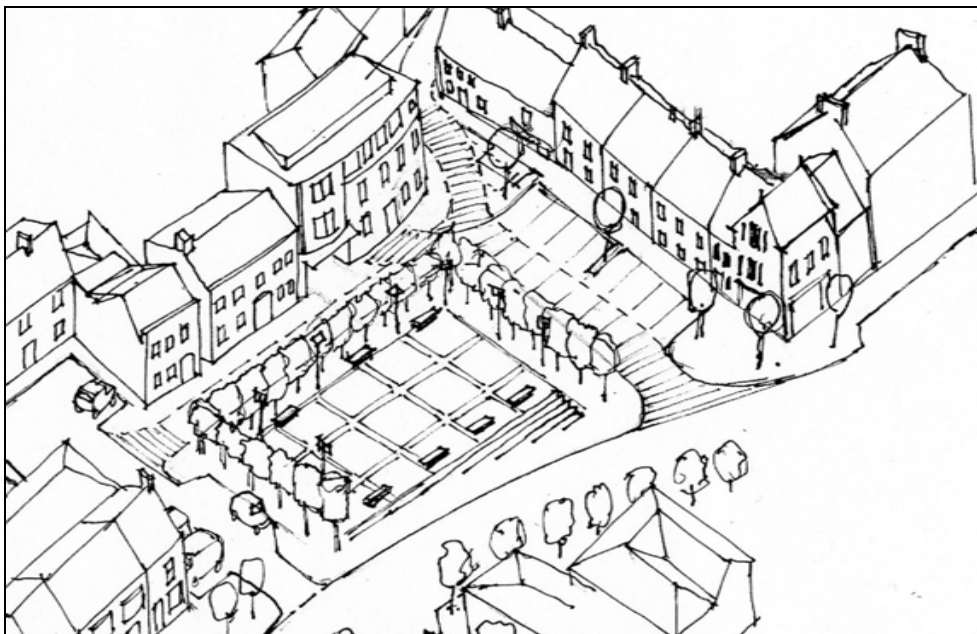


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The following concept is an adaptation of the original proposed by Shaffrey Associates Architects in the Integrated Urban Design Scheme for The Square (2000).



Insert View of West Square



Opportunity Area 11 – Riverside

The area incorporates the banks of the Deel River and includes the well established Matrix Way river walk. The River Deel and its associated flood plain is one of the most significant environmental and landscape features in the town. This LAP zones the lands open space and recreation. Adjacent land uses include agriculture, education and community, existing residential and industrial. There is one national monument located in this area, the Bridge over the Deel River, LI 029 – 031002. This area has been identified as a valuable amenity that has potential for further appropriate development in the interest of habitat protection and recreational amenity. It is the objective of the Council to preserve and protect this area from inappropriate development in order to maintain its significance as an important ecological role, as a natural wildlife corridor, as a flood risk management mechanism and as a natural amenity area. The existing Matrix Way river walk extends westwards from the Deel Bridge and connects to the recently completed Great Southern cycleway/walkway. There is potential for upgrading of this section of walkway which could attract visitors using the Great Southern Trail into the town. The continuation of a linear walkway southwards along the Deel River with possible links to the Newline Road and to the R518 Ballingarry Road through the existing Cois Deel housing estate is to be encouraged. Overall any redevelopment of this area should include

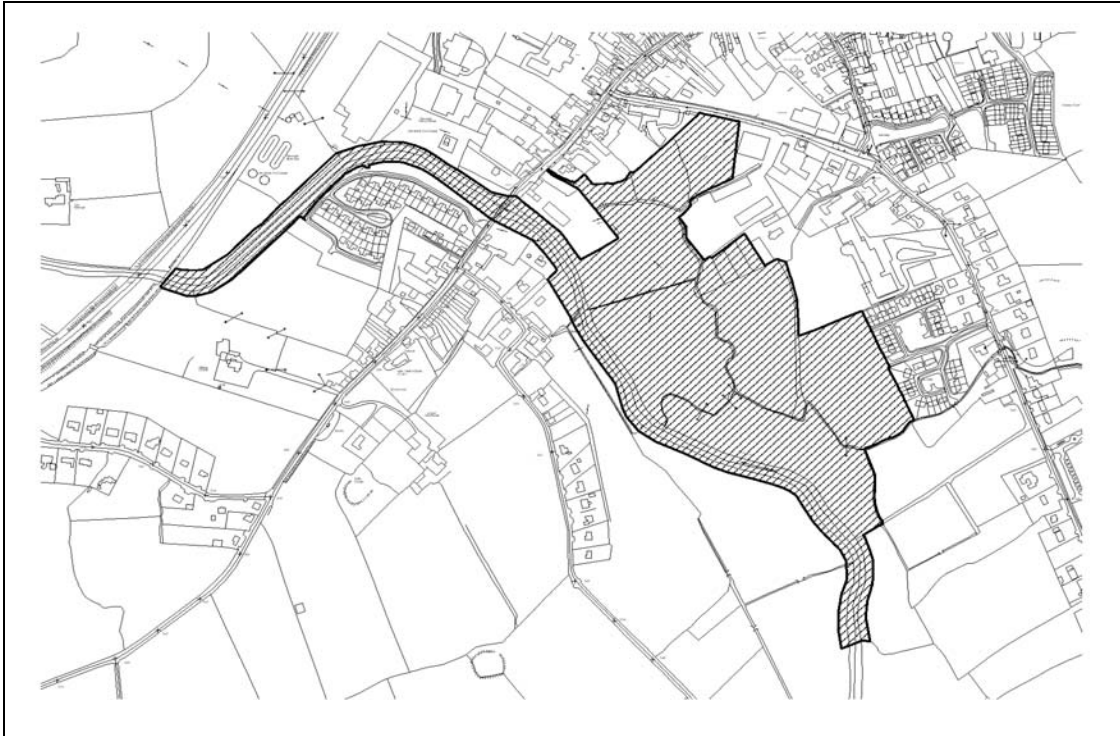
- A comprehensive masterplan to demonstrate a planned, integrated scheme for the area to reinforce the riparian character of the banks of the river safeguarding the natural habitat of the river and its banks. Prior to any works commencing the river banks should be checked for breeding otter and kingfisher, and any works should not be carried out until the risk of significant disturbance to breeding otter or kingfisher has passed. Also scrub to be cleared from the walkways should be done only outside of the bird nesting season;
- Future development proposals shall provide a high quality riverside walkway and cycleway alongside the Deel River in particular on the eastern banks. Any proposals must provide pedestrian and cycleway connections to the Newline Road and the R518 Ballingarry Road. Proposals shall be designed in accordance with the principles of universal access for all.
- All developments shall demonstrate that they enhance the biodiversity value of the area through suitable landscape and management measures.



Matrix Way river walk



View south along the River Deel



Chapter 11 Land Use Zoning

11.1 Purpose of Land Use Zoning

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

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

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

The following table sets out the total zoned land for the various zoning categories in this plan compared with the totals designated in the 2007 LAP.

Table 11.1 Total Zoned Lands

Zoning	Total Area proposed 2012 LAP - ha	Area designated in 2007 LAP - ha	% change
Agriculture	61.44	1.53	+3915
Enterprise and employment	41.04	23.68	+73
Education and community facilities	8.17	8.08	+1
Utilities	1.53	1.53	0
New residential Phase 1	9.82	77.52	-88
New residential Phase 2	9.39	0	+100*
New Residential Phase 3	12.81	0	+100
Existing residential	54.12	42.61	+27

Residential Serviced Sites – Phase 1	5.52	0	+100**
Residential Serviced Sites – Phase 2	1.59	0	+100
Open space	47.19	26.75	+76
Town centre	6.55	5.90	+11
Mixed Use	8.76	72.85	-88

* There was no phasing in the 2007 LAP. New residential phase 1, 2 and 3 of the proposed LAP used to calculate the percentage change.

**There was no serviced sites zoning in the 2007 LAP.

11.2 Non Conforming Uses

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

11.3 Land Use Zoning Categories

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

Town Centre

The purpose of this zoning is to protect and enhance the character of Rathkeale town centre and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to the town centre while guiding the development of an expanded and consolidated town centre area. Any proposed retail development shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Retail Strategy for the Mid West Region, 2010-2016.

Mixed Use

This zoning objective reflects existing commercial uses on the edge of the town, outside of the core area of the town. See also Section 5.5 in Chapter 5.

Existing Residential

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

New Residential

This zoning provides for new residential development and other services associated with residential development. While housing is the primary use in this zone, recreation, education, crèche/playschool, clinic/surgery uses, sheltered housing and small corner shops are also envisaged, subject to the preservation of neighbouring residential amenity. Permission may also be

granted for home based economic activity within this zone, subject to the preservation of residential amenity, traffic considerations and compliance with Section 5.5 in Chapter 5 of this Plan.

Residential Serviced Sites

Residential serviced sites offer a real alternative to individuals wishing to build and design their own houses in an urban setting with established services rather than the open countryside. Suitable edge-of-town lands have been identified within the LAP boundary that provide the opportunity to cater for these lower densities, so as to provide an alternative to sporadic development in the rural areas. Proposals for the development of serviced sites shall comply with objective H3 in Chapter 4 of this plan.

Open Space and Recreation

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

Education and Community Facilities

The purpose of this zoning is to facilitate the necessary development of these facilities. Tourism activities related to the Palatine Museum and the Great Southern Trail such as cafés/restaurants, equipment rentals and bike hire will be considered at the Palatine Museum site.

Enterprise and Employment

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

Agriculture

The purpose of this zoning is to provide for the development of agriculture by ensuring the retention of agricultural uses, protect them from urban sprawl and ribbon development and to provide for a clear physical demarcation to the adjoining built up areas. Uses which are directly associated with agriculture or which would not interfere with this use are open for consideration. Dwellings will be considered for the long-term habitation of farmers and their sons or daughters and subject to the terms and conditions of the rural housing policy as set out in Section 3.9 of the Limerick County Development Plan.

Utilities

The purpose of this zoning is to provide for essential public services, existing and planned, such as waste water treatment plants.

11.4 Land Use Matrix

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

Table 11.2 Rathkeale Land Use Zoning Matrix 2012-2018

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

Key = / Generally Permitted O Open for Consideration X Generally not permitted. * Except for farmer or son / daughter of landowner where rural housing need demonstrated in accordance with the rural housing policy as set out in the Limerick County Development Plan

Appendix 1

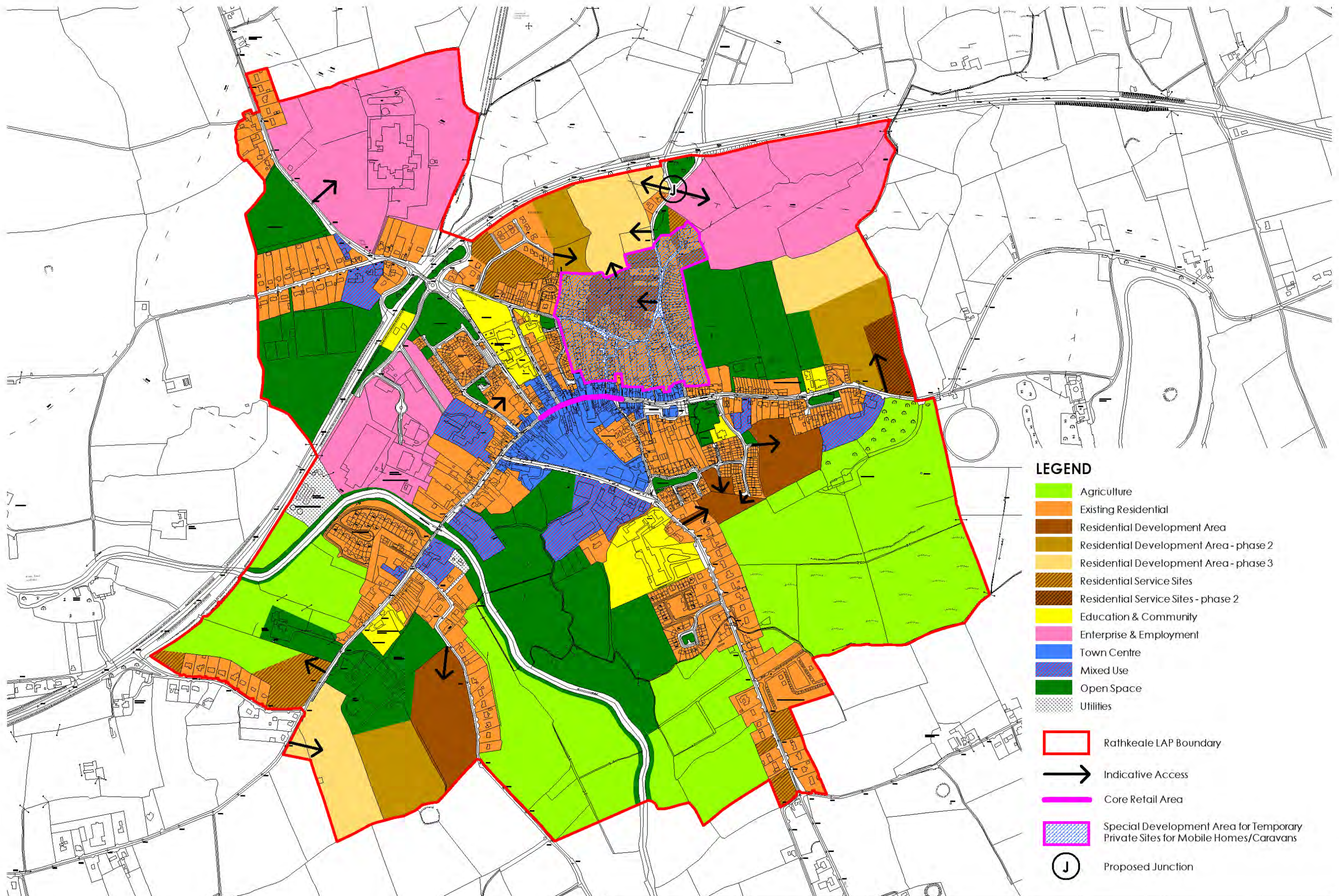
Maps

Map 1: Rathkeale Zoning Map

Map 2: Amenity Map

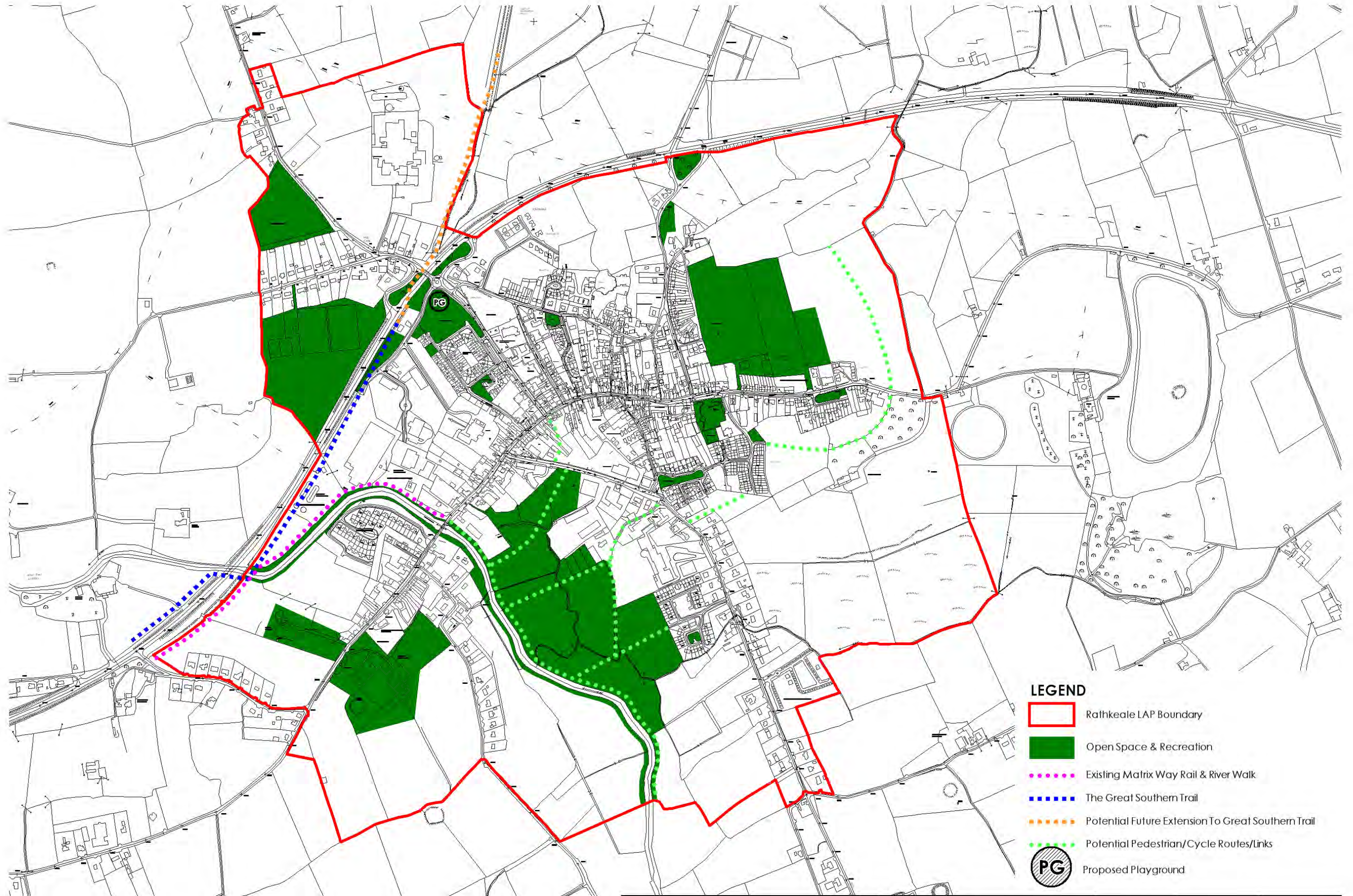
Map 3: Protected Structures Map

Map 4: Predictive Flood Zones



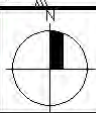
LEGEND

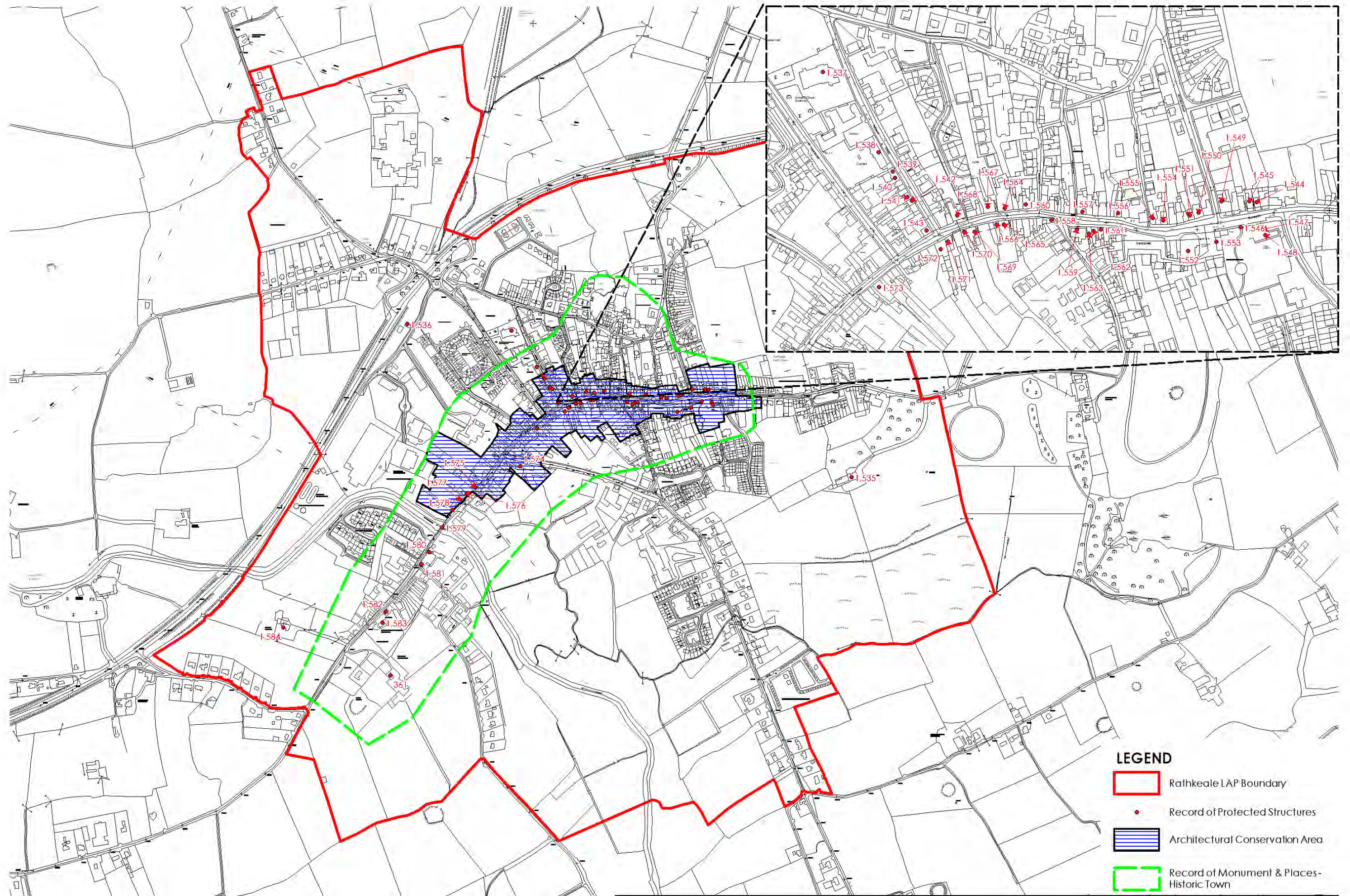
- Agriculture
- Existing Residential
- Residential Development Area
- Residential Development Area - phase 2
- Residential Development Area - phase 3
- Residential Service Sites
- Residential Service Sites - phase 2
- Education & Community
- Enterprise & Employment
- Town Centre
- Mixed Use
- Open Space
- Utilities
- Rathkeale LAP Boundary
- Indicative Access
- Core Retail Area
- Special Development Area for Temporary Private Sites for Mobile Homes/Caravans
- J Proposed Junction





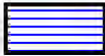

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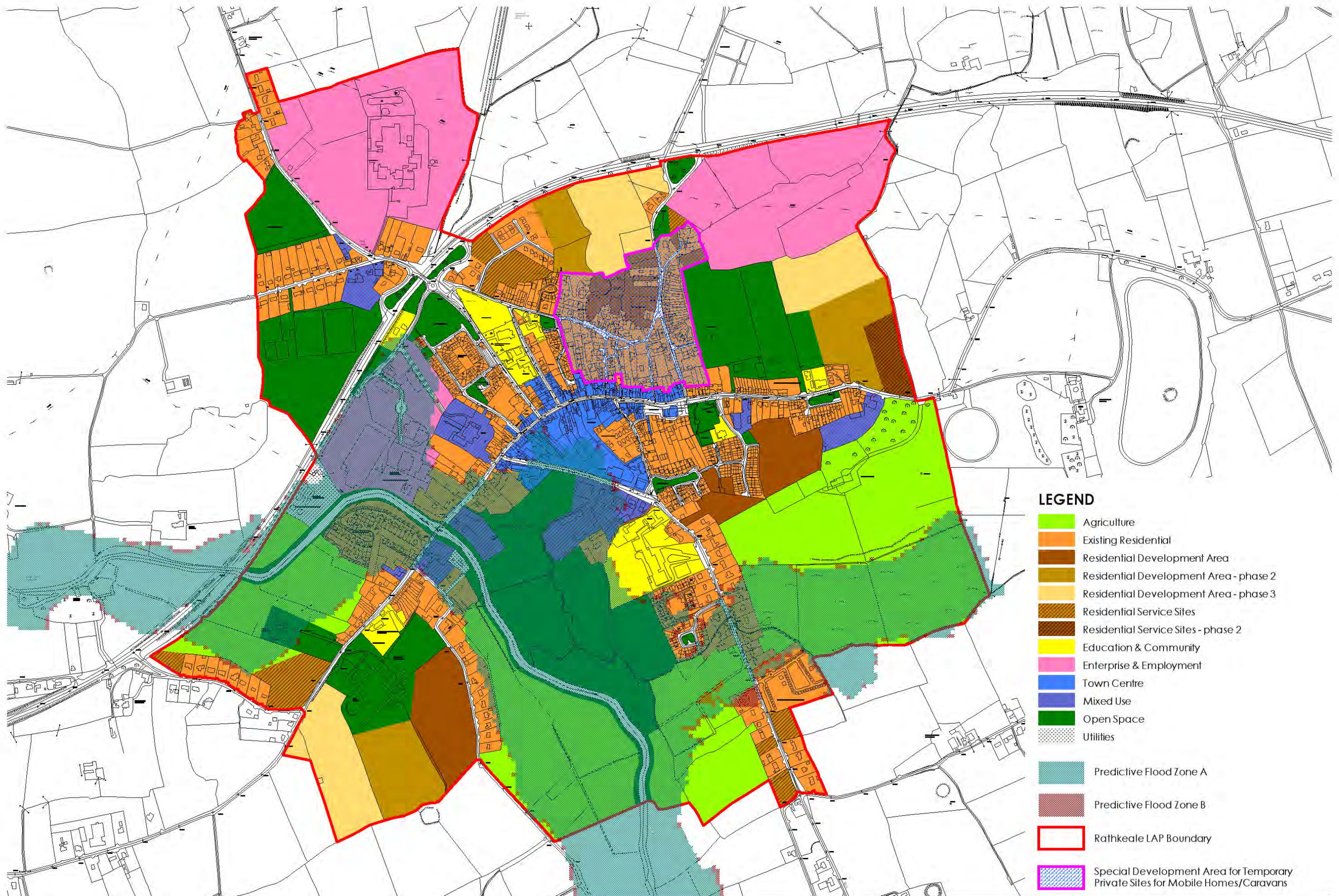
- Rathkeale LAP Boundary
- Open Space & Recreation
- Existing Matrix Way Rail & River Walk
- The Great Southern Trail
- Potential Future Extension To Great Southern Trail
- Potential Pedestrian/Cycle Routes/Links
- PG Proposed Playground





LEGEND

-  Rathkeale LAP Boundary
-  Record of Protected Structures
-  Architectural Conservation Area
-  Record of Monument & Places-Historic Town



LEGEND

- Agriculture
- Existing Residential
- Residential Development Area
- Residential Development Area - phase 2
- Residential Development Area - phase 3
- Residential Service Sites
- Residential Service Sites - phase 2
- Education & Community
- Enterprise & Employment
- Town Centre
- Mixed Use
- Open Space
- Utilities
- Predictive Flood Zone A
- Predictive Flood Zone B
- Rathkeale LAP Boundary
- Special Development Area for Temporary Private Sites for Mobile Homes/Caravans

Appendix 2

Flood Risk Assessment

2.1 Introduction: Flood risk in Rathkeale.

This is the stage 1 flood risk identification following the commencement of the review of the Rathkeale Local Area Plan 2007-13. It should be read in conjunction with the zoning map of the draft plan. Please note that the zoning pattern may change as the review progresses.

2.2 Stage 1: Flood Risk Identification:

The Technical Appendices of the *Planning and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (November 2009 p.9)* identify the following sources of information:

- 1 OPW Preliminary flood risk assessment indicative fluvial flood maps.
- 2 National Coastal Protection strategy study flood and coastal erosion risk maps.
- 3 Predictive and historic flood maps and benefiting land maps.
- 4 Predictive flood maps produced under CFRAM studies.
- 5 River Basin Management Plan and reports.
- 6 Indicative assessment of existing flood risk under Preliminary flood risk assessment.
- 7 Previous flood risk assessments
- 8 Advice from Office of Public Works.
- 9 Internal consultation with Local Authority personnel, in particular water services engineers.
- 10 Topographical maps- in particular LIDAR
- 11 Information on flood defence condition and performance.
- 12 Alluvial deposition maps.
- 13 Liable to flood markings on old 6 inch maps. In addition these maps particularly the first edition, contain information on landscape features and infrastructure such as mills and weirs that can indicate hydrological features.
- 14 Local Libraries and newspaper reports.
- 15 Local consultation e.g. local groups.
- 16 Walkover surveys to assess potential sources of flooding and likely routes of flood waters and flood defences.
- 17 National, regional and local spatial plans and previous planning applications.

1. OPW preliminary flood risk assessment indicative fluvial flood maps:

These maps show the south east of the town to be at risk. Substantial re-zoning has taken place in this location in order to avoid flood risk. The land is now zoned agricultural/open space.

2. National Coastal Protection Strategy Study flood and coastal maps:

Maps for this study would not be of any assistance in dealing with specific flooding issues in Rathkeale.

3. Predictive and historic flood maps and benefiting land maps (flood maps.ie):

These maps were consulted. Areas that are more likely to flood were identified. Benefiting lands i.e. lands that would benefit from drainage works, can be co-related to river flood plains. These showed patterns along the river to the south west of the town and to the south east. This land has now been zoned as agricultural/open space.

4. Predictive flood maps produced under CFRAM studies.

See above re Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment maps.

5. River Basin Management Plan and reports.

Insufficient detail available to inform responses at LAP level.

6. Indicative assessment of existing flood risk under Preliminary flood risk assessment.

Existing areas of flood risk as indicated above are the areas along the river and in the north western portion of the plan area and south eastern portion of the plan along the river. De-zoning has taken place in these locations.

7. Previous flood risk assessments:

One was submitted as part of earlier planning application (08 348) and has been examined, see attached report. However it was decided to de-zone lands, as with a surplus of zoned land available, it was considered better to avoid lands with even a residual risk when the plan makers had the facility to select other lands that were sufficient in terms of area and location to fulfil the core strategy.

8. OPW advice:

This has been incorporated as part of the public consultation process. .

9. Internal consultations with Council personnel:

Discussions regarding drainage and flooding issues took place with council engineers, which indicated the sensitivity of the area along the river.

10. LIDAR Survey.

The Council has purchased LIDAR mapping. This has been used in the JBA study to provide more accurate information.

11. Information on flood defences and condition:

No flood defences exist within the plan area.

12. Alluvial deposition maps.

Alluvial soils are those deposited by rivers. Their extent helps to indicate the extent of historic flood events. These allied to benefiting areas in addition to historic maps (first and later editions of the six inch maps) show areas prone to flooding. The soils maps show alluvial soils in a corridor of varying width on either sides of the river as it runs through the plan area. This corridor varies in width from 50 to 400m.

13. Liable to flood markings on old 6 inch maps.

Areas liable to flood are shown on the older first edition 6 inch maps and the editions revised between 1920 and 1924. These have been imported into the Limerick County Council GIS system. The area shown as being prone to flooding is in the area currently zoned as open space close to the town centre. Other areas shown as prone to flooding in the western part of the town and in the south east have been re-zoned to agricultural.

14. Local libraries and reports:

Flooding reports from the OPW website were consulted in the preparation of this assessment, these related to flood events close to the Deel bridge dating from the late 1960s.

15. Local consultations:

Pre draft public consultation took place in February 2012.

16. Walkover surveys

Walk over surveys for this draft were an important part of the groundwork associated with the plan and took place in mid March following receipt of submissions for the plan. Such surveys helped to indicate the extent of vegetation associated with wetter ground conditions such as yellow flag iris, *juncus* spp. and creeping buttercup. Surveys also gave indications of surface ponding of water. The preliminary walkover indicates the sensitivity of the area along the river which corresponds to a great degree with the alluvial soil maps referred to above, particularly in the south western portion of the town which has been re-zoned as agricultural land. Part of this area has vegetation which indicates poor drainage.

17. National, regional and local spatial plans.

Insufficient detail was present in other plans or strategies in order to inform the current survey.

18. Previous planning applications

See above.

2.3 Conclusions:

The zoning system within the plan has been updated and much of the plan area has been re-zoned as agricultural/open space where flood risk exists.

Policy for adequate access has been provided for maintenance of the River Deel. This should be a 7m wide strip and remain unpaved and un-landscaped where possible. A 5m strip is required for the Deel tributary in the south east of the plan area.

Appendix 3

SEA/AA Screening Report

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This screening document is prepared following the pre draft public display period in early 2012 in which submissions were received from the public. This document should be read with the proposed zoning map for the town and the Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment, in appendix 1. A number of changes have been made to the plan. Chief amongst these has been the reduction in the amount of residentially zoned land from 77.52ha to 38.83ha, over three phases, to ensure that the provision of residentially zoned lands ties in with the provisions of the Core Strategy. The 61.44ha has been zoned agricultural to reflect its predominant land use. Other more minor changes have occurred as zoning is altered in specific locations. Another issue that has been dealt with in this screening and specifically in the Flood Risk Assessment section is the de-zoning of land in the centre of the plan area close to the River Deel, due to the issue of flood risk. Other alterations to the plan have been the designation of specific sites as mixed use. This is in contrast to the previous plan where large areas of the plan were shown as mixed use, which owing to the range of uses permitted by the mixed use designation, could lead to the risk of uncoordinated development. By confining mixed use zoning to specific sites with active enterprises in key locations in the town, this approach would be better able to continue towards development of existing enterprises.

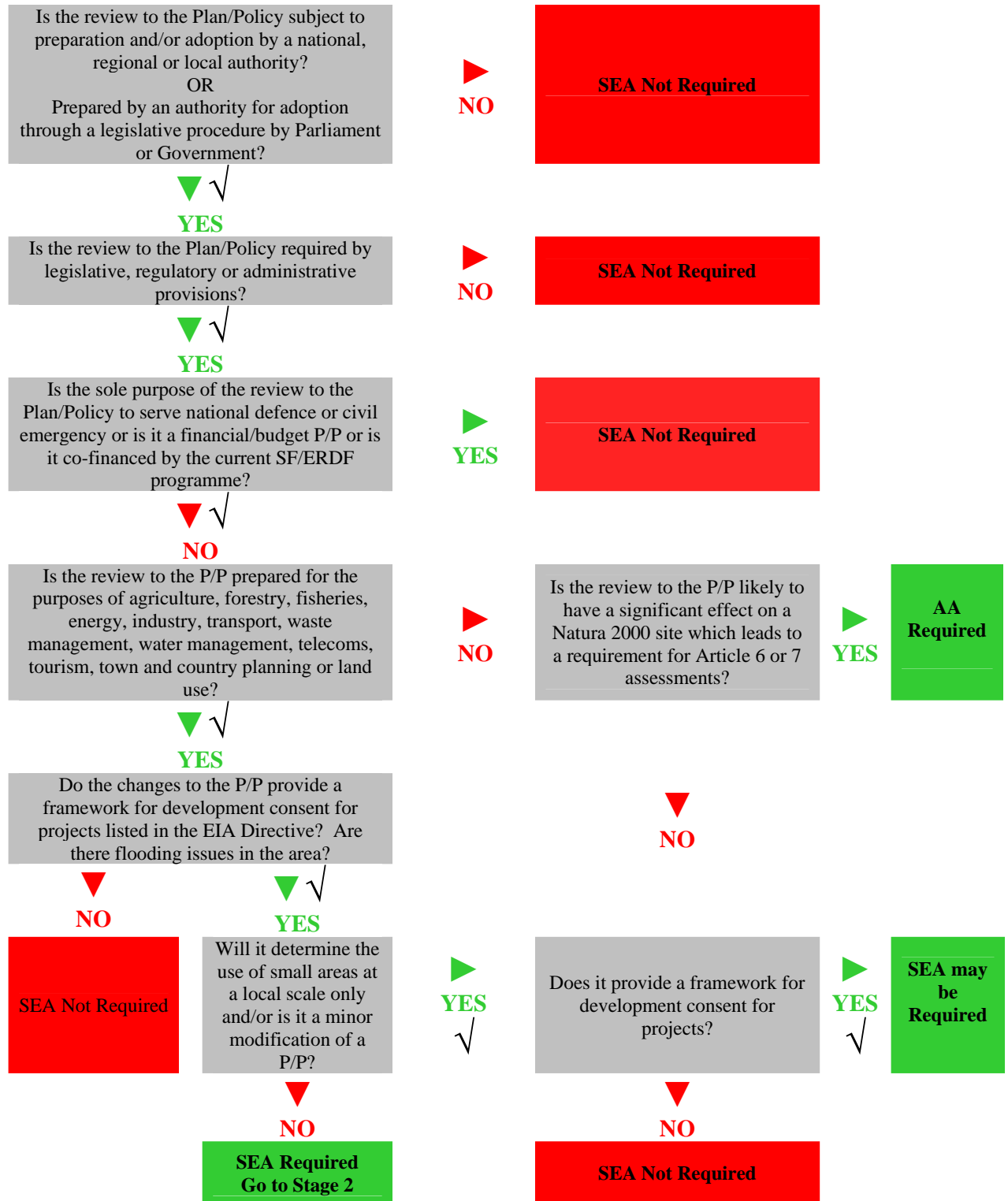
3.2 SCREENING STATEMENT

The Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004-2011 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004, SI 201 of 2011) require case by- case screening of individual plans and programmes based on the criteria in Schedule 2A to the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. These criteria must be taken into account in determining whether or not significant effects on the environment would be likely to arise. The population of Rathkeale is 1494 (2006) and the area zoned is approximately 268ha. These thresholds are below the thresholds for statutory SEA.

Stage One - Pre-Screening

The first step in determining whether the proposed Rathkeale Local Area Plan would require an SEA involves a pre-screening check.

Figure 2 Pre-Screening Decision Tree



Stage Two - (A) Environmental Significance Screening

The application of environmental significance criteria is important in determining whether an SEA is required for small Plans/Policies or modifications or reviews of Plans/Policies. Annex II (2) of Directive 2001/42/EC sets out the “statutory” criteria that should be addressed when undertaking this stage.

Criteria for Determining the Likely Significance of Environmental Effects

Characteristics of the Plan/Programme

- i. the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;*

The Local Area Plan guides development within the settlement boundaries of Rathkeale and in its current draft has reduced residential zoning, has placed an emphasis on more focused mixed use zoning and has revised large portions of the zoning map as a result of the Stage 1 Flood Risk Assessment which has been carried out as part of the review. As a result of this the policy framework put forward by the plan, takes into account the provisions of the core strategy and the concept of a compact settlement.

- ii. the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;*

The review of the Local Area Plan is set within the context of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-16 as varied, the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 and the provisions of relevant planning guidelines issued by the DECLG and the National Spatial Strategy. These tend to influence the contents of the Rathkeale LAP rather than the other way around. The plan will guide individual projects and planning permissions within the LAP, both through the zoning mechanism and the policy content of the local area plan.

- iii the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;*

The review of the Rathkeale LAP 2012-2018 is being carried out under the Planning and Development Act 2000-2011 and takes into account the need to incorporate the Development Plan Core strategy. The Circular letter PSSP 6/2010 *Core Strategies under the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010* and the accompanying Guidance Note on Core Strategies November 2010 (pp. 2-3), mentions that the incorporation of the core strategy “*must integrate relevant EU directive related considerations that development plans must comply with*”, amongst them the SEA Directive, Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive. As outlined in (i) above the revised

zoning strategy will lead to a more compact settlement with an emphasis on development in key sites.

iv. environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;

The revised zoning has addressed the issues raised by the Flood Risk Assessment.

iv. the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).

The review of the LAP prompted by the need to incorporate the Core Strategy means that community legislation and guidance on environmental issues is being incorporated into the proposed plan.

Characteristics of the Effects and of the Area Likely to be Affected

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

The re-zoning of residential areas and their subsequent re-zoning for agriculture will lessen the effects of development in the plan area.

ii. the cumulative nature of the effects

Cumulative negative environmental effects are likely to be localised within the plan boundaries.

iii. the trans-boundary nature of the effects

There are no trans-boundary effects.

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

None.

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

The area that will be affected is that within the development boundary of Rathkeale -see zoning maps in the LAP. The 2006 population was 1494 with a projected increase to 1789 by 2018. The area zoned for development is less than that in the 2007 plan and is approximately 268 ha.

vi. the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to

- *special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;*

The land surrounding the Deel and the tributary to the east have been de-zoned from residential use and now have agricultural/open space zoning in place. These areas, particularly the land parcel to the south east of the plan area function as flood plains and any development on these areas may impair this function.

In terms of cultural heritage, Rathkeale is classified as an historic town (L1029-031001) in the record of monuments and places. There is another ten historic monuments in the town as well as another three whose exact location has been lost. The county council has a policy archaeological monitoring on development locations where they might have an impact on archaeological sites. Objective EH3 sets out the archaeological protection objectives of the council.

Potential Archaeological impacts can also be dealt with at development management stage. During the plan preparation process changes to the zoning layout will be monitored for possible effects on archaeology. This is being done in house with successive draft being forwarded to the council archaeologist for comment.

The continued presence of the Architectural Conservation Area, will help protect the built and archaeological heritage of the town.

- *exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;*

It is not expected that any environmental quality standards will be exceeded or that the value of vulnerable areas limited as a result of the review. The reduction in the amount of land zoned for development use lessens the chances of any standards being breached.

- *intensive land-use;*

As outlined above with a reversion to agricultural zoning from residential zoning the intensity of potential land use within the plan boundaries is lessened.

- vii. *the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.*

No effects, none located within the development boundaries of the plan area.

Stage Two – Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

At this stage in the plan process, no strategically significant environmental problems can be identified in relation to the above issues.

Following the screening process whereby the specific context of the review of the Rathkeale LAP has been assessed against the environmental significance criteria as contained in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive, **it is concluded that**

a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the review of the Rathkeale LAP at this stage in the plan process.

Appropriate Assessment Screening

This is an Appropriate Assessment Screening of the proposed review to the Rathkeale LAP, in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

The review of the Rathkeale LAP has been prepared due to the need to incorporate the Development Plan Core Strategy, as varied. The proposed plan and its updated contents needs to be screened for Appropriate Assessment. Based on the *Methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*, a 'Screening Matrix' and a 'Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix' have been completed. The conclusions were that the Proposed LAP **does not require** an Appropriate Assessment.

The plan-making process is still in its early stages and subsequent alterations to the content of the plan will be informed by this screening and in terms of policies and zonings will be subject to further screening when they arise.

The principal consideration for an Appropriate Assessment would be if the LAP were likely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site – Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas (SACs and SPAs) are Natura sites. There is no SAC or SPA within the boundaries of the Proposed Rathkeale LAP. The LAP has been drawn up to ensure that land uses, developments and effects arising from permissions based upon this Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of any Natura sites, having regard to their conservation objectives.

Changes to the plan: Chief amongst these has been the reduction in the amount of residentially zoned land from 77.52ha to 38.83ha over three phases to ensure that the provision of residentially zoned lands tied in with the provisions of the Core Strategy. The 38.69ha has been zoned agricultural or open space to reflect the predominant land use. Other, minor, changes have occurred as zoning is altered in specific locations. Another issue that has been dealt with in this screening and specifically in the Flood Risk Assessment section is the de-zoning of land in the centre of the plan area close to the River Deel, due to the issue of flood risk. Other alterations to the plan have been the designation of specific sites as mixed use. This is in contrast to the previous plan where large areas of the plan were shown as mixed use which owing to the range of uses permitted by the mixed use designation could lead to the risk of uncoordinated development. By confining mixed use zoning to specific sites with active enterprises in key locations in the town this approach would be better able to continue towards development of existing enterprises.

The following text has been added to the plan: *No projects which will be reasonably likely to give rise to significant adverse direct or 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 this plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects).* This provides additional safeguards for areas of natural history significance. This policy together with phasing and re-zoning from residential to agricultural should reduce potential development pressure on infrastructure and facilities in the plan area and help to prevent ex-situ effects on the Lower River Shannon SAC site. Curraghchase woodlands is too far from the LAP area for any effects to be likely while the site synopsis for the Askeaton Fen Complex identifies the main threat to the complex as being localised drainage. Water for Rathkeale comes from ground water sources in Kilcolman 8km to the south west which is too distant from the fen complex to exert an effect. The substantial re-zoning from agricultural to residential in light of flood risk – see the flood risk assessment provides a greater buffer from development around the Deel and its tributary to the east. Within the plan area it will allow the more natural functioning of these areas as part of the river system.

The conclusion is at this stage is that the review of the Rathkeale LAP **does not require** an Appropriate Assessment.

Screening Matrix

Brief description of the project or plan:
The review of the plan is to allow the incorporation of the core strategy provisions in relation to population figures and the incorporation of EU legislation on environmental issues. The alterations to the plan in this draft were put forward with this in mind.
Brief description of the Natura 2000 sites:
There are no Natura sites within the town. The Lower River Shannon SAC (002165) site is approximately 13 km to the north west of the town. This site has been selected because of a range of riparian habitats and species such as wet woodlands, tidal mudflats, estuaries and for species such as otter, salmon and lamprey. Maintenance of high water quality is an important factor in ensuring the preservation of these habitats.
The Askeaton Fen Complex (SAC site 002279) is 3.5km to the north of the town, while the Curraghchase woodlands (00174) lie 6.5km to the north east. The fen complex is a series of low lying fens and wetland complexes in the midst of intensive agricultural land. Curraghchase woodlands consist of both woodlands with mixed chiefly planted species and the remains of Curraghchase house which is a roost for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat.

Describe the individual elements of the plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site:

The main way in which ex-situ impacts could be created is through pollution that would affect water quality downstream in the Lower River Shannon SAC site or abstraction which could threaten the fen sites which are closer.

The water supply from Rathkeale comes from bore holes in Kilcolman 8km to the south of Rathkeale. To date no effects on the fen have been identified from this source.

The addition of text referred to above which takes into account the requirements of article 6 of the Habitats Directive sought to minimise any chances of ex-situ impacts lessens the possibility of such effects on the designated sites.

A policy ensuring that development takes place only in step with the provision of water treatment facilities was inserted in the LAP.

Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:

- **Size and scale;**

There are no designated sites within the town boundary. Ex-situ impacts are taken into account by including policies that ensure that development takes place in tandem with the establishment of appropriate facilities such as wastewater infrastructure- see SEA screening.

- **Land-take;**

It is not proposed to further expand the development boundaries of the Local Area Plan. The area zoned for development is reduced in size. Within the plan substantial rezoning from residential to agricultural/open space lessens potential development pressure within the plan area and by reflecting existing land uses allows buffers between zoned areas and the Deel and tributaries and affords a measure of protection to semi-natural habitats within the development plan boundary.

- **Distance from Natura 2000 site or key features of the site;**

The River Shannon SAC site lies approximately 13km to the north part of the Askeaton fen complex lies 3.5km to the north and the Curraghchase woodlands site lies 6.5 km to the north east.

- **Resource requirements (water abstraction etc);**

No policies within the plan indicate the need for abstraction of water from the Deel River, the abstraction from ground water for the town lies to the south outside of any designated site.

- **Emission (disposal to land, water or air);**

In the plan there will be policies designed to ensure that the pace of development does not over-reach the capacity of the available treatment systems.

- **Excavation requirements;**

Any excavation which may be permitted within the scope of the plan will take place within the LAP boundaries and are sufficiently distant from the designated sites so as to ensure that there will be no effect on the sites.

- **Transportation requirements;**

It is not envisaged that any of the transport policies put forward in the plan will have any effect in terms of encroachment on any designated sites.

- **Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc;**

No Construction projects within the plan area will encroach upon designated sites.

- **Other**

None.

Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of :

- **reduction of habitat area:**

None- no Natura 2000 sites exist in the town.

- **disturbance to key species;**

No projects giving rise to disturbance to key species for Natura 2000 sites is likely within the boundaries of the plan as no such sites are present in the plan boundaries. The inclusion of policies that ensure that development takes place only in step with provision of wastewater treatment systems helps to ensure that no ex-situ effects through water pollution issues are reduced.

- **habitat or species fragmentation;**

The absence of designated sites and the presumption in the plan against development that would cause ex-situ effects will help to prevent ex-situ effects. The re-zoning of land to agriculture will help prevent fragmentation of non –designated habitats in the plan area and reduce disturbance for the species that are contained within them.

- **reduction in species density;**

There are no Natura 2000 sites close to or within the plan area. It is not envisaged that any reductions in non-designated species density would take place through the fact that that substantial re-zoning from residential to agricultural/open space zoning has been carried out. Policies exist within the current plan to conserve tree stocks within the plan boundary. In the CDP the emphasis placed on the use of native species in landscaping should be stressed.

- **changes in key indicators of conservation value**

No projects giving rise to significant adverse changes in key indicators of conservation value for Natura 2000 sites are likely given that policies are in place to control possible ex-situ effects and the absence of Natura sites within the plan boundaries. The reduction in the area zoned for residential in the plan and its re-zoning as agricultural/open space lessen development pressure in the plan area, prevents overloading of existing infrastructure and by allowing a buffer around the rivers and tributaries in the plan area

lessens the chances of ex-situ effects on the Lower River Shannon Site in particular.

- **Climate change:**

The consolidation of development within the boundaries of the LAP while at the same time recognising the importance of the conservation sites outside the plan boundaries is not expected to result in climate change issues that would affect the sites.

Describe any likely impacts on the Natura 2000 site as a whole in terms of:

- interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site;

None-there are no Natura 2000 sites within the plan area or close to it. See emphasis regarding development of sewage facilities in line with development to reduce chances of ex-situ effects.

- interference with key relationships that define the function of the site;

With the consolidation of development by the updating of the plan and the overall conservation objectives set out by the County Development Plan it is not expected that the various factors that help designated sites function as particular habitats will be affected.

Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:

- **loss;**

Not applicable.

- **Fragmentation;**

Not applicable.

- **Disruption;**

Not applicable.

- **Disturbance;**

Not applicable.

- **change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc);**

The Askeaton fen complex site synopsis identifies the main risk as being localised drainage. This is outside the control of the LAP and given the distance of the LAP area from the fen any works within its boundaries are unlikely to have an effect.

Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts are not known.

Not applicable.

Finding of No Significant Effects Matrix

Name of Project or Plan:	Rathkeale LAP2007 revision
Name and location of Natura 2000 sites:	Lower River Shannon SAC (Site Code 002165) 13 km to the northwest. Askeaton Fen Complex 002279 SAC site 3.5km to the north. Curraghchase woods 00174 6.5km to the north east.
Description of the Project or Plan	As given in Screening Matrix above.
Is the Project or Plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site (provide details) ?	No.
Are there other projects or plans that together with the project of plan being assessed could affect the site (provide details)?	The proposed LAP has been drafted to ensure that the uses, developments and effects arising from proposals and/or permissions based upon the policies and objectives of the Plan (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites, having regard to their conservation objectives. These concerns are also reflected in the County Development Plan.
The Assessment of Significance of Effects	
Describe how the project or plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 sites:	The proposed Rathkeale LAP includes policies relating to sewage infrastructure that minimises pollution risk to the sites and is not likely to affect the designated sites.
Explain why these effects are not considered significant:	No sites exist within the plan boundaries and policies, including those set out in the CDP (2010), for the prevention of pollution, nuisance or other environmental effects likely to significantly and adversely affect the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites.
List of Agencies Consulted: Provide contact name and	AA Screening Reports were sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Arts, Heritage

telephone or email address:	and the Gaeltacht <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPA • DECLG • Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food • Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources 		
Response to consultation	Responses received from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht • OPW • EPA • Dept of Education and Skills, • Bord Gais • ESB • An Garda Siochana 		
Data Collected to Carry out the Assessment			
Who carried out the Assessment?	Sources of Data	Level of assessment Completed	Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed
Heritage Officer, Forward Planning Section, Limerick County Council.	Existing NPWS Site Synopses Site visits during plan preparation process.	Desktop study, site visits	On display with plan.

Appendix 4

Protected Structures

and

List of Traditional Building Materials found in County Limerick

Architectural Heritage

Part IV [Architectural Heritage] of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011 allows for two grades of protection for our built heritage under its provisions. In the first instance there is the Protected Structure. Secondly, there is the Architectural Conservation Area.

Protecting the built heritage under the provisions of Part IV of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2011 has positive benefits for the structures concerned in that they become eligible for consideration under the provisions of the Conservation Grant Scheme operated by Limerick County Council.

The listing of an individual structure, or the protection of an area through the establishment of an Architectural Conservation Area, provides recognition for those elements of the built heritage that are of significance. This significance can be divided into 8 basic categories: Architectural, artistic, archaeological, historical, social, cultural, scientific, technical. Many buildings, structures or features carry more than one category of significance.

Record of Protected Structures (R.P.S)

The Record of Protected Structures is a statutory document maintained by each planning authority under the provisions of Part IV [Architectural Heritage] of the Planning and Development Act, 2000-2010. Under the provisions of the legislation the R.P.S. is an integral part of Limerick County Council's Development Plan. The listing provided here is an extract from the current Development Plan (in force between 2010 – 2016) and the entries in that document are those which have statutory force. However, provisions in the Act allow - buildings, features and structures to be added to the Record either when such an action is deemed to be either desirable or necessary. Consequently anyone contemplating undertaking works to a structure which can reasonably be believed to be of architectural, artistic, archaeological, historical, social, cultural, scientific, or technical interest should make inquiries with the Council's Conservation Officer, Forward Planning Section, Planning and Development Department, as to whether a particular structure is protected or not. Furthermore, full protection is afforded to those elements of the built heritage where a 'Proposed Protected Structure Notice' is issued under the provisions of S.55 of the Act, pending the final resolution of the matter by the elected Members of the County Council.

A protected structure is deemed, under the provisions of Section 2 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2011, to consist of the following:





- (i) the interior of the structure,
- (ii) the land lying within the curtilage of the structure,
- (iii) any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, and
- (iv) all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in *subparagraph (i) or (iii)*".

Elements comprising the fabric of the structure (which at first glance may not be considered to be of importance or significance), such as lath and plaster finishes, external render, window and door frames and their associated joinery and fixings (such as latches and catches, and so forth), glazing, natural slate roofing and the supporting structures, painted timber, as well as the more obvious elements of the structure such as decorative plasterwork, are deemed to be protected. Protection is also afforded to the plan and layout of the building. For example, an internal partition dividing the entrance hall from the stairwell or a wall that separates a sitting room from a dining room, and so forth.

Works to the exteriors and interiors of protected structures or proposed protected structures (including the area deemed to be the curtilage of these structures) or in their settings, which may directly impinge upon the fabric of the protected structure or the character of those buildings may require planning permission. Owners or occupiers may obtain clarification through the use of the Declaration Process set out in Section 57 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended in 2002.

It must be emphasised that alterations to protected structures are not prohibited. However, they should be considered interventions- all alternatives should be explored and the proposed changes must demonstrate that they are justifiable in the context of the structure's significance and the owner's needs. Furthermore, interventions that are made should be capable of being reversible without loss of historic fabric or damage to the structure. Limerick County Council's Conservation Officer is available to provide a general advice service to owners and occupiers. However, the planning authority recommends that those proposing to make changes engage the services of an appropriately qualified advisor to act on their behalf. The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland has instituted an accreditation programme for conservation architects.


List of Protected Structures in Rathkeale


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1535	Abbey House	Abbeylands, Rathkeale	County House	
<p>Detached two-storey over basement former country house, built c. 1830, with projecting bay. Cut limestone entrance gateway, erected c. 1850, comprising cut limestone piers supporting elliptical arch with cornice above.</p>				
1536	Palatine Museum	Rathkeale townland	Industrial – Railway feature	
<p>Detached three-bay two-storey former railway station, built in 1867, now in use as a heritage centre. Having multiple-bay single-storey block to south-east elevation, pitched slate roofs with cut limestone chimneystacks.</p>				
1537	St Mary's Roman Catholic Church	Thomas Street and New Road	Roman Catholic Church	
<p>Freestanding gable-fronted Gothic Revival cruciform-plan Roman Catholic church, begun in 1866, consecrated in 1873 and tower and spire completed in 1881. Five-bay nave elevations having side aisles.</p>				
1538	St Anne's Convent	Thomas Street and New Road	Urban Structure – Institutional	
<p>Detached seven-bay two-storey convent, dated 1850, with projecting gabled north bay to east (front) and west (rear) elevations and three-bay two-storey hipped-roofed block to north. Pitched slate roofs with cut limestone copings,</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1539	McCarthy's [A]	Thomas Street	Dwelling	
			Attached three-bay two-storey house, built c. 1820, one of a pair. Pitched slate roof with rendered walls and chimneystack. Square-headed window openings with render shouldered surrounds, and one-over-one pane timber sliding sash windows, those to ground floor with decorative cast-iron sill guards.	
1540	McCarthy's [B]	Thomas Street	Dwelling	
			Semi-detached four-bay two-storey house, built c. 1820, one of a pair. Pitched slate roof with rendered walls and chimneystack. Door opening with rendered engaged columns and timber panelled door with cobweb fanlight.	
1541	Keogh's	Thomas Street	Dwellings	
			Attached two-storey house, built c. 1820. Pitched slate roof with rendered walls with render quoins. Round-headed door opening with render shouldered surrounds, timber sliding sash windows, those to ground floor with decorative cast-iron sill guards.	
1542	Kett's	Thomas Street	Dwelling	
			Attached two-storey house, built c. 1820. Pitched slate roof with rendered and dashed walls, Render quoins and shouldered surrounds, timber sliding sash windows.	


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1543	Lynch's	Main Street/ Thomas Street	Dwelling	
Semi-detached four-bay two-storey house, built c. 1920, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystack. Rendered walls with render platband dividing storeys. Timber sliding sash windows. Square-headed door opening with replacement uPVC door and overlight.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1544	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling	
Attached two-storey house, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof having rendered walls, cast-iron rainwater goods, stone sills, round-headed door opening with cobweb fanlight over timber panelled door.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1545	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling	
Built c. 1800. Notable features pitched slate roof, rendered walls and chimneystacks, cast-iron rainwater goods, stone sills, round-headed door opening with cobweb fanlight over timber panelled door.				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1546	Abbey (in Ruins)	Main Street	Medieval Site – Entrance to Abbey	
This gateway, which now forms the entrance in to Rathkeale Abbey, is an interesting feature along the streetscape. It displays a high level of stonework, particularly in the voussoirs, cornice and pointed arch surround. The cast-iron gate adds further interest and decorative appeal. It may have been part of the Abbey House demesne.				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1547	Abbey (in Ruins)	Main Street	Medieval Site – Tower	
Medieval Tower to ruined church in graveyard				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1548	Abbey (in ruins)	Main Street	Medieval Site – Abbey	
Rathkeale Priory is a rectangular church with a vaulted room at the north. It has a simple four-light traceried east window. There was a south transept but only the arch of this remains. It is an Augustinian Priory founded in the early 13th century by Gilbert Harvey and dedicated to St Mary. It was possibly colonised by monks from Ratoe in 1210.				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1549	Frawley's	Roches Street/Main Street	Dwelling/ commercial premises	
Attached end of terrace two-storey house, built c. 1820. Pitched slate roof with rendered walls rendered quoins and rendered chimneystacks. Ionic doorcase and cobweb fanlight over timber panelled door.				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1550	Purcells	Lower Main Street	Dwelling	
Built c. 1820, Notable features traditional shop fronts on ground floor, slate roof, square-headed openings, concrete sills, sliding sash windows.				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1551	Conway's	Lower Main Street	Dwelling	
<p>Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1830. Rendered walls, channelled to ground floor, with render quoins. Timber sash windows, those to first floor with shouldered render surrounds, those to ground floor with cast-iron sill guards.</p>				



RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1552	Courthouse	The Square	Urban structure – Civic	
<p>Formerly detached four-bay two-storey former courthouse and bridewell, built c. 1830, with gabled breakfront, and flanked by wings, that to east two-bay two storey with hipped roof, that to west single-bay two-storey with hipped roof.</p>				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1553	Stables	The Square	Dwelling	
<p>Two-storey townhouse, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof. Building was originally rendered and plastered and stonework was not originally intended to be revealed. Round-headed openings at ground floor and timber sliding sash windows.</p>				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1554	Hegarty's	Lower Main Street	Dwelling	
<p>Built c. 1800, pitched slate roof, rendered walls and chimneystack, stone sills, sash windows, those to ground floor with cast-iron sill guards round-headed door opening with fanlight over timber panelled door.</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1555	Round House	Chapel Lane/Main Street	Former Commercial Premises	
<p>Corner-sited attached two-bay two-storey house and pub, built c. 1920, with chamfered south-west corner and pubfront to ground floor. Hipped roof with rendered octagonal-profile chimneystack. Pubfront to ground floor comprising architrave, fascia with raised lettering and cornice.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1556	Noonan's		Urban structure – commercial	
<p>Terraced three-storey building, built c. 1830, timber shop front on ground floor, rendered walls, natural slate roof, cast iron rainwater goods, sash windows.</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1557	'The Wash Board'	Peppard's Lane/ Main Street	Commercial Premises	
<p>End of terrace two-storey commercial building, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof. Building was originally rendered and plastered and stonework was not originally intended to be revealed. Round-headed openings at ground floor with replacement PVC windows.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1558	End of terrace building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
<p>End of terraced two-storey building, built c. 1820, shop front on ground floor, rendered walls, natural slate roof, timber sash windows replaced with PVC alternatives.</p>				





RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1559	Detached Building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
<p>Detached five-bay two-storey over half-basement bank, built c. 1880, with two-bay two-storey returns to south (rear). Hipped slate roof with terracotta ridge crestings, sawtooth pattern brick eaves course and cast-iron rainwater goods. Painted brick walls with carved limestone plinth course. Rendered walls to rear.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1560	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
<p>Built 1830, three storey terraced commercial premises. Notable features include cast iron rainwater goods, rendered walls with rendered quoins and decorated window surrounds. Chinaman statue removed for conservation.</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1561	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
<p>Built c. 1820, Notable features include shopfront comprising timber pilasters flanking openings, slate roof, rendered eaves, chimney stack, and walls, cast-iron rainwater goods square-headed openings, concrete sills, sash windows, cast-iron sill guard and render riser.</p>				



RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1562	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
<p>Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1840, formerly in use as shop and having shopfront to ground floor north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with rendered chimneystack. Lined-and-ruled rendered walls. Square-headed openings with timber sliding sash windows.</p>				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1563	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban structure – commercial	
<p>Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1840, formerly in use as shop and having shopfront to ground floor north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with red brick chimneystack. Lined-and-ruled rendered walls. Square-headed openings with timber sliding sash windows.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1564	Terraced Building	Main Street	Commercial Premises	
<p>Attached pair of four-bay two-storey houses, built c. 1820, now also in use as shops having shopfronts to ground floor south (front) elevation. Pitched slate roofs with rendered chimneystacks and overhanging eaves. Rendered walls. Square-headed openings with replacement uPVC windows.</p>				


RPS ref	Building name/Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1565	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling/ Commercial Premises	
<p>Attached three-storey commercial building, built c. 1820, Shopfront to ground floor, north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with rendered chimneystacks and rendered walls and quoins. Timber sliding sash windows replaced with PVC, render surrounds, those to the first floor fluted and with segmental arches above.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1566	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling/ Commercial Premises	
<p>Attached three-bay three-storey house, built c. 1820, now disused, formerly in use as shop. Shopfront to ground floor, north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with rendered chimneystacks. Rendered walls, timber sliding sash windows, render surrounds, those to second floor fluted, those to first floor fluted and with segmental arches above.</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1567		Main Street	Commercial Premises	
<p>Attached two-storey commercial building, built c. 1820, Pitched slate roofs with rendered chimneystacks and overhanging eaves. Rendered walls. Square-headed openings with replacement uPVC windows and decorated window surrounds</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1568	Terraced Building	Main Street	Commercial Premises	
<p>Attached five-bay three-storey bank, built c. 1870,. Pitched slate roof with cut limestone chimneystacks and cast-iron rainwater goods. Carved limestone corbelled cornice to south (front) elevation. Cut limestone walls with dressed flush limestone quoins,</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1569	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling	
<p>Attached two-storey commercial building, built c. 1820, Render coping to south gable and rendered chimneystack. Rendered walls and timber sliding sash windows. Square-headed door opening with rendered engaged columns</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1570	Terraced Building	Main Street	Dwelling	
<p>Attached four-bay two-storey house, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks. Rendered walls. Square-headed openings with render surrounds and six-over-six pane timber sliding sash windows.</p>				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1571	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
<p>Attached two-storey house, built c. 1840, formerly in use as shop and having shopfront to ground floor north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof and rendered walls. Shopfront comprising timber pilasters flanking openings, patterned architrave, frieze and cornice.</p>				
1572	Terraced Building	Main Street	Urban Structure – Commercial	
<p>Attached four-bay two-storey former house and former hotel, built c. 1800, now in use as shop and commercial offices, with recent shopfront to ground floor north (front) elevation. Pitched slate roof with render copings to gables.</p>				




RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1573	Former cinema	Main Street	Urban Structure – Commercial	
<p>Attached three-bay two-storey Art Deco style former cinema, built c. 1940, now disused, comprising barrel-roofed block with concrete frontpiece, having projecting bay to ground floor. Barrel-roofed corrugated-iron roof with cast-iron rainwater goods.</p>				
1574	Carnegie Library	Ballingarry Road	Civic Structure – Library	
<p>Previously detached six-bay two-storey Carnegie library, built c. 1900, having two gable-fronted porches to north (front) elevation. Roughcast rendered walls, pitched slate roof and timber bargeboards to gables. Timber battened doors, overlights and concrete sills.</p>				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1575	Detached Building	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
<p>Terrace two-storey townhouse, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks. Building was originally rendered and plastered and stonework was not originally intended to be revealed. Existing windows removed and enlarged.</p>				



RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1576	Detached Building	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
<p>End of terrace five-bay two-storey townhouse, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks. Building was originally rendered and plastered and stonework was not originally intended to be revealed. Decorative fanlight window over door.</p>				


RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1577	Bridge House	Main Street	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
<p>End of terrace five-bay three-storey townhouse, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks and walls. Ionic doorcase with decorative fanlight window. Timber sash windows replaced with PVC alternatives and existing centre windows enlarged.</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1578	Wall	Main Street	Boundary Wall	
<p>This boundary wall with arches is an interesting feature along the streetscape. It displays a high level of stonework and it may have been part of the Abbey House demesne.</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/Title	Location/Townland	Description	Picture
1579	Bridge	Main Street	Bridge	
<p>Five-arch humpback road bridge, originally built c. 1747, carrying a road over the River Deel. Bridge incorporates earlier fabric. Rubble stone walls with arches having cut stone with rendered plinths.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/Title	Location/Townland	Description	Picture
1580	O' Connor's'	Enniscough	Urban Structure – Dwelling	
<p>Detached three-bay two-storey former gas works building, built c. 1820, now disused. Hipped slate roof with rendered chimneystack and wall. Four-bay two-storey former gas works building to south-east, with pitched corrugated-iron roof and red brick walls</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1581	An Seabhac Pub	Church Street	Urban Structure – Commercial	
<p>Detached two-storey public house, built c. 1820, with pitched slate roof and rendered chimneystacks. Rendered walls, square-headed openings with timber sash windows.</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1582	Rathkeale No 2 National School	Enniscough	Urban Structure – Institutional	
<p>Built c1840. Two storey, square plan building, slate roof with overhanging eaves, rendered roughcast finish with stone sills</p>				

RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1583	Holy Trinity Church	Enniscoush	Church of Ireland	
<p>Freestanding Board of First Fruits Church of Ireland church, built in 1831, comprising four-bay nave with single-bay single-storey vestry to south elevation, and square-plan three-stage entrance tower to west. Pitched slate roof to nave with carved limestone copings to gables and cast-iron rainwater goods.</p>				
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
1584	Glebe castle	Castlematrix	Medieval site	
<p>A three floored castle built of coursed limestone with long and short quoins. The walls and gables are stepped and the east and west walls have chimneys while the north and south walls have drainage chutes.</p>				

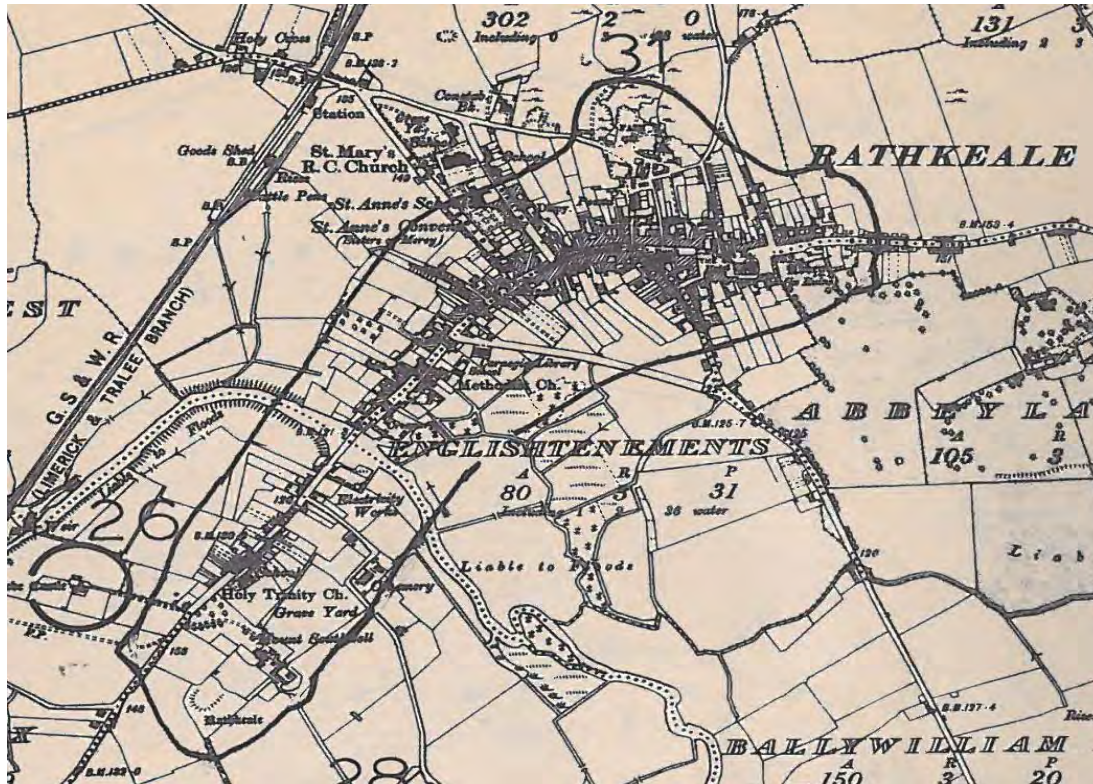
RPS ref	Building name/ Title	Location/ Townland	Description	Picture
361	Mount Southwell	Enniscoush	Country House	
<p>Detached two-storey country house, built c. 1800, with projecting bay. This country house was the residence of Francis Brown in 1837 and was still in his possession in the early 1850s but leased to Edward John Collins.</p>				

List of Traditional Building Materials found in County Limerick

Fabric:	Limestone, brownstone, sandstone or brick, bound with lime mortars
Roofing:	Natural Slate, Reed or Straws, with certain exceptions found in some areas
Rainwater Goods:	Cast iron or galvanised sheet iron / mild steel
Windows:	Primarily Sash windows of varying patterns and designs, with some exceptions
Finishes:	Painted lime renders of varying consistencies, often with stucco detailing at returns, along floor lines and roof level, and on window or door opes; Alternatively either well-worked or quality rubble stone, with appropriate joints in both cases were left bare or were or have had multiple layers of limewash applied over the generations.
Paint:	The use of any paints or other materials of modern composition, which seal the surfaces to which they are applied, should be avoided as they have a deleterious impact on lime based materials, whether used in renders or other finishes. The use of garish colours on walls or details of structures (such as quoins), which clash with the traditional range of pigments must be avoided as they impact negatively on the cohesiveness of the streetscape. If individuality is sought, it can be imparted to a building through highlighting the timberwork of doors and their frames, windows and gates- features which are recessed slightly and out of direct view of those looking along the length of the conservation area.

Appendix 5

Recorded Monuments in the Rathkeale LAP area



RMP Number	Classification	Townland
LI029-031001	Historic Town	Abbeylands, English Tenements, Enniscough, Rathkeale
LI029-031002	Bridge	English Tenements, Enniscough, Rathkeale
LI029-031003	Castle	English Tenements, Enniscough, Rathkeale (not located)
LI029-031004	Church	Enniscough
LI029-031005	Graveyard	Enniscough
LI029-031006	Religious House	Abbeylands
LI029-031007	Enclosure	Enniscough
LI029-031008	Memorial stone	Enniscough
LI029-031009	Memorial stone	Enniscough
LI029-031010	Memorial stone	Enniscough
LI029-031011	Graveyard	Abbeylands
LI029-031012	House 16 th /17 th C	Abbeylands, English Tenements, Rathkeale (not located)
LI029-031013	Market Cross	Abbeylands, English Tenements, Rathkeale (not located)

Appendix 6

Abbreviations and Glossary

Abbreviation	Details
AA	Appropriate Assessment
ACA	Architectural Conservation Area
BATNEEC	Best Available Technology Not Exceeding Unreasonable Cost
CDP	County Development Plan
CFRAM	Catchment Flood Risk and Management Studies
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DEHLG	Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
ED	Electoral Division
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
DED	District Electoral Division
HSE	Health Service Executive
LAP	Local Area Plan
MWASP	Mid-West Area Strategic Plan
NATURA 2000	European Network of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas
NDA	National Disability Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NSS	National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, People Places and Potential
OPW	Office of Public Works
RPS	Record of Protected Structures
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System

Affordable Housing

Housing or lands made available by the planning authority to persons who need accommodation but whose income would not be adequate to meet the payments on a mortgage for the purchase of a house to meet his or her accommodation needs.

Appropriate Assessment

An Appropriate Assessment is required under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive and is an evaluation of the potential impacts of a plan on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site, and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects.

Architectural Conservation Area

A place, area, group of structures or townscape, taking account of building lines and heights, which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

Backland Development: Development which takes place to the rear of existing structures fronting a street or roadway.

Biodiversity: The variety of life (wildlife and plant life) on earth.

Brownfield Sites: An urban development site that has been previously built on but is currently unused.

Convenience Goods

Those goods that are required on a daily or weekly basis by individuals and households (such as food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, tobacco and non-durable household goods).

Development Charges

Charges or levies placed on developers relating to the cost of services and utilities, which are provided by Limerick County Council.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The process by which we measure anticipated effects on the environment of a proposed development or project. If the likely effects are unacceptable, design measures or other steps can be taken to reduce or repair those effects.

Greenfield Sites: A piece of open land that has not been built on and is therefore a vacant lot.

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Hedgerows:

A natural or semi-natural row of bushes, shrubs and/or trees forming a boundary. Hedgerows help define places, act as shelterbelts, and add to biodiversity. They also offer significant wildlife habitat, including wildlife corridors which allow wild animals to move across open countryside, and provide food, nesting and roosting places.

Household: One or more persons occupying a dwelling which has kitchen and bathroom facilities.

Infill Development: Refers to development taking place on a vacant or undeveloped site between other developments, i.e. an infill site.

Infill Site: Small gap sites, unused or derelict land usually located in urban areas.

Infrastructure

Drainage, water supplies, sewage treatment plants, sewerage networks, lighting, telecommunications networks, electricity and energy network,

railways, roads, buildings, schools, community facilities and recreational facilities.

Manager's Report

A document outlining the submissions made during the preparation of the Development Plan, the Manager's comments and recommendations on the submissions.

Monument (Recorded Monument)

An archaeological monument protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendments) Act, 1994.

National Spatial Strategy (NSS)

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is a coherent 20-year national planning framework for Ireland. It's about people, places and potential, making the most of our cities, towns and rural places to bring a better spread of opportunities, better quality of life and better places to live in. Key to the strategy is the concept of balanced regional development.

Protected Structure: A building, feature, site, or structure identified in the Development Plan as worthy of protection or preservation in accordance with Part IV of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2011.

Residential Densities: The number of residential units per area unit (hectare).

Social Housing

This is housing provided for persons who are registered with the Local Authority on the Social Housing Waiting List, and assessed as being eligible for social housing. The broad categories of households who are eligible for social housing are set out in Section 9(2) of the 1988 Housing Act and include the homeless, travellers, persons living in unfit or overcrowded accommodation, the elderly, persons with disabilities, persons who cannot reasonably afford to provide their own accommodation.

Social Impact Assessment

This is a systematic documented analysis of the availability of social facilities in a community/settlement. The purpose of a SIA is:

- To give a broad overview of existing social infrastructure (services/facilities) currently provided within the vicinity of a proposed development site.
- To determine what measures could be proposed as part of a development scheme in order to provide for social infrastructure (services/facilities) which are considered by the Planning Authority to be deficient in the area.

Some planning applications are required to submit an SIA as part of their application as required by Section 10.3 of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 , as varied.