



MWP

**NEWCASTLE WEST PUBLIC REALM AND MOVEMENT PLAN
FOR LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL**

Draft Plan for Public Consultation February 2022

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NEWCASTLE WEST PUBLIC REALM AND MOVEMENT PLAN PRESENTED TO LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL

BY
MWP

in conjunction with



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Nicholas de Jong Associates has been established since 1984 in the UK and 2001 in Ireland, providing Land Planning, Urban Design and Landscape Architectural services for public and private sector clients throughout the UK, Ireland and many countries overseas.

We are committed to the environment we live in and aspire to influence how change can be positively managed for the benefit of creating memorable and sustainable places for people. We work at many different levels, from the macro scale of the urban structure (planning, zoning, transport and infrastructure networks) to the micro scale of street furniture and lighting. Our involvement covers all aspects of urban design projects from inception, local authority and public consultations, the preparation of planning and design strategies, to detailed design and delivery of projects through construction administration.

Our services include town centre regeneration and improvement studies; development frameworks; public realm design; urban place making and legibility initiatives; design guidelines; pedestrian priority and traffic calming initiatives; townscape heritage and historic landscape appraisals; landscape and visual impact analysis; development master planning; external design, contract documentation and site supervision of schemes for town centre, residential, industrial, commercial, recreation and leisure developments.

The practice is particularly experienced at managing and working as part of a multi-disciplinary team – understanding and respecting the relevant roles of other professionals and ensuring that appropriate skills and resources are available for each project. We also maintain a network of related disciplines (including ecology, arboriculture and archaeology) to ensure appropriate skills and resources are available for each project.

Chapter 01

INTRODUCTION

Malachy Walsh and Partners, in conjunction with Nic de Jong Associates, have been appointed by Limerick City and County Council to provide a Public Realm and Movement Plan for Newcastle West.

The vision for the town of Newcastle West is a vibrant town in which to live, work and visit, fostering an authentic sense of place and is competitive in attracting future investment. To achieve this vision, Newcastle West 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.

The Newcastle West Public Realm and Movement Plan (PRMP) has an overarching objective to contribute to the vision for Newcastle West by identifying transport proposals and public realm improvements that will benefit the town. The plan has been laid out according to transport mode. It is a high level plan that is indicative of what can be achieved.

Walking and cycling has been prioritised as part of the overall vision for the town. Walking and cycling are active travel modes that contribute to all aspects of life, amenity, work and home. By providing transport links that place walking and cycling at the centre, there is the potential to contribute to improving the quality of life for residents of Newcastle West.

As a market town and as a key town, the car maintains a key role in the life of the town. Traffic management at junctions and on key routes is also a priority for the PRMP. The location of Newcastle West contributes to the traffic volumes as its roads provide a key link between Limerick, Tralee and Foynes. Finding a balance between maintaining the strategic function of these through routes and improving the traffic for local activities is part of the movement plan for the town.

Parking plays a key role in the operation of a market town. The Plan outlines in a dedicated chapter the parking facilities that are existing and proposed to enhance the connectivity and traffic flow within the town, while bringing benefits to the retail units and businesses located in the town.

High quality public realm brings many improvements to a town, and contributes to improving the quality of life of residents. It contributes towards many aspects of the town including visual appeal, tourism, business and the willingness to make a journey by walking and cycling. The public realm aspect of this plan reflects on the cultural and historical nature of Newcastle West.

Finally supporting measures outside of infrastructure have been identified to encourage an increase in active travel and enable residents and visitors alike to enjoy Newcastle West.



Chapter 02

PLANNING CONTEXT



This chapter sets out the national, regional and local policies which interact with the Newcastle West PRMP. This includes those that are directly related to land use planning, transport and climate change.

2.1 National

The **Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework (NPF)** sets out Ireland's planning policy direction. As part of strengthening rural communities, NPO 18a seeks to support the proportionate growth of and appropriately designed development in rural towns that will contribute to their regeneration and renewal, including interventions in the public realm, the provision of amenities, the acquisition of sites and the provision of services.

The **Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework (NPF)** sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the successful implementation of the NPF. This will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions in Ireland. The key National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) that are relevant to the Newcastle West MPRP are outlined below:

- NSO 2 – Enhanced Regional Accessibility
 - N21 Newcastle West Bypass will be progressed through pre-appraisal and early planning with Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII);
- NSO 3 - Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities
 - The main emphasis investment will be for operation of the Public Service Obligation routes and the Local Link Programme;
- NSO 8 – Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society;
 - Encouraging a modal shift through greater levels of investment and further development of meaningful alternatives to private car usage, including new urban cycling and walking routes which will provide additional sustainable travel options.



Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future sets clear targets in relation to sustainability in transport. This includes a goal that walking, cycling and public transport will make up to 55% of total commuter journeys to work in the State. Journeys to a student's place of education were identified as an area where there are opportunities to increase walking and cycling journeys.

Of all travel modes, cycling and walking have the lowest environmental impact. Pedestrian and cycle facilities will be most successful where they form a coherent network, place an emphasis on safety, directly serve the main areas where people wish to travel, provide priority over vehicular traffic at junctions, are free from obstructions and have adequate public lighting. Furthermore, cycling and walking will be pivotal to achieving some of the goals in the national health policies to promote physical activity.

2.2 Regional

The overall aim of the **Mid-West Area Strategic Plan 2012 - 2030** is to provide a framework to help guide decision making with regard to the physical and spatial development of the region to 2030 and to promote balanced growth throughout the region to achieve the maximum social, economic, health and cultural benefits for all its citizens.

As part of the Transportation Strategy, the following objectives were identified as interacting directly with the MPRP:

- Maximise the use of existing infrastructure;
- Improve accessibility to employment, education, health and community facilities;
- Investment in transport infrastructure; and
- Reduce car dependency and increase smarter travel.

As part of the **Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region**, Newcastle West has been identified as a Key Town. The RSES identifies the Newcastle West Distributer Road and other transport measures identified through a Local Transport Plan as key infrastructural requirements.

Regional Priority Objectives 157 - Local Travel Plans (LTPs) will be prepared for the key settlements by Local Authorities, based on the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) guidance produced by NTA and TII and will be focused on, but not limited to, Key Towns as designated in the RSES and other towns as identified by Local Authorities, including towns in metropolitan areas as a complement to Metropolitan Area Transport Strategies and certain other development areas identified within the metropolitan areas of Cork, Limerick Shannon and Waterford.

LTPs will:

- Maximise the opportunities for the integration of land use and transport planning.
- Assess the existing traffic, transport and movement conditions within the plan area and in its wider context.
- Plan for the efficient and sustainable movement of people, goods and services within, to and from the Plan area.
- Identify the extent to which estimated transport demand associated with local development objectives can be supported and managed on the basis of existing transport assets, and
- Identify the transport interventions required within the plan area and in the wider context, to effectively accommodate the anticipated increase in demand.
- Prioritise the delivery of sustainable and active travel infrastructure.
- Plan and target actions for modal shift to sustainable transport modes to facilitate a modal shift away from car dependence.
- Plan and target actions to retrofit permeability for green modes (walking and cycling).
- LTPs shall include the perspectives of vulnerable road users (e.g. wheelchair users) to be taken into account in respect of LTPs.
- LTPs shall be subject to further environmental assessment at local level as part of the Local area plan process.
- LTPs shall take into consideration the DTTAS National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport 2017- 2030.
- LTPs shall include provision for infrastructure for electric vehicles.
- Local Link Offices, (Transport Co-Ordination Units) will be consulted in the development of Local Transport Plans.

The RSES identifies the infrastructure to strengthen regional accessibility and sustainable mobility for Key Towns.

2.3 County

The **Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016** sets out the Council’s policy to steer future development in the County. Newcastle West is designated a Tier 2 settlement, which is a key service centre, and is the largest of two key settlements in the County Development Plan.

Objective IN O3 seeks to provide quality bus services and facilities. Having a service for people, and of quality and reliability, are essential prerequisites if the public transport system is to become a viable alternative to public transport.

The R520 and R522 have been designated strategic Regional Roads as part of the County Development Plan.

Cycling and walking are highlighted both as transport and community objectives. Cycling and walking are to be encouraged as they are both an environmentally sustainable means of movement and are accessible to the wider community. For short trips walking and cycling are cost effective and highly flexible modes of transport that foster improved health and wellbeing.

2.4 Local

As part of the **Newcastle West Local Area Plan, 2014 – 2020 (as extended 2024)**, it is the policy of the Council to improve accessibility; reduce dependence on private car transport and encourage the use of energy efficiency forms of transport and alternatives to the private car in accordance with national transport policy as set out in Smarter Travel.

- **Objective T1: 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 Newcastle West through supporting the recommendations of the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West (2013).
- **Objective T2: Measures in support of public transport**
 - a. It is an objective of the Council to facilitate measures to improve public transport infrastructure within Newcastle West and networks to adjacent settlements and Limerick City.
- **Objective T3: Car parking and traffic management**
It is the objective of the Council to encourage the provision of off-street parking areas as part of any application for development.
- **Objective T6: Southern Distributer Road**
It is the objective of the Council to promote the delivery of a southern distributor road to allow for improved accessibility and a more efficient local road network.

The Newcastle West Local Area Plan (LAP) also sets out the strategic policy for Urban Design in Newcastle West. It is the policy of the Council to promote high quality design throughout the Plan area and ensure that future development in Newcastle West is guided by principles of best practice and sustainability.

Newcastle West has in place a **Walking and Cycling Strategy (2013)**. The strategy recommends the provision of preferable traffic free safer routes for people to travel by bike or on foot and improved walking and cycling access to public transport routes and hubs. It recommends both engineered interventions together with measures aimed at increasing public awareness of the benefits of walking and cycling. The walking and cycling elements to the Newcastle West PRMP have been built on this previous work.

Newcastle West – Vision 2023 is a strategic development plan for Newcastle West that was commissioned by a joint working group of Newcastle West Community Council and Newcastle West Chambers of Commerce. The strategic plan provides a blue print for the future development of Newcastle West with a focus on priority initiatives that once implemented will achieve the overall vision for Newcastle West which is A vibrant active community to live in, work in and visit. Vision 2023 identifies the need for a traffic management plan with a public realm study included. Priorities for Newcastle West have been identified throughout Vision 2023 and have been incorporated as part of the PRMP where appropriate. These include:

- Active public spaces, utilising the demesne in the centre of town. Promoting healthy and active lifestyles.
- Streets and lanes which carefully interconnect the main hubs and focus points of the town.
- Activate the town centre through developing the urban form by managing traffic flow, promoting use of public realm car park space and encouraging pedestrianisation by developing existing laneways through the town centre.
- Enhance the image of the town and approach roads.

Chapter 03

CONSULTATION AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

3.1 Newcastle West Public Realm & Movement Plan Consultation Phase 1

A public consultation day was held on 14th May 2019 in the Newcastle West Area Office for Limerick City and County Council. The day was split into individual meetings with organisations and an open public forum in the afternoon and evening. Members of staff from the project team were present and available for discussion. Consultation letters were sent in advance asking organisations to identify issues relating to public realm and traffic.

Organisations who provided feedback to the public consultation included:

- Local business groups;
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland;
- Public transport providers;
- Tidy Towns;
- Newcastle West primary and secondary schools;
- Teagasc.

The format of the consultation was to provide maps and photographs of Newcastle West and ask members of the public to identify issues. 27 comments were made by the public during the open forum. A further 32 comments were provided as written submissions. The comments received identified issues throughout Newcastle West. All written feedback received by the team was recorded. The comments received contributed to the direction of the strategy from the onset, as it assisted the project team in identifying the issues that were impacting on the community.

**Newcastle West Public Realm & Movement Plan
Public Consultation Stage 1 – Tuesday, 14th May, 2019**

FEEDBACK FORM

Note: Please identify the nature of the issue/comment i.e. Safety, Parking, Traffic, Landscaping, Public Lighting etc., the location and what your comment/suggestion is.

This form can be:-

- Handed back today;
- Handed in to this office at a later date – please put in an envelope and mark it "Newcastle West Public Consultation Phase 1 Feedback";
- Posted to this office, marked for the attention of Ben Noonan, Senior Executive Engineer, Newcastle West Municipal District, Limerick City & County Council, Newcastle West, Co Limerick;
- Scanned and e-mailed to: ben.noonan@limerick.ie

Nature of Issue:-

Location:-

Comment/Suggestion:-

Name (Optional):-

Contact Details (Optional):-

Figure 3.1 - Feedback Form Used

3.2 Newcastle West Public Realm & Movement Plan Consultation Phase 2

Consultation was undertaken with Elected Members of Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) as part of the Public Consultation Phase 2. Meetings were held between the Elected Members, the LCCC project team and the consulting project team on 15th January 2020 and 12th February 2020.

Due to restrictions in place as part of the Covid-19 health emergency during 2020, a wider public consultation was not possible as a public forum.

3.3 Newcastle West Public Realm & Movement Plan Consultation Phase 3

Following the completion of the draft PRMP, a further round of consultation will take place. The public will be invited to comment on the draft PRMP, as well as stakeholder organisations. The comments received will be taken into account in preparation of the final document.



3.4 Developing the Public Realm and Movement Plan

As part of developing the PRMP, the following steps were taken:

- Review of the relevant policy and guidance;
- Visits to Newcastle West at a variety of times as a driver, pedestrian and cyclist to understand the key challenges with regards to public realm and movement to be addressed;
- Consultation with stakeholders to further identify issues that are impacting on the community;
- Review of existing reports and documentation relating to Newcastle West. These include:
 - Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014 -2020 (As extended to 2024)
 - Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West (2013)
 - Newcastle West Junction Review (2017)
 - Newcastle West – Vision 2023
- Review of the existing transport network alongside the land uses, both existing and opportunities for future development.

Following these steps, the PRMP was developed to build on the existing transport network. The report format follows the transport networks, outlining improvements to the pedestrian, cycle, public transport and road network. Parking is also included as a separate chapter, which reflects on the important role it plays in the operation of a county town.

The pedestrian network focused on ensuring quality and connectivity throughout the network. Newcastle West is a compact town and there are significant opportunities for increasing walking trips.

The development of the cycle network was based on the work previously undertaken as part of the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West. This was reviewed to ensure integration with the overall movement plan. There is a strong amenity cycle presence in the town, with the Limerick Greenway.

Public transport was reviewed for its connectivity with the town centre and other modes of transport.

The parking operations of Newcastle West were reviewed in line with the existing by-laws and the high demand observed in Newcastle West. Parking was separated into two categories of on-street and off-street. For safety and operational reasons, on-street parking has occasionally been recommended



for removal in individual locations. This has been countered, where possible, with an increase in off-street parking. No displacement of parking will take place without alternative measures in place.

The road network was identified as an area of concern with regards to traffic volumes, generated both locally and by the N21. The PRMP acknowledges that the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme for Newcastle West is required and is in the early design stages. The proposals for the road network as part of the PRMP will deliver benefits to Newcastle West prior to the implementation of the road scheme and will continue to provide benefits to the local traffic network following the construction of the distributor road. The evaluation of the road network identifies the key routes and junctions through the town and areas proposals for improving traffic flow through them.

Supporting measures have been identified that will work alongside the delivery of transport infrastructure to encourage a shift from private car use to sustainable travel modes within Newcastle West.

The following chapters of this report will detail the proposed infrastructure and supporting measures that have been identified to deliver the Public Realm and Movement Plan.

Chapter 04

EXISTING TRANSPORT CONCEPT

4.1 Study Area

Newcastle West is a market town, located approximately 45km south-west of Limerick City. It is located on the N21 National Primary Route, a strategically important transport corridor for both County Limerick and County Kerry. It has a central location between Gateway cities of Limerick and Cork. Newcastle West has a population of just over 6,600, as determined from Census 2016. The study area for the plan is shown within the red line boundary in the Figure 4.1.

4.2 Existing Development

Newcastle West is home to a wide range of community, recreational, social and business services. The town centre is a mix of business and retail, across a small area which makes it easy to navigate for residents and visitors alike. Parking is provided in the town centre by way of on-street parking and public car parks. Aldi and SuperValu are located in the town centre, with Lidl located to the east of the town and Tesco to the east of the town on the N21.

The town centre has access to amenity areas such as the Demesne and the River Arra. Desmond Hall, open seasonally by the OPW as a tourist facility, is located in the town centre. The Limerick Greenway provides a walking and cycling amenity route, as well as linking Newcastle West as part of the Greenway between Rathkeale and Abbeyfeale.



Figure 4.1 - Study area for the Newcastle West Public Realm and Movement Plan

There are three primary schools within the town of Newcastle West, Courtenay School, Gael Scoil and Scoil Íósaf. There are two post-primary schools, Scoil Mhuire agus Íde and Desmond College. The Desmond Complex is a community building that provides a day centre aimed towards elderly, mentally and physically disabled and socially and geographically isolated people. A community crèche is also located in the facility. Newcastle Civic Amenity Centre is located off Station Road, alongside Gael Scoil.

St Ita's Hospital is located to the north-east of the town centre and provides community health care. A Primary Care Centre is planned for construction on Station Road.

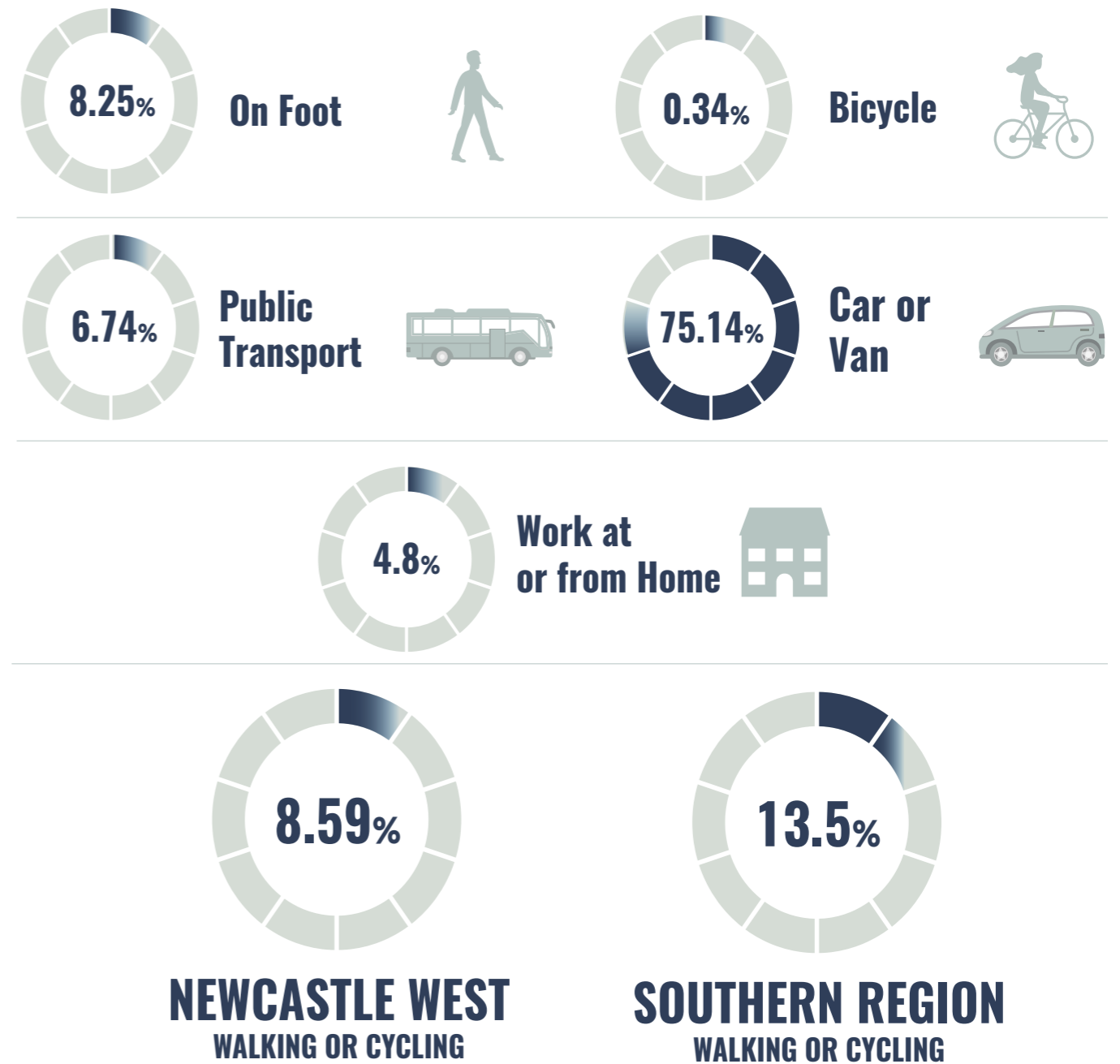
Newcastle West has industry and business located on the outskirts of the town centre, on Sheehan's Road and Station Road. Pallas Foods is located on the R521 north of Newcastle West. Residential development in Newcastle West is largely based south of the River Arra and N21 and north-east of the town centre. Residential housing is also present along the radial routes of R521 and R522. There are opportunity sites and land zoned for further residential, industry and enterprise, which is discussed later in the report.

4.3 Existing Movements

The dominant mode of travel in Newcastle West is the car. 75% of residents travel to work, school or college as a car or van driver or passenger. Minimal options for public transport are reflected with 0.7% using bus or train as a mode of travel to work. In 2016, 997 commuters who lived in Newcastle West worked outside of the area, while 1,683 commuters travelled in for work. This resulted in a net flow of 686 commuters into Newcastle West. This is reflected in demand for car parking across the town.

19% of residents travel to school or college by bus, which demonstrates a good uptake of the school travel programme. School and college trips are important trips to consider when planning the movement plan. Similar to work trips, they occur daily during the week, they potentially are four trips to account for drop off and collection and involve a high amount of traffic converging on a small number of locations at the same time.

Walking and cycling rates in Newcastle West are low, with 8.25% of trips being made on foot and 0.34% of trips being made by bicycle. This is compared to 13.5% walking and cycling to work in the southern region. This is despite 40% of trips to work, school or college for the residents of Newcastle West taking less than 15 minutes.



In 2016, 7% of residents worked mainly at or from home. This is likely to have increased in the intervening years and more so during the Covid-19 health emergency. Working locations and patterns have altered for many and at this early stage, working mainly from home is an option for some that is likely to remain going forward.

4.4 Walking Network

Newcastle West has a good provision of footpaths throughout the town centre and in the surrounding routes. Areas for improvement that were identified in the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West (2013) have been implemented, including a pedestrian bridge at St. Mary's Road and St. Ita's Road and the provision of a footpath along the south side of the N21 between Sheehan's Road and St. Ita's Road.

There are a number of locations throughout Newcastle West where connectivity of the pedestrian network requires improvement. Safe and easy to use crossing locations improve accessibility for pedestrians and increase comfort levels for those walking. Walking rates within Newcastle West are low for those making short journeys to work and school. These locations include Station Road and Churchtown Road junction, Bishop Street, Bishop Street and Market Place junction and Sheehan's Road.

There are notable pedestrian links within the town centre, including Bridewell Row which links the public car park with Bishop Street. Maiden Lane links Market Place with Maiden Street, but is not open to the public at this time. Nash's Yard allows for vehicular traffic, but is predominantly used by pedestrians to access Aldi and the Demense from the town centre.

As well as providing a movement link for vehicle traffic, the N21 also provides an important east-west link for pedestrian movements. Residential, amenity and schools are located south of the N21, with the town centre and many services provided north of the N21. Consequently, crossing the N21 forms a significant link in the pedestrian network. Controlled crossing points are provided along the route at Sheehan's Road, Bother Buí and Bridge Street.



Bridewell Row






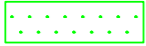
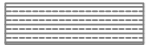




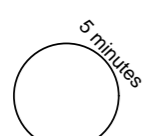
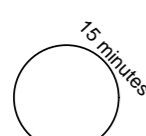

Entrance to Nash's Yard from The Square

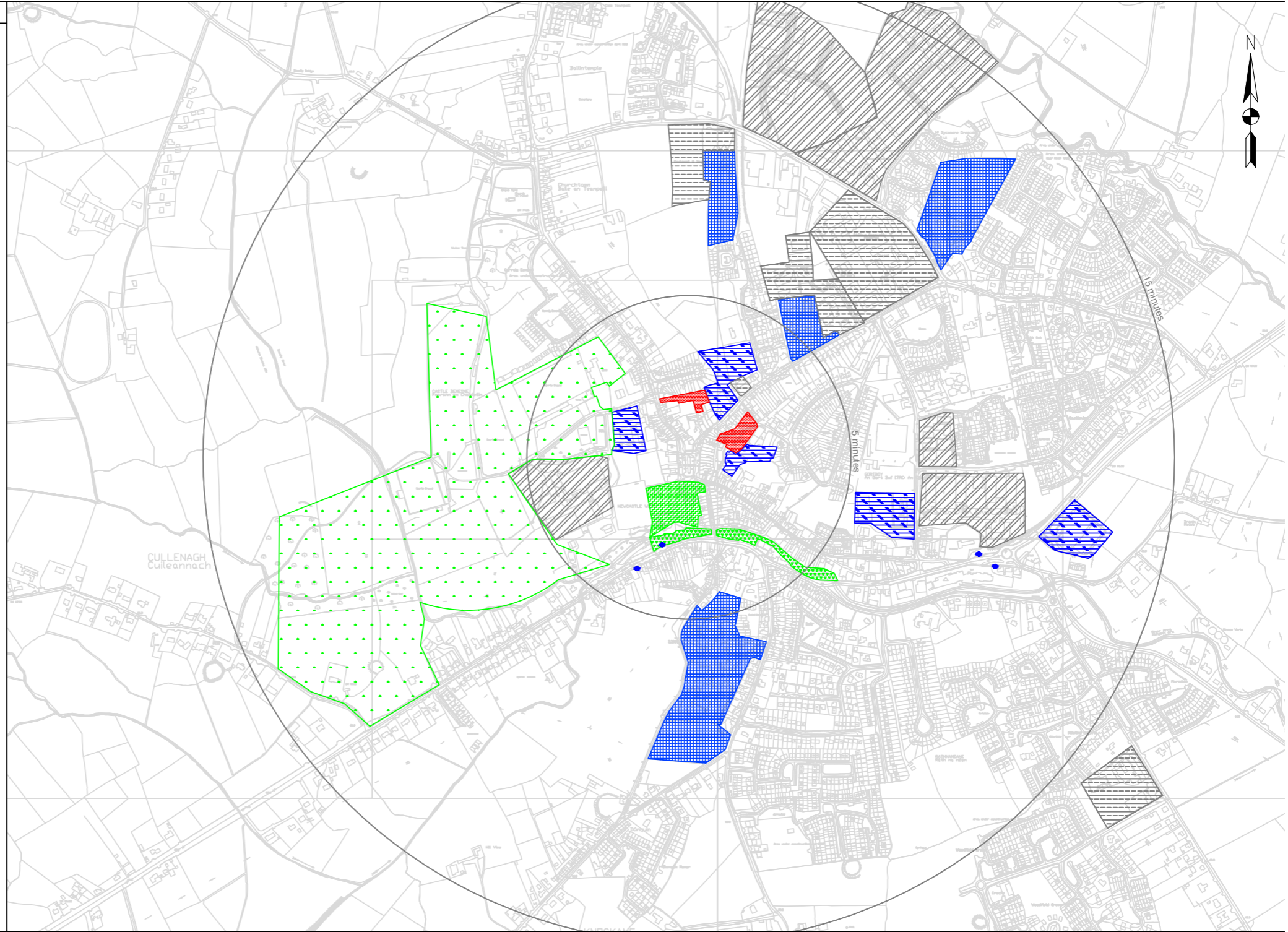
Amenity walking in the town is provided in the Demense and the Limerick Greenway. The Demense is located on the west side of the town centre and can be accessed from The Square, west of Aldi and from Churchtown Road. It provides recreational playing fields, access to sports facilities, green spaces and walking routes. The connections between the Demense and the town centre will be explored further in this report. The Limerick Greenway commences in Newcastle West in the residential area of Bishop Court, north of Bishop Street. It continues north to Station Road, where a signal-controlled crossing is provided. The Limerick Greenway is a greenway route suitable for walking and cycling off road along a 37km route. It is part of a national designated cycling and walking route formed by the disused Newcastle West / Limerick / Tralee Railway Line. The completed section includes from Rathkeale westwards to Ardagh, then southward to Newcastle West and then further west to Abbeyfeale.



Limerick Greenway



LEGEND:

-  Education
-  Industry
-  Retail car park
-  Demense
-  Civic amenity
-  LCCC Car park
-  Bus stop
-  River amenity area
-  Tourist - Desmond Hall + Fullers Folly
-  Distance of 375m from town centre "as the crow flies"
-  Distance of 1.125km from town centre "as the crow flies"
-  Great Southern Greenway (GST)



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<p>TITLE: NEWCASTLE WEST LAND USE AND TRANSPORT LINKS</p>	 <p>L.S. EN ISO 9001</p>
<p>CLIENT: LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL</p>	

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Figure 4.2 - Overview of Town Centre

4.5 Strategic Road Network

A number of strategic routes go through Newcastle West, including the N21 National Primary Road, the R521 to Foynes, the R522 to Charleville and the R520 to Kilmallock. These are identified as strategic routes in the Limerick County Development Plan 2012-2016 (as varied).



Bicycle Stands in the Square

The N21 National Primary Route connects Limerick and Kerry and plays an important role in the regions transport links. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)'s traffic count data provides an AADT of in 10,710 2018, with 5.6% of this being HGV traffic. High flows of through traffic have effects on local traffic, with queues forming on the N21 to travel through Newcastle West, especially during times of high tourist activity, such as bank holidays. This also leads to difficulty for local traffic to travel around Newcastle West, as many journeys require crossing or joining the N21.

The R521 to Foynes commences at the Square in Newcastle West and travels north to connect with the N69 at Foynes, providing a key north-south link in Limerick. The R522 and R520 converge at the east of Newcastle West, linked to the N21 by way of a roundabout. The R522 links Charleville with Newcastle West, connecting Cork with east Limerick County. The R520 provides an east-west link between Newcastle West and Kilmallock and Ballingarry. All of these regional routes are also used by residents of Newcastle West's hinterland to access the town centre. They also provide an important industry link between the regional towns, carrying HGV traffic. The R521 in the north of Newcastle West is connected to the N21 and R522 and R520 by local roads Station Road and Gortboy. With the exception of the roundabout at the N21 and R520, priority Stop controlled junctions are in place along the route.

Newcastle West Road Scheme

A new road is proposed for Newcastle West to assist in alleviating through traffic in the town from the N21. A study has commenced into options for the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme route and design. This is being led by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and has ongoing support from Limerick City and County Council. The results of this study will be published separate to the PRMP.

The movement and public realm improvements proposed as part of this plan are intended to complement a future roads infrastructure.

4.6 Local Road Network

Newcastle West has an extensive local road network that connects the residential, business, industry, retail, school and social services within the



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PROJECT:
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TITLE:
NEWCASTLE WEST OVERVIEW

CLIENT:
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Figure 4.3 - Local Road Network in Newcastle West

town. As part of the background study for the PRMP and the consultation process, a number of local roads and junctions were highlighted. More detailed descriptions and design measures for improvements are detailed further on in the report.

- A. Gortboy is a single lane carriageway that runs along the north east of Newcastle West, linking the N21 and Station Road to the north of the town. It forms a priority junction with the N21. Observations demonstrate that vehicles have difficulty turning right from Gortboy onto the N21.
- B. Sheehan’s Road is a single lane carriageway which provides a north-south link for Newcastle West between the N21 and Bishop Street. It joins the N21 via a priority controlled junction with Lower Maiden Street. Sheehan’s Road regularly experiences high levels of vehicular traffic, with queuing at the junction of Sheehan’s Road. Vehicles wishing to turn right onto Sheehan’s Road from the N21 also causes queuing on the N21. Sheehan’s Road is a mix of residential and industry, with Lidl located at its south end.



Junction of N21 and Sheehan’s Road

- C. Bother Buí is a residential road running south of Newcastle West. It forms a priority junction with the N21. It is a single lane carriageway and provides access to residential areas and Scoil Mhuire agus Íde before continuing south to Monagea. On-street car parking is provided, which is under the parking controls of Newcastle West. There are significant issues on Bother Buí with traffic around school drop off and collection times.
- D. Knockane Road / Bridge Street / N21 is a priority controlled junction at the south west of Newcastle town and the first junction when approaching from the Kerry side of the N21. Bridge Street provides a direct link into the town centre and is one-way northbound after the junction. There are a lot of turning movements at the junction, with local traffic interacting with the through traffic of the N21, resulting in queues for vehicles.
- E. The Square is at the centre of the town and provides a wide open public space, along with on-street parking. It has a high place context. The Square will be further discussed as part of the public realm strategy.
- F. Bishop Street is a single lane carriageway, with intermittent on-street parking. It runs north-east from the town centre to link it with Station Road and Gortboy. As a result it sees high vehicle flows and has a high movement function. However, it also has a high place value as it provides a connection between many of the town’s services and the Limerick Greenway. It is a gateway into the town for tourists arriving by bicycle and walking.
- G. Station Road is a single lane carriageway, which runs east-west along the north of Newcastle West. It provides access to large areas of business and industry, as well as residential housing. It has a high movement value, with HGV traffic using it to connect between the R521 and the R522 and R520. It forms a priority junction with Churchtown Road and the R521 at the north of the town, which is a busy junction for vehicle and pedestrian flows.

Traffic counts were undertaken over the past the few years and are provided in the table below. These are for both Regional and Local Roads.



Bishop Street N21 / Bridge Street junction

Table 4.1 - Traffic Counts for Newcastle West

Traffic Count Location	AADT (Vehicles)	Date
N21, Wards Cross, Abbeyfeale	10,710	2018
R222 at Woodfield Estate	9,563	31/10/2017
Bother Buí at SMI School (during term time)	4,780	31/01/2017
Courtney Boys School, Bishop Street	5,846	27/07/2018
Sheehan's Road	1,762	11/01/2019
R521 Foynes Road	5,428	2018
R521 Station Road at Foynes Road	6,462	2018
Churchtown Road	5,428	2018
R521 Station Road at Gortboy	8,731	2018
Gortboy West	7,158	2018
R521 Gortboy East	8,078	2018

4.7 Public Transport

Newcastle West is served by regular regional and local bus services, as shown in the table below. Local Link also provides less frequent services to Adare, Kilfinny, Ballingarry, Feenagh, Ballyhahill and Abbeyfeale to provide local services to the Newcastle West Desmond Complex.

Bus stops are provided at two locations on the N21, one east of the town at the Longcourt House Hotel, with a bus stop for east and westbound services. Shelters are provided at these bus stops. The second bus stop location is on the west of Newcastle West on South Quay, also for east and westbound services. When required for local services, Local Link will use a car park in the centre of Newcastle West. There are no dedicated bus stop facilities within the town.

Table 4.2 - Bus Routes for Newcastle West

Bus Route Number	Operator	Route	No. of services per day
13	Bus Éireann	Limerick – Adare – Listowel – Tralee	8
14	Bus Éireann	Limerick – Killarney	5
321	Bus Éireann	Limerick – Rathkeale – Newcastle West	1
300	Dublin Coach	Dublin and Tralee, via Limerick	14
521	Local Link	Newcastle West - Charleville	
520	Local Link	Newcastle West - Kilmallock and Mitchelstown	
593	Local Link	Newcastle West - Rathkeale, Askeaton, Shanagolden, Loughill, Glin	

4.8 Road Safety

The collisions recorded between 2005 and 2016 were reviewed as part of the PRMP. 94 collisions were recorded in total in the Newcastle West area. Of the 94 collision, two were fatal, five were serious and 87 were minor.

35 out of 94 (37%) collisions involved a pedestrian, three of which were serious accidents. This compares with a national average of 13%. The table and map below shows the location that these collisions occurred.

Table 4.3 - Pedestrian Collisions in Newcastle West

Location	Total
Assumpta Park	1
Bishop St	1
Daar Wood Cres	2
Gortboy	1
Knockane Rd	2
Lower Knockane Rd	1
Lower Knockane Rd and Bóthar Buí	1
Maiden St	2
Maiden St and Bridge St	1
Market Yard	4
North Quay	1
N21	6
R521	2
Sharwood Estate	1
Sheehan's Rd	4
Station Rd and R521	1
The Square	4
Grand Total	35

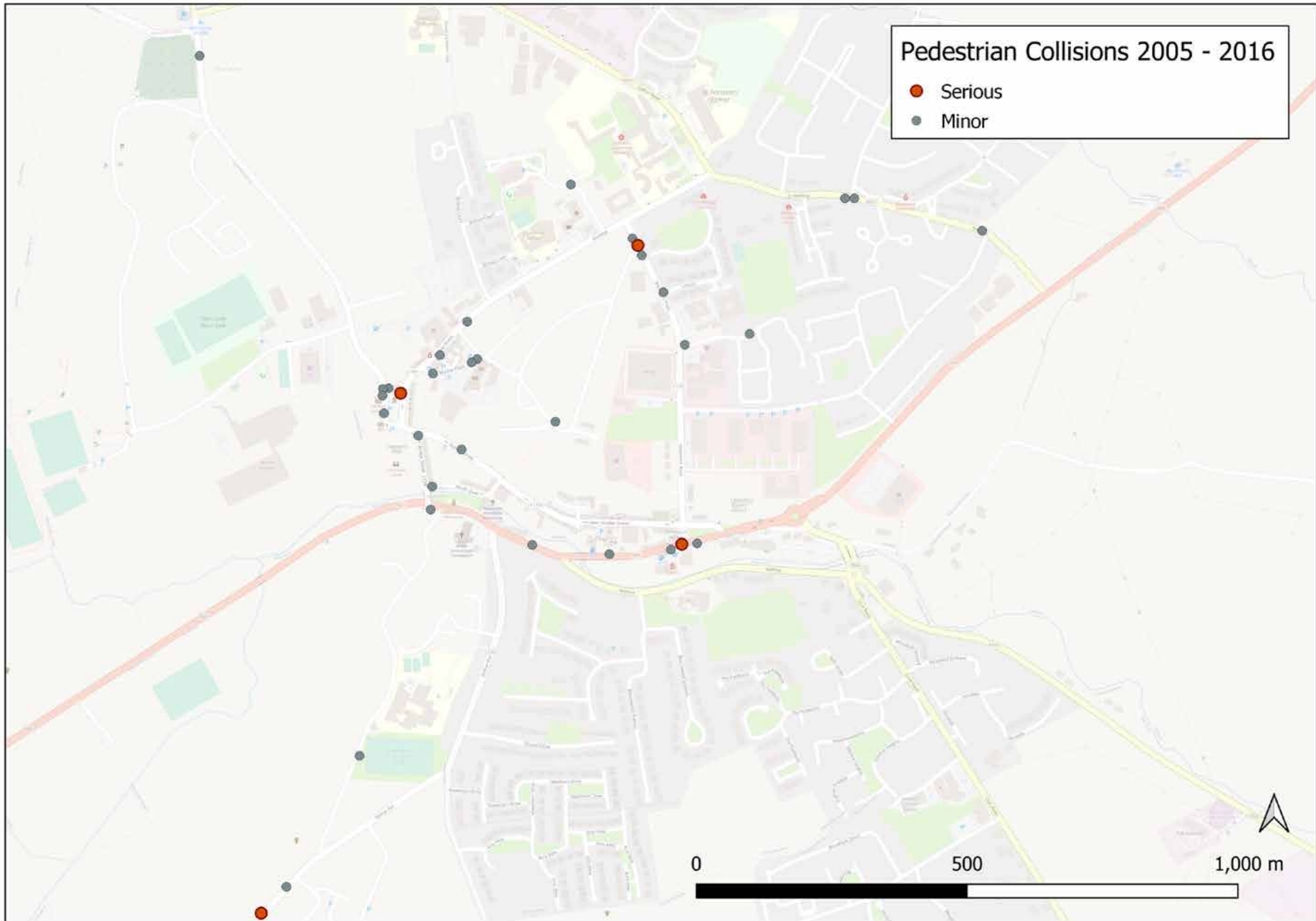


Figure 4.4 - Pedestrian Collisions

4.9 Key Outcomes for the Newcastle West Public Realm and Movement Plan

Based on the background study and the existing transport context for Newcastle West, the following key outcomes have been identified for the PRMP.

- Providing a clear, coherent and connected pedestrian network.
- Improving access for cyclists and visibility of cycling as a mode of transport.
- Identifying the car parking needs of the town and balancing this with other transport and public realm improvements.
- Ensuring that public transport is integrated into the movement plan alongside other modes of transport.
- The balancing of local traffic and through traffic from the N21.
- Providing enhanced public realm at various locations throughout the town.

Chapter 05

WALKING AND CYCLING

5.1 Benefits of Walking and Cycling

One of the key outcomes of the Public Realm and Movement Plan is to increase the attractiveness of walking and cycling as an option for travel within Newcastle West, for leisure, work or school. This chapter will look at the pedestrian and cycle network separately and propose projects to address the issues raised.

Walking and cycling have a range of benefits associated with it, including:

- **Health:** Improved levels of fitness and public health generally from increased activity. Improved air quality in towns as a result of reduced vehicle volumes. Walking or cycling to work or school provides an opportunity for adults to achieve the recommended 30 minutes of moderate physical activity for five days a week and for children and young people to be active for a moderate to vigorous level for 60 minutes a day for five days a week¹. Regular physical activity reduces risk of chronic diseases and benefits physical, mental and social well-being.
- **Environment:** Reduced levels of carbon emissions and greenhouse gases, improved air quality.
- **Economic:** Increased active travel usage can lead to reduced congestion levels and improved accessibility in urban areas. The space and infrastructure required for large numbers of pedestrians and cyclists are often significantly more economical to provide when compared to the costs associated with new roads. There is a small, but growing, body of evidence that improvements in walking and cycling infrastructure can contribute to increased footfall and retail sales^{2, 3}.

¹ <https://www.getirelandactive.ie/Resources/Nat%20guidelines/GuidelinesPhysicalActivity.pdf>
² Brooke Lyndhurst Investing in Cycling and Walking, Rapid Evidence Assessment, DfT, 2016
³ PJA/University of Birmingham The Value of Cycling: rapid evidence review of the economic benefits of cycling, DfT, 2016

- **Social:** Increased provision for walking and cycling can improve transport equity. Increasing the provisions for active travel modes can improve accessibility and mobility for lower income groups, while improved active travel infrastructure (e.g. high quality footpaths) can also increase accessibility for people with mobility impairments or disabilities.
- **Quality of life:** With improved opportunities for more active commuting and leisure trips, there is the potential to improve the quality of life for residents of Newcastle West, when the benefits listed above are combined. A town with more people walking and cycling also adds to the sense of place created by the community.

5.2 Barriers to Walking and Cycling

In order to promote walking and cycling as a viable alternative to private car use, there must be, as far as possible, a safe and pleasant mode of transport. Barriers to walking and cycling may include:

- Safety concerns with traffic;
- Not having enough time;
- Personal security;
- Having other ways of traveling that work better;
- Streets not pedestrian friendly;
- Feeling unsafe cycling with traffic;
- Cycling is uncomfortable;
- Conflicts between modes of travel (e.g. pedestrian crossing a busy street).

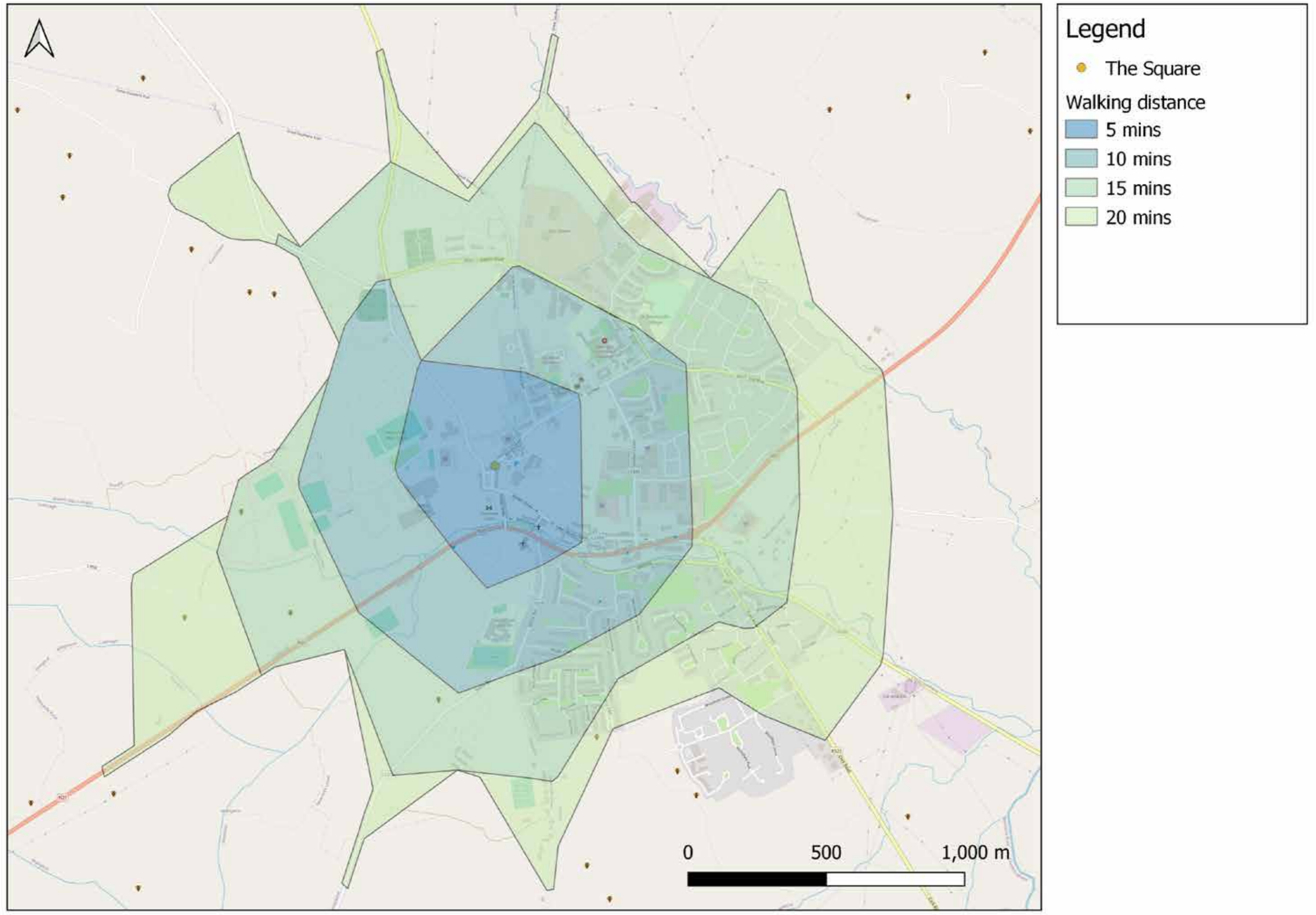
5.3 Improving the Pedestrian Network

The Walking and Cycling Strategy (2013) reviewed the existing pedestrian network and made proposals. Successful projects which have been implemented include the provision of a footpath on the southern side of the N21 between Sheehan's Road and St Ita's Road and the addition of a pedestrian bridge on the N21 Courtenay Bridge. The proposals formed as part of the PRMP continue on from this report. Based on the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019), the proposals aim to take an integrated design approach, which puts well designed streets at the core of the community.

As part of reviewing the pedestrian network, the following principals were considered:

1. Providing a continuous footpath network;
2. Providing pedestrian crossings to connect footpaths and places;
3. Ensuring the pedestrian network is accessible to all;
4. Providing a pedestrian network that is direct;
5. Providing a comfortable to use pedestrian network;
6. Providing a safe pedestrian network.

As shown in Figure 5.1 below, large areas of Newcastle West are accessible within a 20 minute walk of the town centre. This demonstrates the opportunity for increasing the number of trips made by walking. The 20 minute walking area also includes two secondary schools and three primary schools.



Legend

- The Square
- Walking distance
- 5 mins
- 10 mins
- 15 mins
- 20 mins

Figure 5.1 - Walking Map

5.3.1 Nash's Yard

Nash's Yard runs between the junction of the Square and Churchtown Road to Nash's Yard and the Aldi car park to the west of the town centre. It is currently used for vehicle access and is two-way, despite signage to state that there is no vehicular access to Aldi. This is also the most direct route for pedestrians from the Square to the Demense. Nash's Yard is well used by pedestrians as existing going between Aldi and the town centre. Converting Nash's Yard to a pedestrian only route will open up the connection between the town centre, off-street car parking and the Demense. This project ties in with Opportunity Area 2 of the Newcastle West Local Area Plan.



Entrance to Nash's Yard from The Square

5.3.2 The Square and the Demense

The Demense can be accessed by vehicles and pedestrians from Churchtown Road. This road (also known as the Demense) provides access to GAA facilities and the Newcastle West Community Centre. The Square runs north - south between the Demense and Nash's Yard and does not have a footpath. The Demense has a footway running parallel to the Square, however, it is obscured from the road by high vegetation and the tennis courts. The Square is used by heavy vehicles travelling to and from Ballygowan. A safe space for pedestrians to walk will improve the pedestrian connectivity between the Demense and Nash's Yard, and in doing so will link areas of retail, off street car parking (refer to Chapter 6 Parking), sport and amenity. This can be achieved by removing the vegetation on the west side of the Square and providing a footpath running parallel to the Square or a footpath to provide a link to the Demense footpath. This project ties in with Opportunity Area 6 of the Newcastle West Local Area Plan.



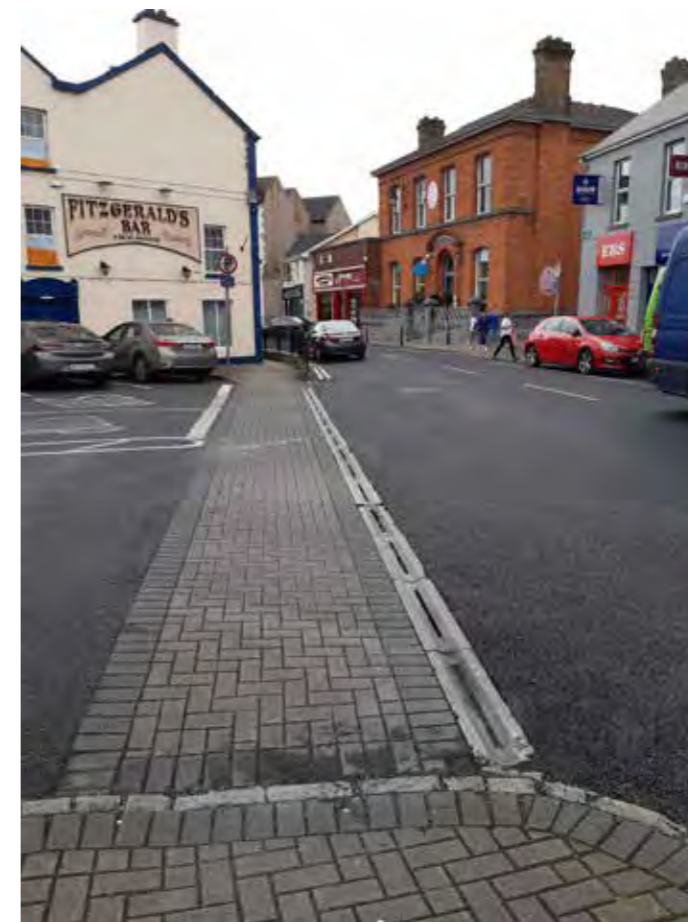
The Square West of Aldi



The Demense Playground and Footpath

5.3.3 Market Place and Bishop Street

Market Place is a public car park area, operated by Limerick City and County Council. It is accessed from Bishop Street and Assumpta Place. It has various business, retail and food premises around the perimeter, leading to high pedestrian activity in the area. Site observations noted that the junction of Market Place and Bishop Street was a desire line for pedestrians. The existing provision is an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, which is obscured by railings and on-street parking for vehicles. Pedestrians were observed stepping out into the carriageway to find a gap in the traffic to cross. Improvements to the junction of Market Place and Bishop Street, by way of a raised table across the junction, will significantly improve pedestrian comfort at the junction. This will require the removal of approximately two on-street parking spaces, to improve sightlines for pedestrians at the junction. Providing a design in line with the public realm design palette will aid with connectivity to the town centre.



Market Place Entrance on Bishop Street

5.3.4 Brewery Lane

Brewery Lane runs from Market Place to Maiden Street. It is currently in private use and is not available for the public to walk through. Connecting Market Place to Maiden Street reduces the walking time between the two locations and brings Maiden Street closer to the town centre activities and parking that is available in Market Place. Bridewell Row is a good example which demonstrates pedestrian connectivity between areas of the town centre. Taking Brewery Lane in charge and opening it to the public will bring significant benefits to the town centre. The public realm, lighting and condition of the paving are recommended to be upgraded to ensure a pleasant walking environment. This project ties in with Opportunity Area 2 of the Newcastle West Local Area Plan.

5.3.5 Maiden Street and Bridge Street

Similar to Market Place and Bishop Street, a high pedestrian demand was observed at the junction of Maiden Street and Bridge Street. Pedestrians were crossing all arms of the junction. Bridge Street is one-way northbound and Maiden Street is one-way eastbound. There is an opportunity to improve the public realm at this junction while improving pedestrian crossing facilities. A raised table that provides entry onto Maiden Street will contribute to traffic calming at the junction, as well as providing easily accessible pedestrian crossings. It will serve as an entry treatment to Maiden Street.

5.3.6 Maiden Street

Maiden Street has been identified in Vision 2023 and the Newcastle West Local Development Plan as an area for retail and cultural development. The public realm opportunities for Maiden Street will be discussed in Chapter 9. Maiden Street is one-way eastbound until its junction with Sheehan’s Road. It is heavily trafficked, providing a route from the town centre towards the N21 and its surrounds. It is also narrow, with a carriageway of approximately 5.0m in width and footpaths of less than 1.2m on either side. This makes it uncomfortable for pedestrians to travel side by side. The direction of travel and use of the street by vehicles is proposed to remain as is, with a street design to include a shared surface carriageway and high quality public realm. The overarching aim of this is to improve the pedestrian environment by providing more space for footpaths and introducing traffic calming along the route.

5.3.7 Bishop Street

Bishop Street provides an important movement link in Newcastle West, bringing people into and out of the town centre from the north and east. It provides access to residential areas, employment, schools, healthcare and social facilities. These are all within a 10 minute walk of the town centre. It is also the gateway to the town for tourists arriving from the Limerick Greenway. Improvements proposed for Bishop Street include a raised table at the junction of Bishop Court and Bishop Street to provide a gateway feature for pedestrians entering from the Limerick Greenway. Zebra crossings will be provided on Bishop Street close to the Revenue building and west of Sheehan’s Road. The material palette for these works will be led by the wider public realm design, creating a continuous link between Bishop Street and the town centre. The raised table and speed cushions will provide traffic calming along the street.



Bishop Street

5.3.8 Sheehan’s Road and Bishop Street

The junction of Sheehan’s Road and Bishop Street is very wide, with a crossing width of 9m. Combined with heavy traffic flows, the junction is uncomfortable for pedestrians to navigate. Building out the corner radii on the junction will reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians and slow traffic down on their approach to the junction. These works could also incorporate the junction of Sheehan’s Road and Assumpta Place to reduce the crossing distance. Proposed works in this area tie in with the Newcastle West Local Area Plan Opportunity Area 3.

5.3.9 Sheehan’s Road and Assumpta Place

There is an opportunity for improved pedestrian connectivity between Sheehan’s Road and the town centre by providing a green infrastructure link between Sheehan’s Road and Assumpta Place (north of Lidl). At present, pedestrians have to divert to either Lower Maiden Street in the south or Bishop Street in the north to travel from east to west. It has an additional benefit of providing an alternative cycle route for cyclists travelling from the east to the town centre. This green infrastructure link will improve connectivity between the town centre and the employment and residential areas east of Sheehan’s Road.

5.3.10 Station Road

As identified in the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West, there is a break in connectivity of the pedestrian network on the south side of Station Road between Gortboy and the Limerick Greenway. It is recommended that a new footpath is installed along this route, a total length of approximately 500m. The majority of this route has a hard shoulder identified with a yellow line and industrial frontage.



Gap in Footpath on South Side of Station Road

5.3.11 Station Road and Churchtown Road

The junction of Station Road, Churchtown Road and the R521 is a priority controlled junction, with a petrol station forecourt at its centre. The wide crossing widths and heavy volume of traffic reduce the comfort of pedestrians in the area. This junction is part of a town loop that brings walkers to the Limerick Greenway, as well as providing access to the graveyard. The proposals for this area, as shown on the next page, provide ample crossing opportunities for pedestrians and provide a higher quality pedestrian environment. A zebra crossing is proposed on Station Road, with a footpath on the south side to allow pedestrians to continue to Churchtown Road. Corner radii have been reduced to shorten the crossing time for pedestrians. An uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, with a build out, has been provided on Churchtown Road. There is also the option to provide this as a zebra crossing.

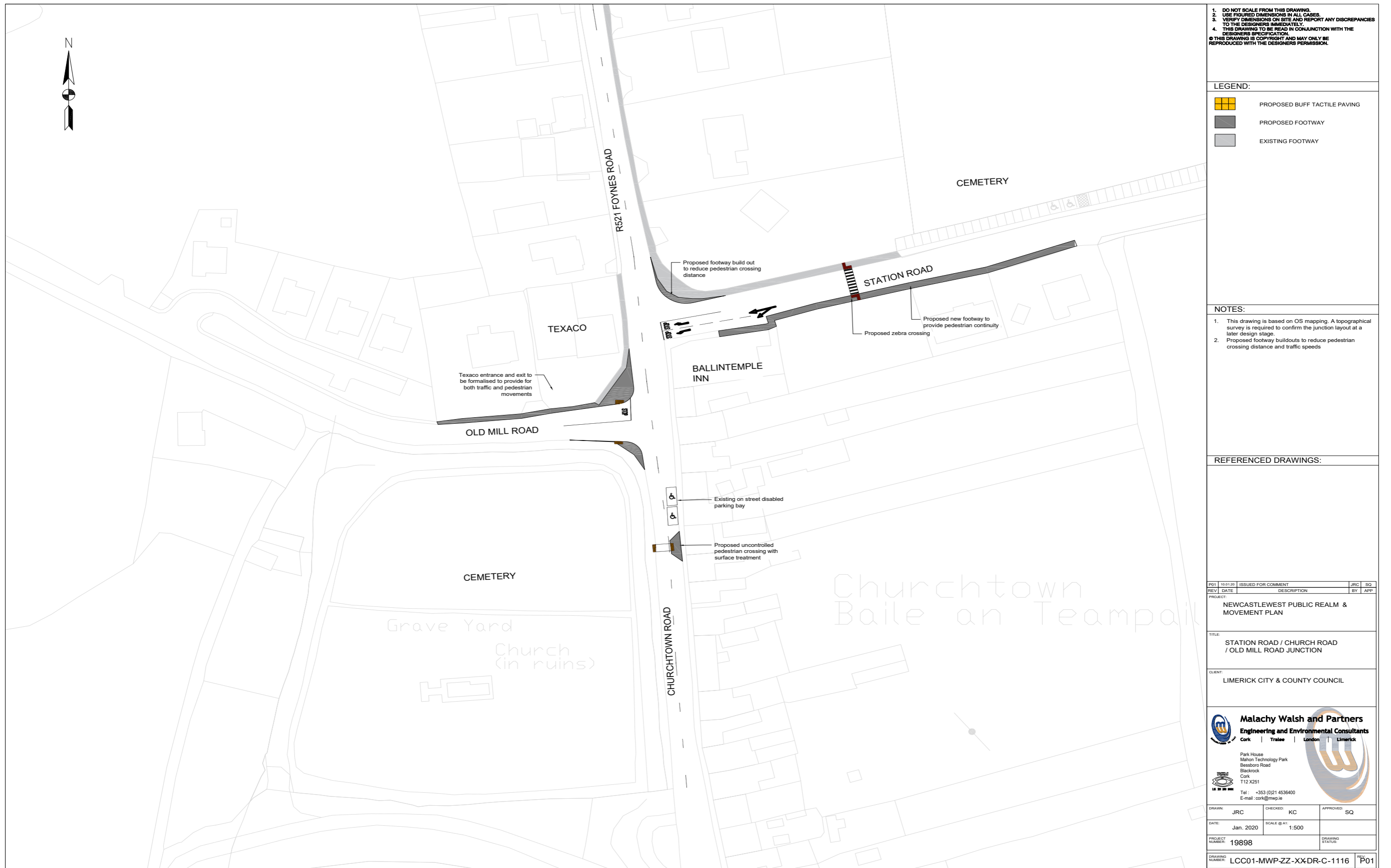


Figure 5.3 - Station Road / R521 / Churchtown Road Junction

5.3.12 Proposed Footpath R521

There is a gap in the pedestrian network on the east side of the R521 for approximately 150m south of the Cois Tempaill residential area. This forces pedestrians to cross the road in traffic or to continue walking with the carriageway. Provision of a new footpath at this location will ensure that residents are connected safely by walking to the town centre.



Gap in Footpath on R521

5.3.13 Connection Between Residents and the Limerick Greenway

There is an opportunity to link **residential areas with the Limerick Greenway** in the area of the Cois Teampaill and Templegreen residential areas. At present, residents of Cois Teampaill have to walk an additional 500m to access the Limerick Greenway. This area is zoned for further residential development. As part of planning future development, options to link the Limerick Greenway with nearby areas are recommended to be considered.

5.3.14 N21 Pedestrian Improvements

As well as catering for high volumes of traffic, the N21 also provides an important pedestrian connection for Newcastle West. As part of the proposals to improve the N21 for vehicular traffic, these proposals are also intended to bring significant improvements for pedestrians wishing to cross the N21. This will provide greater connectivity between the south residential areas of Newcastle West with its services and facilities in the north.

5.4 Improving the Cycling Network

Bicycles, as a mode of transport, are not visible in Newcastle West at this time. There is significant opportunity for encouraging cycling as part of everyday trips, as well as for amenity and exercise. Figure below demonstrates the wide area that is accessible in a short time across Newcastle West. Designing for cyclists can include less costly interventions, such as road markings, to improve the visibility of cyclists as a travel mode.

As part of developing the cycle network for Newcastle West, the following principals were considered:

- The cycle network should be designed to be accessible and used by all;
- Cycle routes must be direct and logical;
- Cycle infrastructure must be designed as part of a holistic, connected network;
- The cycle network must be easy to understand and legible;
- The cycle network should be clearly signposted and labelled;
- Proposals should be cost-effective;
- Proposals should consider the maintenance requirements.

A mixed street environment is proposed on many of the links in Newcastle West. This is due to a combination of low traffic flow and speeds, low cycle numbers, the need to retain on-street car parking and limited width available for additional infrastructure. A mixed street environment is one where the cyclists share the same space with traffic.

It is proposed that a wayfinding system is put in place to aid cyclists and pedestrians negotiate the routes to and from the town centre in Newcastle West and its radial routes. This would be composed of upright signs and road markings, such as those shown on the right. On-carriageway road markings

in the form of confirmation of the route and directional markings provide users with confidence and reassurance that they are on the right route.

Due to the short distances involved, cycling does not provide significant time savings over walking. Therefore the focus is recommended to be on promoting sustainable travel modes in terms of health and environmental benefits, less reliance on car, reduced time spent parking and an overall improved quality of life.

Road Name: Gortboy

Surrounding area:

Gortboy runs on a north-south axis to the east of Newcastle West. It links the N21 with Station Road, and the R521 to Foynes. It has residential areas on both sides.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There are currently no cycling facilities along this route. A footpath is present on both sides of the road.

Proposed infrastructure type:

None at this time.

Road markings and wayfinding will assist users in using the alternative walking and cycling routes that are available through Hazelgrove, Castleview and onto Sheehan’s Road.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

In agreement with Walking and Cycling Strategy, the road between the N21 / Gortboy and St Ita’s is currently too narrow for cycle facilities, with already narrow footways. There is the potential in the future, as development is set back far enough from the road to purchase land.



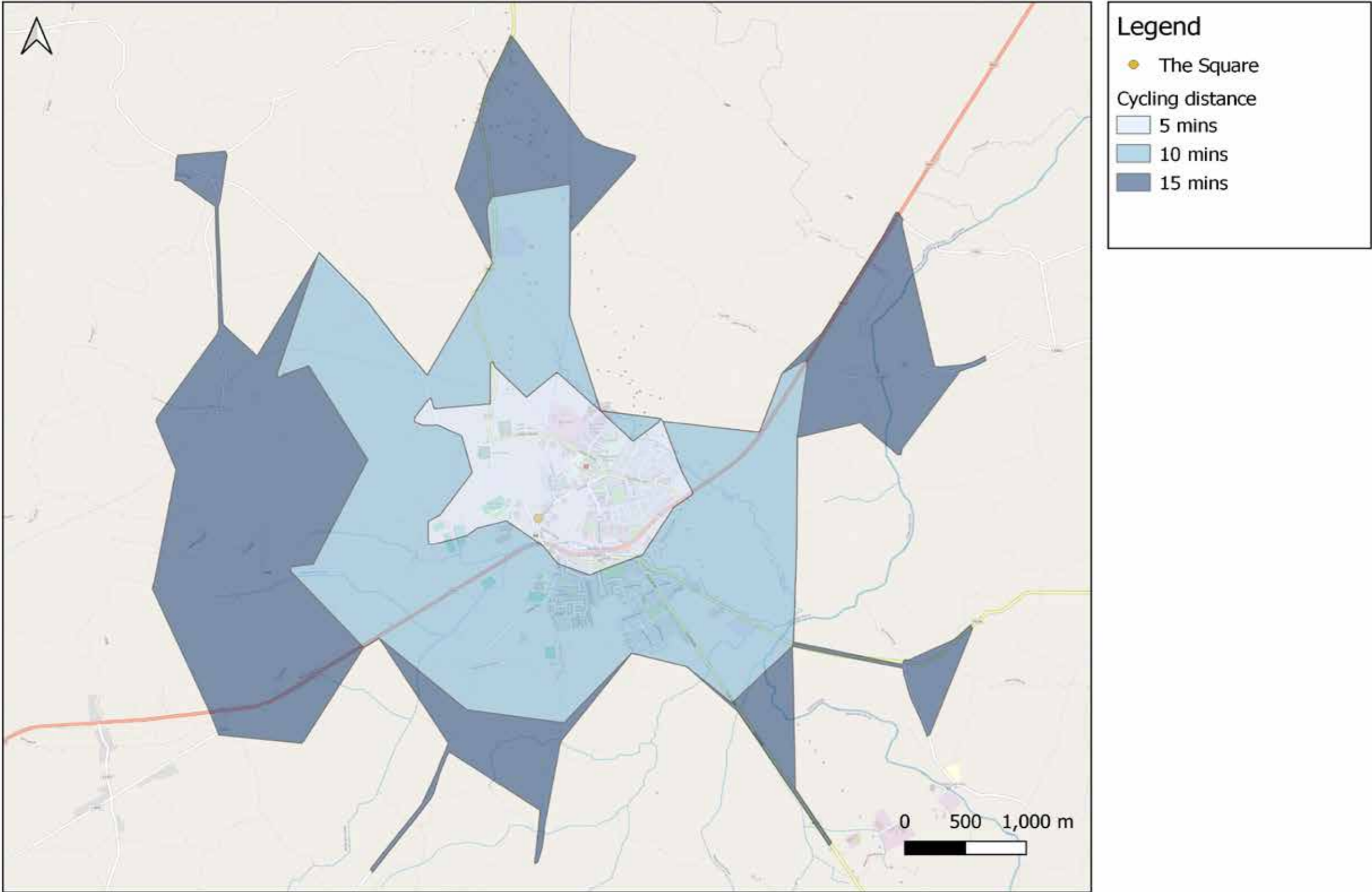












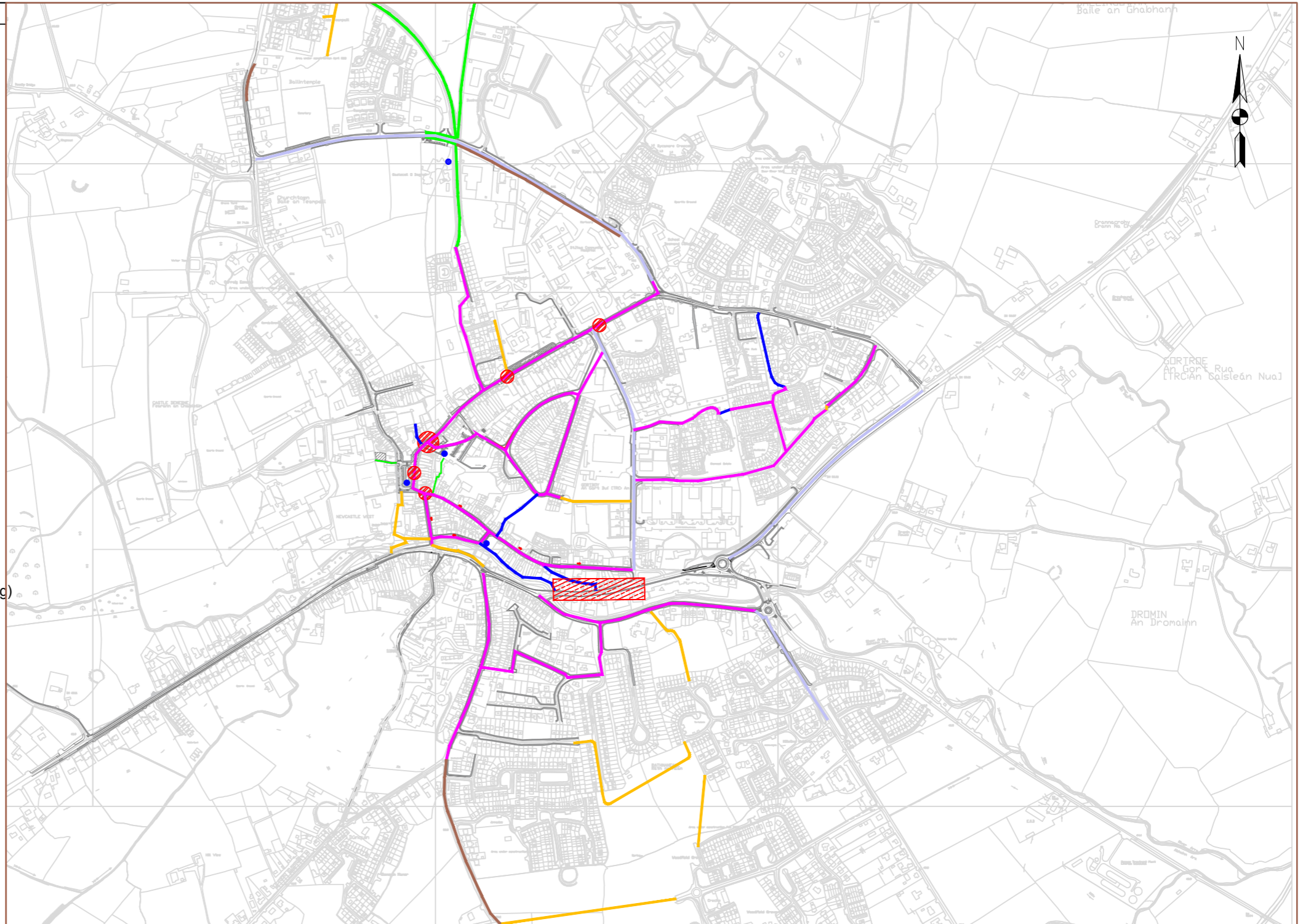


Figure 5.3 - Cycle Distance Map

LEGEND:

-  Limerick Greenway
-  Mixed traffic street
-  Existing pedestrian / cycle infrastructure
-  Proposed pedestrian / cycle infrastructure
-  Proposed Cycle Facilities
-  Proposed footpath
-  Proposed pedestrian and cycle only
-  Proposed cycle parking
-  Existing cycle parking
-  Enhanced crossing area
-  Direction of travel
-  Break of continuity in route (Cycling)



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<p>PROJECT: NEWCASTLEWEST PUBLIC REALM & MOVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>TITLE: NEWCASTLE WEST CYCLE PATHS</p>
<p>CLIENT: LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL</p>	



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DRAWING NUMBER: 19898-MWP-XX-ZZ-DR-C-0903			STATUS: REV: P01	

Figure 5.4 - Cycle Paths

Road Name: Station Road

Surrounding area:

Desmond College (secondary) and Gaelscoil O Doghair (primary) are present on the route, along with residential and industrial areas. Employment, schools and residential suggest good demand.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There are currently no cycling facilities along this route.

Proposed infrastructure type:

Footpath on the southern side of Station Road is required. At this time no cycle facilities are suggested, future consideration should be given to providing a cycle track in both directions.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

The width available on Station Road varies between 11 and 13m. Given the high volume of traffic, the high percentage of HGV and the presence of two schools, the cycle lanes are recommended at a minimum of 2.0m. This will provide an overall cross-section of 14.5m, which includes 3.25m traffic lanes, 2.0m cycle lanes (both sides) and 2.0m footpaths (could reduce to 1.8m at a minimum). Additional land would be required along the route to meet the width requirements.



Gortboy

Road Name: Station Road - Limerick Greenway Crossing

Surrounding area:

Limerick Greenway enters Newcastle West at Station Road. It continues south until Bishop Court.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There is a pedestrian crossing located approximately 20m west of the Limerick Greenway. There is a footpath on both sides. The Limerick Greenway is suitable for both walking and cycling.

Proposed infrastructure type:

The entrance from the GSGL to Station Road is recommended to be improved as part of the public realm. Wayfinding is proposed to assist visitors in crossing Station Road and continuing into the town centre. A shared footpath/cycle path is proposed for the side to provide safe, off-road continuation of the Limerick Greenway.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

None.

Road Name: Cois Teampaill - Limerick Greenway

Surrounding area:

Cois Teampaill is a residential area in the north east of Newcastle West with access from Churchtown Road / R521. Templegreen is a nearby residential area with access from Station Road.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

Both areas are adjacent to the Limerick Greenway, but with no direct access to the Limerick Greenway.

Proposed infrastructure type:

A shared footpath / cycleway is recommended.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

There is a level difference between the Limerick Greenway and residential areas.

Road Name: Bishop Court

Surrounding area:

Bishop Court is a residential cul-de-sac, with access off Bishop Street. The Limerick Greenway runs north-south from the north of Bishop Court.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There are currently no cycling facilities along this route.

Proposed infrastructure type:

Mixed street environment. Wayfinding in the form of upright signage and road markings to form the route from the Limerick Greenway to the town centre (refer to Chapter 8 Roads for further details of this scheme).

Pinch Points/Constraints:

None.

Road Name: Bishop Street

Surrounding area:

Bishop Street connects the town square and the north and north-east of



GST Entrance from Station Road

Newcastle West. Courtney Boys School, the entrance to the Desmond Complex, St. Ita's hospital, fire station, library and the courthouse are all present on this street.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There are currently no cycling facilities along this route. A footpath is present on both sides of the carriageway.

Proposed infrastructure type:

- Mixed street type means that the street is suitable for both vehicles and cyclists. Traffic calming is suggested outside Courtney Boys School in the form of a footway build out and landscaping. Public realm along this stretch will link the town centre with the many public amenities along this route.
- Cycle wayfinding in the form of road markings are suggested for Bishop Street, to guide visitors in from the Limerick Greenway.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

None.

Road Name: Sheehan's Road

Surrounding area:

Sheehan's Road runs north-south between Bishop Street and the N21 and is the only through route in Newcastle West in this direction. It serves residential areas, industrial and business parts. It also serves the funeral home and social welfare offices.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There are currently no cycling facilities along this route.

Proposed infrastructure type:

A raised cycle track in both directions or a mandatory cycle lane in both directions. This will be critical in providing safe routes for cyclists as part of the wider network.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

There is restricted width approaching the junction with the N21. Approximately 2.0m is required to continue the cycle facilities through here.



Bishop Court



Entrance to Limerick Greenway from Bishop Court

Road Name: Assumpta Park

Surrounding area:

Residential area that links Sheehan’s Road and Market Yard.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There are currently no cycling facilities along this route.

Proposed infrastructure type:

Mixed street environment suitable for use by cyclists and pedestrians. Wayfinding in the form of upright signage and road markings to provide an alternative cycle route to the N21.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

None.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

This is a through route for footpath/cycleway only. A ramp and steps are provided at Lower Maiden Street where there is a level difference.

Proposed infrastructure type:

Maintained as a footpath/cycleway.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

None.

Road Name: Mass Path

Surrounding area:

A footpath that links Assumpta Park and Lower Maiden Street.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

This is a footpath/cycleway/ Lighting to be confirmed.

Proposed infrastructure type:

Maintained as a footpath/cycleway.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

None.

Road Name: Chapel Close

Surrounding area:

A footpath that links Lower Maiden Street and N21/St. Mary’s Road. At Lower Maiden Street, there is a cul-de-sac drive that allows access to properties.



Bishop Street

Road Name: N21-Gortboy to Cork Road Roundabout

Surrounding area:

N21 approaching Newcastle West from Limerick. It is a single carriageway proposed to be under a 50km/hr speed limit.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There is a footpath and verge on the northern side. The hard shoulder on the southern side is dedicated as a cycle lane.

Proposed infrastructure type:

A two-way cycle track, footpath and verge are proposed on the northern side.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

This will result in the loss of trees and visual amenity. Consideration will have to be given to providing continuity of cycle route around the Cork roundabout and into Newcastle West. There is a gap in provision on the N21, adjacent to St. Ita's Terrace.

Road Name: N21 - Cork Road Roundabout to Bridge Street

Surrounding area:

It is a single carriageway with footway on both sides. Residential properties front onto the road.

Existing Facility and Quality of Service:

There are no cycle facilities on this section. The carriageway is narrow, at approximately 7.3m.

Proposed infrastructure type:

There are no cycle infrastructure proposals along this route. With an AADT in excess of 10,000 vehicles, cyclists are recommended to be separated from vehicle traffic. This is not possible on this section of the route. An alternative proposed route is to use Sheehan's Road, onto a new greenway infrastructure between Sheehan's Road and Assumpta Place (refer to Section 4.3.9) and for cyclists to continue into the town centre from here. Cyclists may undertake journey in the opposite direction along the same route or via Lower Maiden Street (which is one-way eastbound). Options for including a contra-flow cycle

lane on Lower Maiden Street were also considered, but would require the loss of on-street car parking.

Pinch Points/Constraints:

The narrow width of the carriageway requires a different route selection. 2.0m is required to continue the cycle facilities through here.

Surrounding area:

N21 approaching Newcastle West from Limerick. It is a single carriageway

Chapter 06

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

6.1 Existing Public Transport Services

As a key town, Newcastle West is served by regional and local services, linking Newcastle West by bus to the wider area. 6.74% travel is by bus for the purposes of work, school or college. There are additional bus trips not included in this figure, including retail, health, visiting family and friends and tourism.

Table 6.1 outlines the bus services currently originating, ending or stopping in Newcastle West as part of their journey.

Table 6.1 Bus Services in Newcastle West

Bus Route Number	Operator	Route	No. of services per day
13	Bus Éireann	Limerick – Adare – Listowel – Tralee	8
14	Bus Éireann	Limerick – Killarney	5
321	Bus Éireann	Limerick – Rathkeale – Newcastle West	1
300	Dublin Coach	Dublin and Tralee, via Limerick	14
521	Local Link	Newcastle West - Charleville	
520	Local Link	Newcastle West - Kilmallock and Mitchelstown	
593	Local Link	Newcastle West - Rathkeale, Askeaton, Shanagolden, Loughill, Glin	

There are four bus stops within Newcastle West. These are shown in Figure 6.1. Two bus stops are west of Newcastle West, on the N21, one eastbound and one westbound. These are known on the timetables as Newcastle West (Crock of Gold Pub). An upright Bus Éireann bus stop sign is present on both sides, with an inset bus cage also provided on both carriageways.

Two bus stops are located east of Newcastle West, on the N21, one eastbound and one westbound. These are known on the timetables as Newcastle West (Longcourt House Hotel). A covered shelter with seating is provided on both sides, along with litter bins. An inset bus cage is provided on the eastbound carriageway, along with a wide footpath and verge area. The westbound bus stop is located on an access road from the roundabout to the entrance to the Longcourt House Hotel. On-street parking is provided opposite the bus stop.

There are no formal bus stop or parking facilities within Newcastle West. Local Link services advise that they use the SuperValu car park informally for services which collect and drop off in Newcastle West town centre.

Secondary schools within Newcastle West also generate bus trips, with students arriving from the wider hinterland by school transport. Scoil Mhuire agus Íde bus services use the bus stops on the N21, Newcastle West (Crock of Gold Pub) and walk from there to the school entrance on Bother Buí. Desmond College has space for buses to pull in outside the school on Station Road.

6.2 Key Outcomes for Public Transport

The focus of the Public Realm and Movement Plan with regards to public transport to ensure that it is integrated into the land use and other transport modes in Newcastle West. With this in mind, the key outcomes identified when examining public transport within Newcastle West were:

- Providing a link between the road, walking and cycling network and public transport infrastructure (in this case bus stops);



Newcastle West (Crock of Gold Pub) Westbound Bus Stop

- Providing bus stops in locations that are accessible and relevant to Newcastle West employment, residential, educational and tourism areas;
- Providing bus stops which are safe, comfortable and accessible to all.

6.3 Public Transport Proposals

6.3.1 Review of bus stop locations

As part of a wider review of all movement links in Newcastle West, the location of the bus stops on the N21 were reviewed. The bus stop locations as existing were found to be suitable, as follows:

- Inset bus stop bays are provided at all four bus stops, allowing the bus to pull in without adversely impacting on traffic behind it. This also has safety benefits, as vehicles are not overtaking a waiting bus. The width of the carriageway on the N21 between the two bus stop locations does not allow for an inset bay.



Newcastle West (Crock of Gold Pub) Eastbound Bus Stop

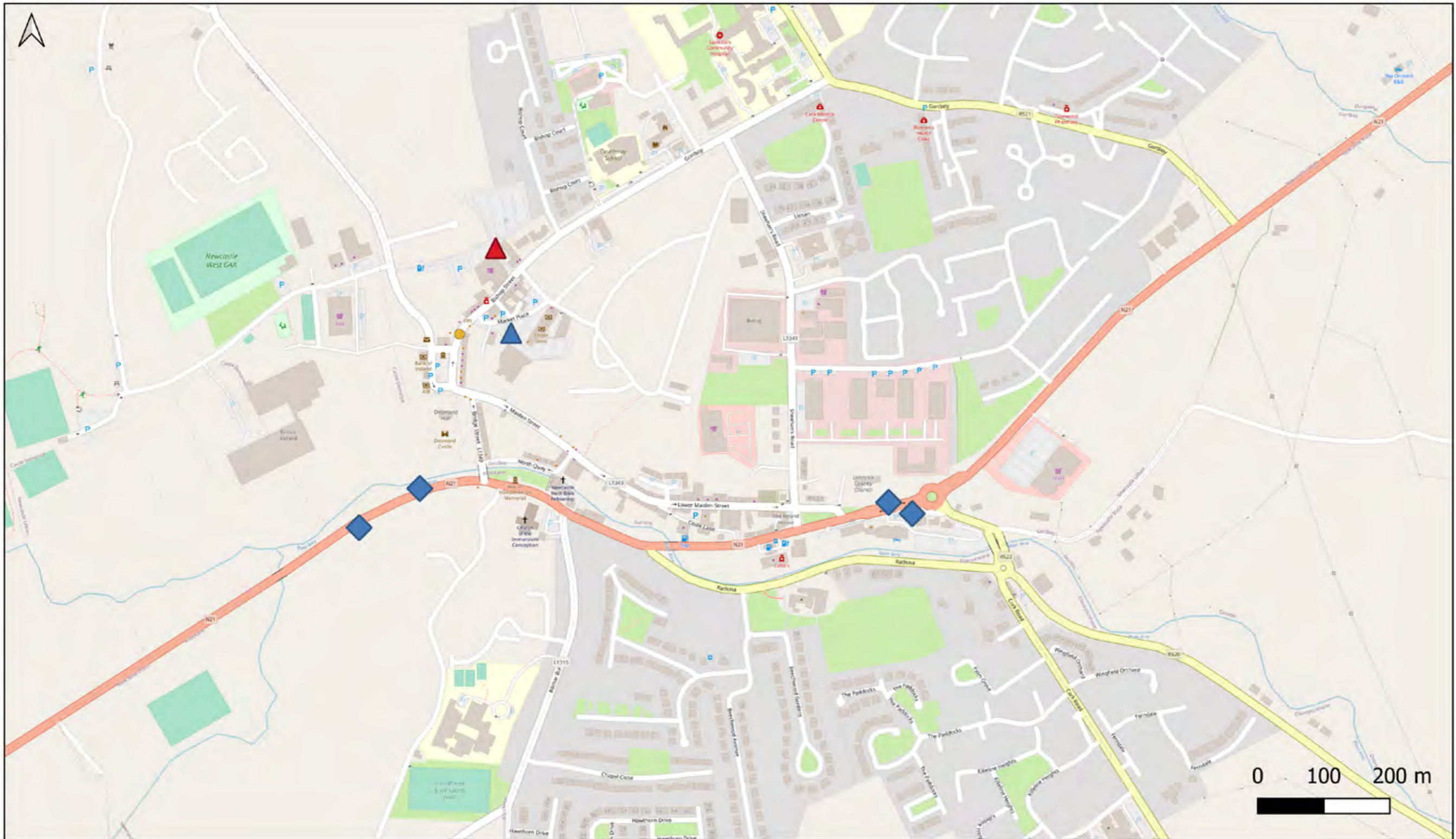
- The bus stops were linked to the pedestrian network, with significant areas of Newcastle West (both to the north and south) within a ten minute walk of a bus stop. Upgrades to the pedestrian network (as outlined in Chapter 4 Walking and Cycling) will further enhance the walking environment to and from the bus stops.
- The location of the bus stop on the N21 reduces the journey time for all bus users on regional routes.
- There is sufficient footpath width available to allow for passengers to safely wait. The bus stops to the east of the town, Newcastle West (Longcourt House Hotel), are located on a wide footway (2.5m) with a grass verge area. This provides space for the bus shelter, seating and the improvements outlined below.
- The bus stops on the west of the town centre, Newcastle West (Crock of Gold Pub) have the potential to provide a direct walking link from the N21 to the town centre by way of Desmond Hall and future plans for Fullers Folly.



Newcastle West (Longcourt House Hotel) Westbound Bus Stop



Newcastle West (Longcourt House Hotel) Eastbound Bus Stop




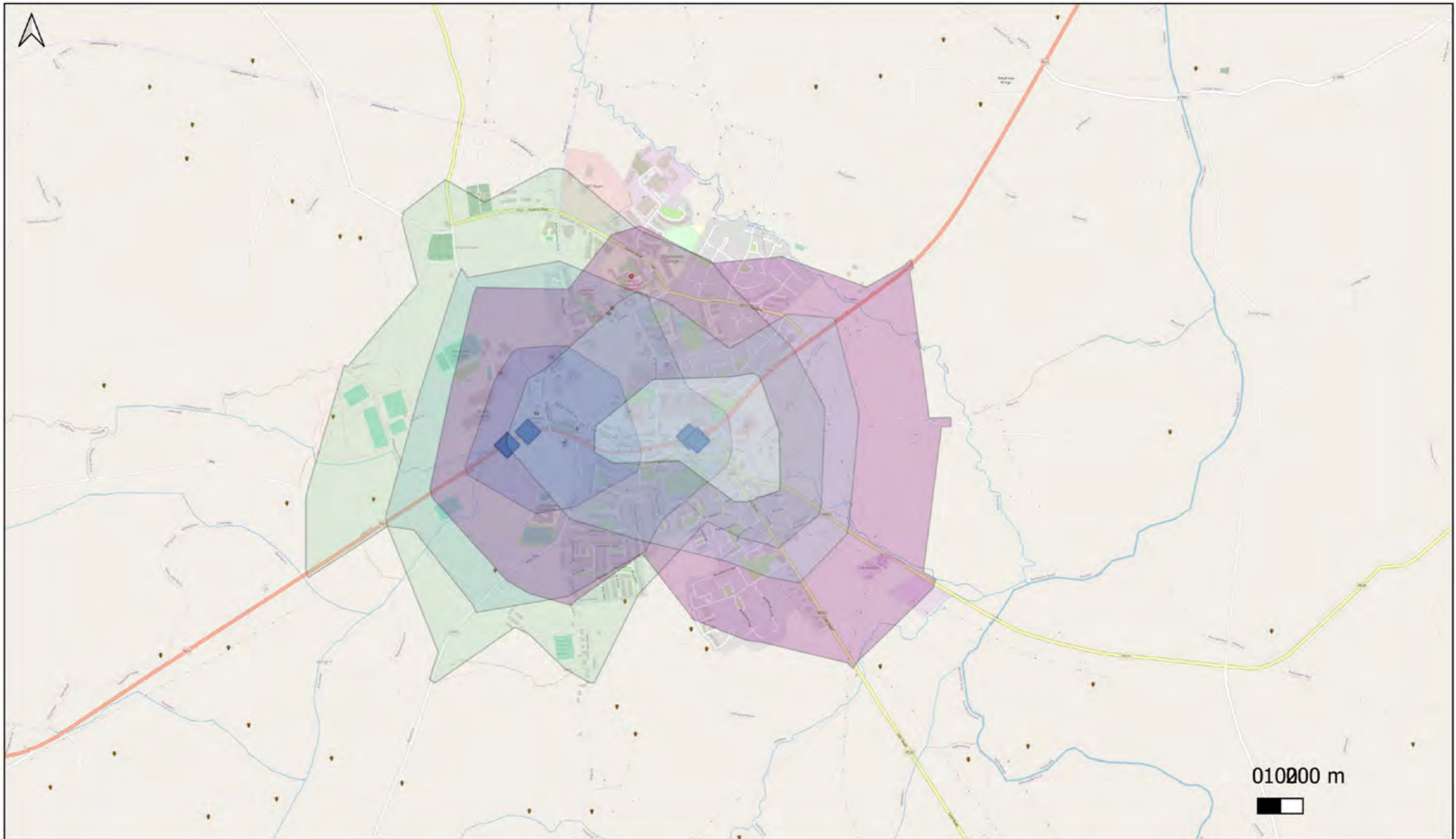
Legend		 Malachy Walsh and Partners Engineering and Environmental Consultants
▲	Local Link informal bus stop	
▲	Proposed Local Link bus stop	
◆	Bus stops	

Figure 6.1 Public Transport



Legend

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| ◆ Bus stops | Walking distance | Walking distance |
| | □ 5 mins | □ 5 mins |
| | □ 10 mins | □ 10 mins |
| | □ 15 mins | □ 15 mins |



Figure 6.2 Bus Stop Walking Distance Map

6.3.2 Wheelchair Accessible Bus Stops

The bus stops on the east of Newcastle West (Longcourt House Hotel) have been recommended by the National Transport Authority (NTA) as being suitable for upgrade to a wheelchair accessible bus stop. The main component of a wheelchair accessible bus stop is that a hardstanding area of 3.0m x 3.4m is provided to allow the wheelchair lift from the bus to deploy.

6.3.3 Linking Public Transport with the Other Modes

An integrated movement plan allows for users to move easily from one mode to another, for example, walking or cycling to a bus stop. It is recommended that the bus stop on the east side of Newcastle West (Longcourt House Hotel) is developed as an interchange area that allows bus users continue their journey with another mode of transport. Covered and secure bicycle stands will allow users to cycle to the bus stop. Direct and accessible pedestrian links, including a pedestrian crossing on the N21 at Sheehan’s Road (Refer to Chapter 8 Roads for more details), will improve linkages. Seating provided at the bus stops will allow for people to comfortably wait for the bus service.

6.3.4 Proposed Local Link Bus Stop in the Town Centre

Local Link Limerick services are at present using the bus stops on the N21 and an informal bus stop within the SuperValu car park on Bishop Street. Local Link services provide links to other towns in the regions, as well as services in the wider region. Local Link are expanding their services to include a route running six days a week between Newcastle West and Charleville.

An integrated public transport system contributes to the transition to a low carbon economy. Providing accessible transport links is also part of developing an Age Friendly town, which Local Link contributes towards. A dedicated, accessible bus stop in the town centre (Market Place) will enhance the quality of the bus service provided and promote it as a reliable transport option. The bus stop is recommended to include shelter, seating and a well-lit environment. By locating the bus stop in the town centre, it will allow bus users to easily access the businesses and services they have come to Newcastle West for, or to link a bus journey with another journey purpose to Newcastle West (for example, using the bus service to shop in a nearby town on the same day as an

appointment for a service in Newcastle West). This bus stop would also provide a set down and collect area for small or private group tourist buses.



6.3.5 Set Down Area for Scoil Mhuire Agus Íde

A set down area, which includes provision for buses, has been proposed for Scoil Mhuire agus Íde secondary school. This is discussed further in Chapter 8 Roads.



Knockane Road Outside Scoil Mhuire Agus Ide

6.3.6 Bus Facilities for Tourism

As part of developing a vibrant and active tourism town, bus facilities are required. These include somewhere to drop and collect visitors with easy access to the town centre and somewhere for buses to wait. Buses travel to Newcastle West along the N21.

In the first place, a location along the N21 was sought in close proximity to the town centre. The N21 in this section is narrow, with the building line defining its width. No location was found suitable for a bus to wait. West of Bridge Street, on the north side, options were considered for creating a space for buses to drop off and wait. However, this is likely to have environmental impacts as well as requiring structural and geotechnical design and so was deemed not suitable.

As part of any development of car parks (refer to Chapter 9), it is recommended that provision for bus parking is provided, in consultation with tourism facilities. A drop off location at the Square is also recommended to be considered as part of the further consultation and design.

Chapter 07

PARKING

7.1 Existing Parking Context

Parking facilities contribute to supporting an active community, especially with regards to retail and commercial activities. The availability of car parking is recognised as a key factor in the development of the Movement Plan.

Public parking is provided in two formats within Newcastle West, on-street and off-street. There are also additional parking provided privately in the form of retail or customer parking. On-street parking is controlled by the Newcastle West (Parking Places) Bye-Laws (2013) in the following locations:

- Bridge Street
- Maiden Street
- Lower Maiden Street
- The Square
- Church Street
- Bother Buí
- St. Mary's Road
- Bishop Street
- Market Place
- South Quay
- North Quay

A valid parking disc must be provided to park within the controlled area during business hours 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., Monday to Friday. The fee for a parking disc is €0.50, with the first hour free. The maximum stay is three hours. A traffic warden oversees the enforcement of the parking regulations. Resident's parking permits are available upon application from Limerick City and County Council. This entitles the owner to park within the controlled area for an unlimited time period and without the use of a parking disc.



Controlled Parking Restrictions

Public off-street parking, controlled under the parking bye-laws is also available in Market Place in the town centre. This is accessed from Bishop Street and Assumpta Place. It has approximately 80 spaces, with additional disabled spaces and a loading bay. Business, food and retail units surround Market Place. It also provides access to the large retail unit of Homesavers and its additional customer parking.



Market Place Car Park

Church Street provides access to a second public car park, operated by Limerick City and County Council. Parking charges are €0.50 for one hour, or €2.00 for the day. The car park is linked to the town centre for pedestrians by Bridewell Row and to the adjacent SuperValu car park. The car park is well used and demonstrates a demand for longer term parking in Newcastle West.

Loading bays are provided within the controlled parking areas. These are

for goods vehicles only during the business hours of 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., Monday to Friday, with a maximum stay of 30 minutes.

There are two locations within Newcastle West for electric vehicle charging. Two chargers are located in the Church Street car park and two chargers are located in Garvey's Centra Service Station, on the N21 opposite Sheehan's Road. Parking is free for electrically powered vehicles that are recharging in designated electrically powered vehicle recharging bays, up to a maximum of four hours.



Electric Vehicle Charging Points in Church Street Car Park

Disabled parking is provided throughout Newcastle West, both on-street and off-street in the following locations, with the number of spaces in brackets:

- The Square (4);
- Market Place (4);
- Church Street car park (2);
- North Quay (2);
- Lower Maiden Street (2); and
- Churchtown Road (2).

7.2 Objectives of the Parking Strategy

The objectives of the parking strategy are to provide a high-quality environment for those living in and visiting the town. Parking should be well connected by walking to the town or nearby amenities by way of high-quality public realm and direct paths. Parking locations will also take into account the ease at which they can be accessed from the road network. The parking strategy has been developed with the understanding that on-street and off-street parking are related and cater for different uses.

The parking strategy is based on an order of priority:

1. Residents and disabled people
2. Short or medium stay visitors (shoppers, tourists and business visitors)
3. Long-stay visitors (commuters to work)



Parking in the Square

Careful consideration has been given to the removal or displacement of parking, with an emphasis based on the order of priority established. Removal of parking has been considered for a number of reasons:

- The parking spaces create a road safety hazard;
- Parking spaces take up space that could be used for pedestrian and/or other public realm or environmental improvements;
- Vehicles manoeuvring in and out of spaces in streets with high pedestrian activity cause a particular hazard;
- Drivers will drive around the town centre streets looking for a free space, which contributes to unnecessary high volumes of traffic in the town centre.

There will be no displacement of parking without alternative measures in place.

7.3 Off-Street Parking Proposals

Additional off-street parking is proposed as part of the Public Realm and Movement Plan. This is primarily for two reasons:

- There is demand for additional parking in Newcastle West; and
- In order to implement other proposals, some on-street parking spaces have been identified for removal. These numbers need to be catered for in a car park.

Nash's Yard has been identified as an opportunity site for formal off-street parking. This has close proximity to town, approximately 150m or a two minute walk from The Square via Nash's Yard. This area is already used by vehicle owners as informal car parking, with users accessing the town via Nash's Yard. Aldi and its adjoining car park is also in the area. This area is also directly east of the Demense. Parking in this area would contribute to connecting the Demense with the town centre.

Newcastle West is an Age-Friendly town and any creation of new car parking areas are recommended to take into account the provision of Age-Friendly parking spaces, alongside the guidance on disabled parking.

Newcastle West Community Centre has also been identified as an opportunity site for formal off-street parking. This has a large car park as existing, which is in need of some maintenance. The community centre is located on The Desmense, accessed via Church Street. It is approximately 240m from The

Square, via Church Street, or a four minute walk. If this area will be used for additional car parking, the pedestrian links to the town centre are of importance and have been considered as part of the walking and cycling chapter.

There are plans for an additional 50 car parking spaces at the entrance to the Limerick Greenway on Station Road. This will also include spaces for up to three minibuses and a bus set

These areas identified are suitable for creating additional car parking spaces in the short to medium term. Longer term, a car parking site that can be accessed directly from the N21 would be beneficial to tourism and would reduce vehicles going through the town centre. The development of this car park would require close consideration in line with tourism planning for Newcastle West.

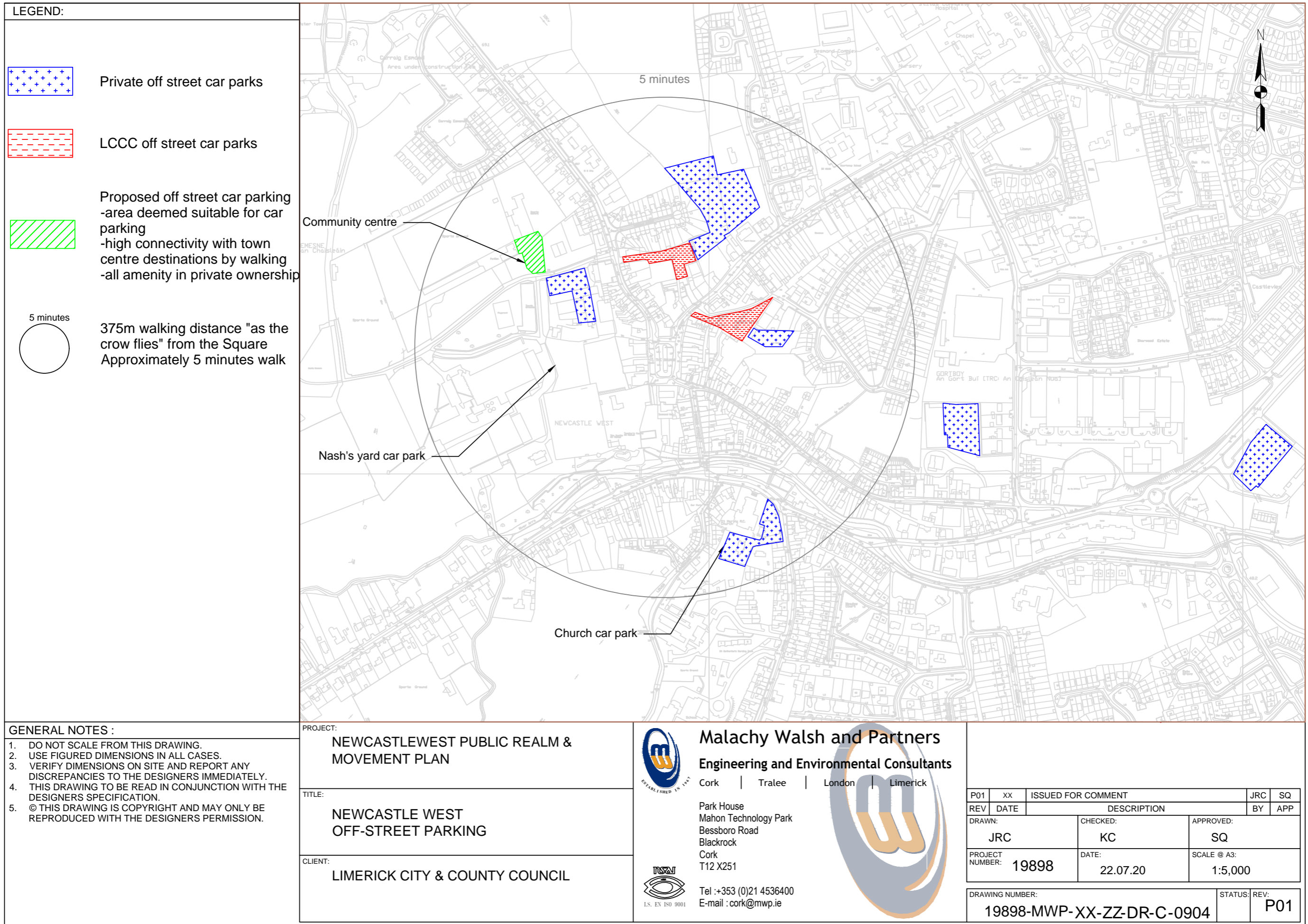


Figure 7.1 Off-Street Parking in Newcastle West

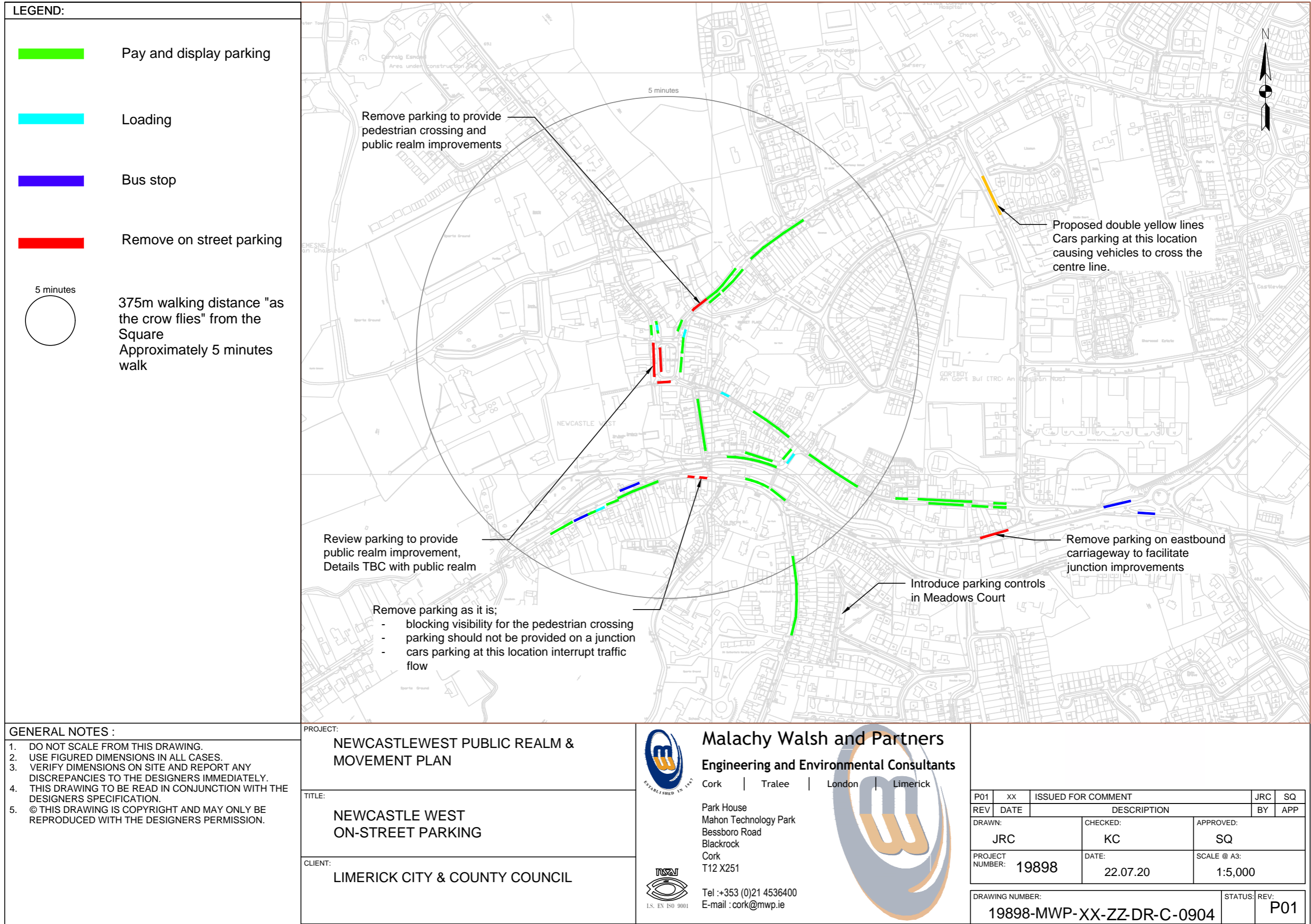
7.4 On-Street Parking Proposals

Safety and traffic congestion improvements are advantages of improving off-street parking provision. A number of locations have been identified for removal of on-street parking, in order to improve safety and create space for public realm enhancements.

- The Square – the reduction in number of spaces will depend on the final public realm design outcome and will be consulted on as part of this design. The number of spaces will be offset with additional off-street parking.
- Bishop Street (opposite Market Yard) – in order to create a safe crossing environment for pedestrians, 2 – 3 on-street parking spaces on the west side of the street have been identified for removal.
- South Quay (at the junction with Bridge Street) – the parking spaces on the south side of the N21 were identified by TII as part of their safety review. The on-street parking spaces and loading bay are blocking visibility for traffic using the junction and for pedestrians using the zebra crossing. Vehicles manoeuvring into the parking spaces create a safety hazard at the junction.
- N21 (at the junction with Sheehan’s Road) – informal on-street parking on the north side of the N21 has been identified by TII as a safety concern. Large vehicles traveling eastbound on the N21 are required to cross the centre line into oncoming traffic to pass the parked vehicles. In addition, designs to improve capacity and traffic flow at the junction of the N21 and Sheehan’s Road require the additional carriageway space that is being used by the on-street parking.
- Sheehan’s Road (south of Assumpta Place) – double yellow lines are proposed on the east side of Sheehan’s Road. Vehicles overtaking the parked vehicles do not have visibility to oncoming traffic due to the horizontal curve in the road. By placing double yellow lines to enforce no parking at this location, a potential safety issue will be reduced.



Large Vehicles on the N21



LEGEND:

█ Pay and display parking

█ Loading

█ Bus stop

█ Remove on street parking

5 minutes

375m walking distance "as the crow flies" from the Square
Approximately 5 minutes walk

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PROJECT:
NEWCASTLEWEST PUBLIC REALM & MOVEMENT PLAN

TITLE:
NEWCASTLE WEST ON-STREET PARKING

CLIENT:
LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

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Figure 7.2 On-Street Parking in Newcastle West

7.5 Parking Charges

The current parking charges are summarised as:

- On-street (including Market Place): first hour free, €0.50 per hour thereafter. Maximum stay of three hours
- Off-street: Church St car park €0.50 for two hours or €2 for all day
- When considering the pricing policy, a number of objectives were considered:
- Balancing demand with supply;
- Influencing the demand as between on- and off-street parking;
- Influencing the distribution of demand as between different areas;
- Balancing enforcement efforts with outcomes in terms of compliance.

A number of options were reviewed with regards to the parking charges. The current pricing charges have significant advantages in encouraging people into the town centre, with the first hour free. This has proved successful with businesses and customers alike and is supported by Limerick City and County Council.

The first hour free for on-street parking is balanced by a low charge for all day parking in the Church Street car park. This encourages users who require a longer stay in the town to use the car park, which frees up the on-street parking for use by visitors who intend on a shorter stay. Full day options for car parking are required also for those who are commuting and working in Newcastle West. Free parking in the proposed off-street car park is recommended to be considered during the opening period, to encourage its use.



Loading Bay on Maiden Street

Chapter 08

ROADS

8.1 Improving the Roads

The existing context for roads in Newcastle West is provided in Chapter 3 Existing Context. When considering roads as an overall part of the Public Realm and Movement Plan, the key outcomes considered were:

- A road network that provides benefits to the residents of Newcastle West in terms of journey times and improved safety;
- Ease of movement on the N21 for through traffic;
- A road network that allows for interaction between local and through traffic;
- Proposals that address the current and future traffic congestion issues;
- A road network that includes for other sustainable transport modes, in particular public transport, cycling and walking;
- Cost effective proposals that will add benefits to the road network prior to the design and implementation of a the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme; and
- Proposals that will continue to be effective for Newcastle West, following the construction of the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme and complement it as part of a wider road network.

The proposals developed as part of the PRMP with regards to the road network will not significantly reduce the traffic demands within Newcastle West. The proposed the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme is required to reduce overall traffic volumes travelling through Newcastle West, alongside a continuing commitment to increasing the number of journeys made by sustainable transport modes, such as walking and cycling.

The proposals for road improvements are at a high level feasibility stage. As schemes progress through the design stages following on from the PRMP, more detailed proposals will emerge.

8.2 N21 Newcastle West New Roads

The current status of the N21 Newcastle West Road Scheme is that route corridor options are being generated and assessed against the constraints within the study area. These are being appraised against the objectives for the scheme.

This is an important project to enhance regional connectivity, relieve congestion on the N21 and to improve road safety.

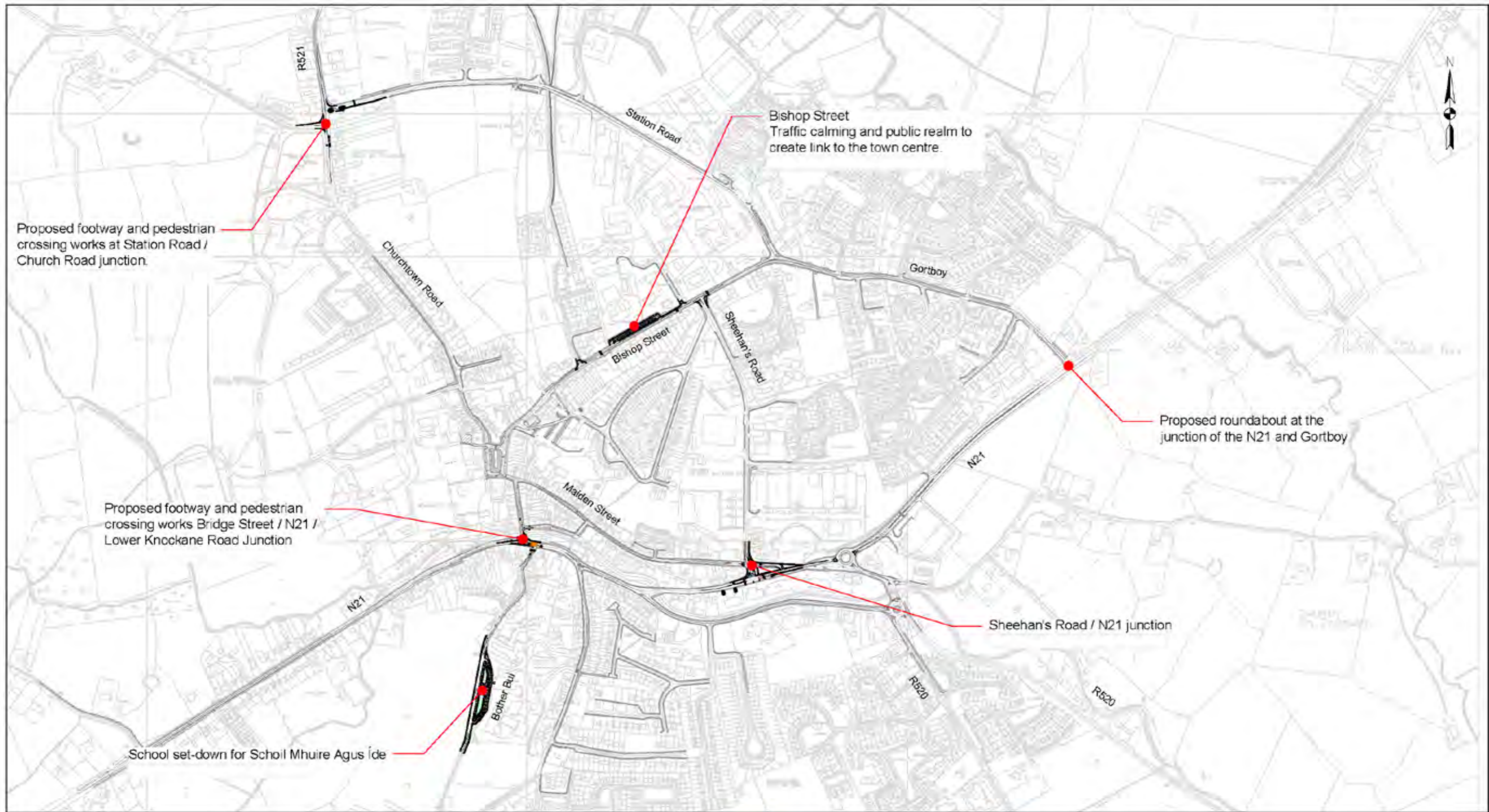
Objective T6 of the Newcastle West Local Area Plan states that it is the objective of the Council to promote the delivery of a southern distributor road to allow for improved accessibility and a more efficient local road network.

8.3 Proposals for Improving the Roads

8.3.1 Gortboy and N21

The junction of the N21 and Gortboy is the first junction on the N21 with Newcastle West when approaching from the east. High traffic volumes and the vertical geometry of this junction make it difficult for vehicles to turn right from Gortboy onto the N21. Gortboy and Station Road form a ring road to the east and north of Newcastle West, linking the N21 with the R521. Vehicle users may avoid the junction, as it is difficult to navigate and continue towards Newcastle West and use Sheehan's Road as an alternative. This increases traffic within Newcastle West and puts additional pressure on Sheehan's Road and its junction with the N21.

A **roundabout** is proposed for the junction of the N21 and Gortboy. This will facilitate vehicles making a right turn from Gortboy onto the N21 with relative ease, along with all other movements. Traffic flows indicated in the Arup junction report provide figures of 6,500 vehicles AADT on Gortboy and in excess of 10,000 vehicles AADT on the N21. The recommendation of a roundabout as the



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Figure 8.1 Roads Improvement Overview

most suitable junction treatment is in line with the recommendations made by the Arup junction report.

Gortboy is frequently used by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) travelling from R521 and the N21. Improvements to the Gortboy junction should further promote this route to HGVs, thereby reducing the number of HGV's using the roads in and closer to the town centre.

8.3.2 Sheehan’s Road and N21

The junction of Sheehan’s Road and the N21 is a vital node in the road network for Newcastle West. The junction facilitates movement from the N21 to the north of Newcastle West, including the residential and employment areas on Sheehan’s Road. The existing junction layout is a Stop controlled priority junction, with the N21 as the major arm. There are no filter lanes present, resulting in traffic queuing on the N21 behind traffic making the right turn onto Sheehan’s Road. There is also queuing from Sheehan’s Road to enter the N21, with traffic queues split into a right and left turning lane. There is an access road from Sheehan’s Road which has a priority junction with the N21 further east. This is frequently used by vehicles wishing to turn left from Sheehan’s Road onto the N21.

As part of the design development of this junction, options included restricting the movements at the junction to one-way for Sheehan’s Road and removing through traffic on the access road to reducing movements on the N21. These designs were determined to not meet the key outcomes established, as they would not increase capacity, safety or pedestrian and cycle facilities at the junction.

Traffic signals were also considered as an option. Further design development is required through the preliminary and detailed design stages to determine an optimum junction layout for all users.

8.3.3 Bother Buí and N21

The junction of Bother Buí and the N21 is priority controlled junction. The junction is busy, especially at school drop off and collection time and during peak summer season. The N21 has a right turn filter lane eastbound to turn onto Bother Buí. This reduces delays to the through traffic on the N21. There are also filter lanes at the stop line on Bother Buí for right and left turns onto



Junction of Sheehan’s Road and N21

the N21. All movements are catered for, with a yellow box junction on the westbound carriageway facilitating right turners from Bother Buí onto the N21. Pedestrians are facilitated by a zebra crossing west of the junction.

As part of developing options for this junction, it was noted that the carriageway width is constrained due to residential properties along all boundaries. All traffic movements at this junction are currently catered for. A restriction on movements (e.g. no right turn from the N21 onto Bother Buí) was considered, but it was determined that this would bring no significant benefits to traffic volumes.

The junction of Bother Buí and the N21 is proposed to remain as existing, with proposals developed for the other junctions on the N21 and for school traffic contributing to alleviating overall traffic volumes.



Junction of Bother Buí and N21

8.3.4 Bridge Street / Knockane Road / N21

The junction of Bridge Street, Knockane Road and the N21 is the first junction on the N21 in Newcastle West when approaching from the west. It is a priority controlled junction at present, with two-way movements on all arms. After its junction with North Quay, Bridge Street is one-way northbound into the town centre. The junction is busy as it provides access to the town centre and parking facilities. A zebra crossing is provided for pedestrians on the west arm of the N21. A right turn ban from the N21 onto Knockane Road was considered. This was ruled out as it was thought that right turning traffic onto Knockane Road was not exceptionally high to cause significant delay. Site observations showed that drivers were aware of the local conditions and allowed vehicles to make the right turn where required, with the yellow box observed.

As part of the design development for this junction, all movements were reviewed. Traffic exiting Bridge Street onto the N21 were required to queue while waiting for a gap in the N21 through traffic. The constraints of the bridge

mean that the road cannot be widened to allow for traffic to be filtered at the stop line. The right turning traffic from Bridge Street onto the N21 is a difficult movement at the junction. A mini roundabout is not suitable at this location given the high flows on the N21 and the need to cater safely for pedestrians and cyclists.

Traffic signals were also considered as an option. Further design development is required through the preliminary and detailed design stages to determine an optimum junction layout for all users.

8.3.5 Scoil Mhuire agus Íde and Surrounding Areas

Scoil Mhuire agus Íde generates high traffic volumes around Bother Buí and its junction with the N21 at school drop off and collection time. The school entrance is on Bother Buí. School drop off and collection, as well as school activities that require bus travel, also generate idling traffic on Bother Buí and its surrounding residential areas. A holistic approach to addressing this issue is required, both in the form of providing appropriate infrastructure and encouraging behavioural change with choices in transport mode. Proposals relating the switch to different transport modes are outlined in Chapter 10 Supporting Measures.

A set down area is proposed on Knockane Road, to the west of the school grounds. The set down area has provision for bus and vehicles, allowing students to safely exit the vehicles and enter the school. As part of the design development for this layout, it was noted that the land to the east is zoned for residential use. There is a horizontal curve in the road, in which the proposed set down area has been set, realigning the main carriageway on a straighter north – south axis. This will provide greater flexibility for access arrangements to future residential areas to the west.

The set down area is a suggested idea of this report indicating what will be possible. More detailed consultation will be required at the next design stage with the residents, landowners, school and parents.

Options for Park 'n' Stride (primary school children) and Drop 'n' Hop (secondary school children) have been reviewed. Drop 'n' Hop operates with parents dropping children within walking distance of the school. Other schemes have operated by providing free parking in car parks for up to 1 hour to allow for drop off. However, as controlled on-street parking in Newcastle West is free

for the first hour, this is already an option for parents. The church car park on the corner of the N21 and Bother Buí is used informally as a drop off and collect location.

8.3.6 R521 / Churchtown Road / Station Road

R521 / Station Road / Gortboy is the main HGV route for traffic between Foynes / R521 and Pallas Food to the north of Newcastle West and the N21 to the south of Newcastle West. This brings with it significant traffic flows. The junction is a priority controlled junction with Churchtown Road to the R521 as the major arm.

Consideration was given to redesigning the junction of the R521/Churchtown Road/Station Road so that the R521/Station Road is the major route and Churchtown Road is the minor arm. However, given its T-junction layout, and the location of the petrol station the considered layout is not possible. This is due to vehicles being required to wait on a bend to turn onto Churchtown Road and the petrol station without any forward visibility.

Site observations showed that the junction has a high number of pedestrian movements to and from the petrol station and from Churchtown Road to Station Road. Station Road provides access to the Limerick Greenway and



Knockane Road

its amenity walks. The proposals for this junction, as outlined in Chapter 5 Walking and Cycling, will not only introduce benefits for pedestrians, but will also contribute to traffic calming at the junction.



Junction of R521 / Churchtown Road / Station Road

8.3.7 Maiden Street

Maiden Street is an important route in the town, allowing vehicles to leave the town centre travelling east to the N21. This forms part of a one-way system with Bridge Street and North Quay. Several options were considered, including making Bridge Street and Maiden Street two-way. Due to parking considerations and junction capacity at Bridge Street and the N21, this option would be difficult to implement. Making Maiden Street a pedestrian only environment would require Bridge Street to have two-way traffic flow. This would require the removal of on-street parking and would place significant extra pressure on the junction of Bridge Street and the N21. A shared surface solution has been proposed and is discussed further in Chapter 9 Public Realm.



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LEGEND:

- PROPOSED RED TACTILE PAVING
- PROPOSED FOOTWAY
- EXISTING FOOTWAY

- NOTES:**
1. Proposed realignment of Lower Knockane Road over 210m

REFERENCED DRAWINGS:

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	APP
P02	15.01.20	ISSUED FOR COMMENT	JRC	SQ
P01	10.01.20	ISSUED FOR COMMENT	JRC	SQ

PROJECT: NEWCASTLEWEST PUBLIC REALM & MOVEMENT PLAN

TITLE: PROPOSED SCOIL MHUIRE AGUS ÍDE SET DOWN AREA

CLIENT: LIMERICK CITY & COUNTY COUNCIL

Malachy Walsh and Partners
 Engineering and Environmental Consultants
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 E-mail: cork@mwpl.ie

DRAWN: JRC	CHECKED: KC	APPROVED: SQ
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DATE: Jan. 2020	SCALE @ A1: 1:500
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PROJECT NUMBER: 19898	DRAWING STATUS:
DRAWING NUMBER: LCC01-MWP-ZZ-XX-DR-C-1114	P02

Figure 8.4 - Proposed Set Down Area for Scoil Mhuire agus Íde

Chapter 09

PUBLIC REALM

9.1 Introduction

Newcastle West is a vibrant riverside town with a rich history going back to Norman times. Strategically located on the banks of the River Arra since, the town is distinguished by the medieval complex of Desmond Hall. By the 19th century Newcastle West had developed as a bustling market town with a continuous traditional Irish townscape of predominantly 3-storey terraced buildings focussed on the civic heart of the Square, where markets and fairs were established on a regular basis. The streets radiating from the Square extend this traditional townscape, contributing importantly to the character of the town, and which remains largely intact to the present day.

Newcastle West retains its importance as a key service provider in West Limerick and North Kerry. It is the second town of the County (after Limerick City) and offers a wide range of retail, commercial, social and civic services to the resident population and the wider area. There is also a district court service in the town, administrative offices for Limerick County Council, a civic recycling centre on Station Road, St. Ita's public hospital in Gortboy and an HSE community care centre in the town.

The wide variety of shops and professional services located in the town centre is complimented by two large convenience retailers (Garvey's Supervalu and Dooley's Supervalu), while Lidl and Tesco superstores are located on the main town approaches, together with substantial DIY stores, furniture outlets, pubs and restaurants.

Much of the town centre is designated as an Architectural Conservation Area, comprising the Square, Bridge Street, part of Maiden Street and North Quay, and including a large number of Protected Structures. The core of Newcastle West, encompassing the townlands of Castle Demesne, Churchtown, Gortboy,

Rathnaneane and Knockane, is a Recorded Monument and classified as an 'historic town'. There are twenty Recorded Monuments within the area, as well as eleven ring forts in the immediate environs of the town, and a medieval church and graveyard north of the town at Churchtown.

The potential of Newcastle West for tourism is increasingly recognised due to its many important assets that include the town's location on the N21 Limerick to Tralee road, the rivers, the local heritage based around Desmond Hall and the Demesne, the Limerick Greenway, and the town's traditional 18th century streetscape with many fine traditional shop fronts that remain largely intact around the Square.

Cultural tourism has also become very important for the town, especially attracting visitors to the annual Eigse festival in honour of the poet Michael Harnett, and in more recent times, the Knights of the West, which has been progressing annually and helps reinforce the town as a tourist destination.

The Newcastle West Local Area Plan 2014-2020 sets out the Vision Statement for Newcastle West as:

"It is the long term vision of the Council that Newcastle West functions efficiently as a place where people can and want to live, work, visit, fostering an authentic sense of place, and is competitive in attracting future investment".

To achieve this vision it is recognised that Newcastle West must continue to develop in a way that safeguards and enhances its rich cultural and natural heritage, accommodating a vibrant and balanced community, and providing good employment opportunities and quality local services and amenities. Good transport links are also important, including improvements to public transport services to provide a genuine alternative to the car. Building on the existing strengths of the town, there is considerable potential for all stakeholders to maximise the development opportunities in the town in order to secure its future and an improved quality of life.

Measures are required to facilitate the town in becoming an attractive town where citizens can avail of local amenities and services. Traffic Management and provision for car parking is a key element to the overall functioning of the town and is the most critical aspect in the preparation of the Plan for NCW. The Traffic Management Plan and car parking element of the Plan must support the functioning of businesses in the town. In addition to the traffic requirements, there are amenities that should be considered in the preparation of the Plan. The Limerick Greenway is located in close proximity to the town and is a key tourist attraction. Access to this amenity must be maximised to take full advantage of the potential economic benefits. The River Arra and River Dually are also areas of high amenity value.

In keeping with the vision for the town, good urban design is essential in creating attractive places for people to live, work and visit. A well-designed public realm ensures 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 feel safe.

This Public Realm and Movement Plan (PRMP) has an overarching objective to contribute to the vision for Newcastle West by identifying transport proposals and public realm improvements that will benefit the sustainable development of the town in the short and longer terms. Walking and cycling has been prioritised as part of the overall vision, in accordance with current national guidance (Smarter Travel and DMURS in particular) and the recommendations of the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West (2013). Walking and cycling are promoted as active travel modes that contribute to all aspects of the town's development, with the potential to significantly contribute to improving the quality of life for residents and the experience of visitors to Newcastle West.

Key Objectives for the study comprise:

- Provide a coherent Traffic Management Plan integrated with a Car Parking Strategy and incorporating HGV movements in the town.
- Improve access for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the town.
- Improve public realm at various locations in the town.
- Identify coach parking sites and motor home site for the town.
- Provide a Signage Strategy to facilitate way finding in the town.
- Maximise the opportunity sites identified in the Local Area Plan and improve connectivity to the town.
- Identify areas in the town where people would dwell and that would create a

sense of place and be people friendly spaces and prepare schematic public realm designs.

- Assess opportunities for connecting the Demense to the town.

9.2 Existing Public Realm

The public realm of Newcastle West, characterised by its streets, public spaces, parks and natural features, has many positive attributes such as the Square and traditional buildings with numerous Protected Structures focused on the Square, Maiden Street and Bridge Street, the imposing Desmond Hall, the historic Demesne, and the picturesque River Arra and its walkway through the centre of the town.

However, as described earlier in this report, Newcastle West currently experiences significant traffic congestion at peak times and severance due to the N21 passing through the town centre on route to County Kerry. This has a substantial impact on the quality of the public realm as well as local traffic movements, including pedestrian and cyclist movements. The location of Newcastle West contributes to the traffic volumes as its roads provide a key link between Limerick, Tralee and Foynes. Finding a balance between maintaining the strategic function of these through routes and improving the traffic for local activities is an essential part of the movement plan for the town.

Vehicles also dominate the narrow street pattern of the historic centre, and the requirements for on-street parking have a major influence on the pedestrian environment and the character of the Square. Whereas parking will continue to play a key role in the operation of the market town, earlier sections of this report outline the parking facilities that are existing and proposed to enhance the connectivity and traffic flow within the town, while bringing benefits to the retail units and local businesses.

There are various other factors that detract from the public realm, common to most other traditional towns, such as vacant buildings, neglected frontages, derelict and under-utilised sites, inappropriate parking, litter, overhead cables and other infrastructural/utilities equipment and structures, poor design of infill buildings (including inappropriate modern materials used on older buildings), poor quality road and footpath surfaces, and clutter from signage and street furniture. Retail/commercial vacancy has persisted as a particularly serious issue in the town, particularly with older premises such as those on Upper Maiden Street, but also recently including newly built units.

Public realm improvements, combined with traffic management measures, can be very effective in addressing these issues, by helping to increase footfall and public confidence in the town, as well as acting as a catalyst for renewed private investment. Both short and long-term programmes can have a significant overall impact. In the short term, efforts to clean, paint and maintain property and public spaces can make a significant improvement to the public realm and the general impressions of the town. Other measures such as appropriate planting, removal of obsolete signs and infrastructure, and co -coordinating types, styles and colours of street furniture, can further enhance the quality of the public realm.

Longer term, more substantial improvements can include traffic calming, rationalised on-street parking, comprehensive up-grading of public spaces, shopfront improvements, re-surfacing of footpaths, under-grounding of cables, improved pedestrian links and co-ordinated street furniture, lighting and signage, can significantly transform the public realm for the benefit of residents and visitors to the town, and hence the longer-term viability of shops and businesses.

9.3 Public Realm Strategy Plan

The overall aim for Newcastle West is to develop a plan that caters for all modes of transport and provides for public realm enhancements, so that all areas of the town are well-connected, safe to move through and enjoyable to live and work in.

The prioritisation of pedestrian and cyclist movements is an important consideration in achieving the overall vision and has considerable potential to contribute to the quality of life for the residents of the town and surrounding areas. The identification of possible amenity walkways and cycle routes throughout the town to promote active travel to school and workplaces is therefore an important part of the Movement element of the Plan and feeds directly into the objectives of the 'Walking and Cycling Strategy for Newcastle West', as well as the 'National Physical Activity Plan' and 'Get Ireland Walking' under the auspices of Healthy Ireland. It is also the policy of the Council to improve accessibility and reduce dependence on private car transport and encourage the use of alternatives to the private car.

To compliment the proposals of the Public Realm and Movement Plan for Walking and Cycling, Public Transport, Parking and Roads, the following Strategy Plan identifies key mobility initiatives for the town as:

- Limerick Greenway
- Great Southern Greenway Town Loop
- River Arra Enhancements
- Public Realm Enhancements



Figure 9.1 - Movement and Public Realm Strategy Plan

9.3.1 Limerick Greenway

- Entry improvements: signage, feature lighting and raised pedestrian crossing.

9.3.2 Great Southern Greenway Town Loop

- Open space improvements (South of Great Southern Greenway entry): lighting, signature tree planting, scrub clearance.
- Bishop Court Trailhead improvements: signage, lighting, feature paving, potential access to Desmond Complex.
- Bishop Court open space improvements: off-street foot/cycleway, signature tree planting, property boundary planting.
- Bishop Street improvements: replacement street lights, potential to remove linear parking to gain off-street foot/cycleway, pedestrian crossing at Cork Road junction.
- Pedestrian access to Desmond Complex: improved signage.
- Cork Road / Sheahan's Road improvements: continuous foot/cycleway along west side, up-grade of former Deel Wholesale frontage, street trees where space permits (north end), up-graded street lights.
- Demesne Playground improvements: up-graded recreation facilities, signature tree planting, refurbished shrub planting, footway links and signage, potential Demesne walk.
- Churchtown Road improvements: wider footways where space permits, footway build-outs with trees to define on-street parking, up-graded street lights.
- Station Road improvements: continuous foot/cycleway to north side, pedestrian crossing at junction with Churchtown Road, signature tree planting, lighting, signage.

9.3.3 River Arra Enhancements

- Vegetation management for bio-diversity.
- Up-grade street furniture.
- Sympathetic lighting.
- Enhanced connection between river and the Demesne/Desmond Hall.
- Up-graded footways and site furniture.
- Interpretation materials.
- Boardwalk concept by Vision 2023.

9.3.4 Public Realm Enhancements

- The Square improvements: creation of extended public space, rationalisation of general parking, relocation of disabled parking and loading, provision for commercial and residential access, potential covered structure (lightweight), high quality surfaces, street furniture, lighting, signage and feature trees.
- Nash's Yard improvements: pedestrianisation of laneway, high quality surface, lighting and signage.
- Brewery Lane, opening-up and improvement: quality surfacing, signage, lighting.
- Maiden Street: potential pedestrianisation.
- Market Place improvements: more clearly defined pedestrian areas, some rationalisation of parking, provision for local services bus stop.
- N21 South Quay improvements: footway widening where space permits (e.g. with selective removal of on-street parking), footway build-outs at pedestrian crossings and to define on-street parking, footway re-surfacing in high quality materials, consistent feature street lighting, up-graded street furniture.
- Sheahan's Road junction improvements.

The key public realm enhancement proposals are described in further detail as follows.

9.4 The Square

9.4.1 Existing

The Square is the spatial, historical, and business centre of Newcastle West, with Desmond Hall, River Arra and most businesses in Newcastle West located in close proximity. Other important facilities such as the Library, the Demesne Arra riverside, Desmond Complex and most local educational institutes are located within a 500m radius.

However, the Square currently lacks the infrastructure and visual character required of a major civic space. Whereas historically it would have been the venue for markets and festivities, vehicles now dominate. A large proportion of the space is assigned to roads and parking, essentially leaving a small island for pedestrians to experience the town centre and the setting of Desmond

Hall. The area also lacks a coherent visual theme in terms of street furniture with multiple types of bollards, bins and visually inconsistent cycle racks. There is a lack of seating, with only one stone bench located near Desmond Hall, and limited planting to help soften the townscape, apart from an avenue of trees visually orientated towards Desmond Hall. The surface materials for pedestrian spaces is generally of reasonable condition, although not very high visual quality.



The Square as Existing



Car Parking and Signage Cluttering Views of Desmond Hall

9.4.2 Strategic Proposals

The overall aim for the Square is to create a welcoming space that caters for a wide range of civic uses and enhances the setting of Desmond Hall. The upgraded Square will also compliment the longer-term proposals for reinventing Fullers Folly, which is conceived as a new focal point for Newcastle West accommodating a range of activity and acting as a gateway to the town centre, Desmond Hall and the wider West Limerick Region.

The underlying principles are to reinforce the pedestrian character of the space so as to encourage its greater use by the community and visitors to the town for the benefit of local businesses and the long-term viability and attractiveness of the town centre.

The proposals also aim to improve pedestrian linkages to existing and future parking areas so that the pedestrian character of the space can be optimised through the rationalisation of current parking arrangements. Nash's Yard provides a direct and convenient pedestrian link (5-minute walking distance) to the existing car parks and amenity facilities of The Demesne.



KEY					
	Raised pedestrian crossing		Existing tree retained		Chairs
	Granite setts		New feature tree		Feature street light
	Paving Type 1 Granite slabs, silver grey		Existing sculpture retained		Bollard
	Paving Type 2 Granite slabs, mixed grey		Lightweight canopy structure		
	Paving Type 3 Granite bands, mid-grey		Market stall (10'x4') Indicative locations		
	Parking bays		Planter Rain garden or raised shrubs		
	Disabled parking		Seat Integral with raised planters		
	Loading/Set Down				

9.4.3 Key Features of the Strategy Proposals

- Minor changes to roadway on eastern side of the Square – existing parking and loading bays retained.
- Raised and wider pedestrian crossings connecting eastern side to the Square, and with Loading/Set Down bay and 2no. disabled parking spaces.
- Two-way vehicle access to western side of the Square, on shared surface of high-quality materials.
- Rationalised parking to western side, with provision for 16no. perpendicular spaces (including 1no. disabled space).
- Vehicle access to existing residential and commercial properties on the south-west corner of the Square retained.
- High-quality surface materials (granite) throughout the Square, with defined spaces for 12no. market stalls.
- Footpath improvements to eastern edge of Square and linking to Nash's Yard.
- Existing trees and sculptures retained.
- Raised planters and/or grass areas and rain gardens with integral seating.
- Provision of lightweight canopy structure for events and weather protection.
- New feature lighting, street furniture, signage and trees.



AS EXISTING



Aerial View of Strategy Proposals

9.5 Main Components (Mood Boards)

For each option a consistent palette of high-quality materials has been selected in order to reinforce the character of the Square.



Surface Materials and Planting



Lighting and Street Furniture

9.6 Nash's Yard

This important laneway provides a strategic connection between the Square and the Demesne. Additionally it is a convenient pedestrian route to and from Aldi and associated car parks. Although signed as one way, with vehicle access towards the Square, cars have also been observed using the lane in the opposite direction.



Nash's Yard Existing

The large surface site near Aldi has been identified in the PRMP as one of the potential locations for parking proposed to be relocated from the Square, reinforcing Nash's Yard as a primary pedestrian route in the town centre. The laneway needs to become pedestrian only to ensure the safety of users and to encourage ease of movement between the visitor attractions of Demond Hall and the Demesne. Re-surfacing in appropriate high-quality materials and improved signage and lighting is also necessary to ensure that the full potential of the route is realised.

9.7 Maiden Street

9.7.1 Existing

Maiden Street is a narrow, one-way thoroughfare defined by traditional 2 and 3-storey buildings providing ground floor commercial space and some upper floor residential accommodation. It is an attractive street with many independent shops and pubs, but currently dominated by heavy volumes of traffic accessing the eastern side of the town. Pavements are narrow, with limited pedestrian crossing facilities, and there are several vacant and under-utilised units along its length. and footpaths are also narrow on both sides, making for an uncomfortable pedestrian experience. The junction of Maiden Street and Bridge Street is a busy pedestrian crossing point.



Maiden Street as Existing

9.7.2 Proposed

A shared surface treatment is proposed, with no raised kerbs, in order to reinforce the presence of pedestrians and as a traffic calming device. The character of the street would be enhanced through high-quality surface finishes and street furniture. A related shopfront improvement scheme would also enhance the attractiveness of the street for visitors and locals, thereby encouraging increased footfall and vibrancy for the benefit of traders. The opening-up and enhancement of Brewery Lane would further increase the vitality of Maiden Street by providing a direct pedestrian link to Market Place and associated parking areas.



Typical Narrow Shared Surface Street (Ennis Town Centre)



Maiden Street Proposals

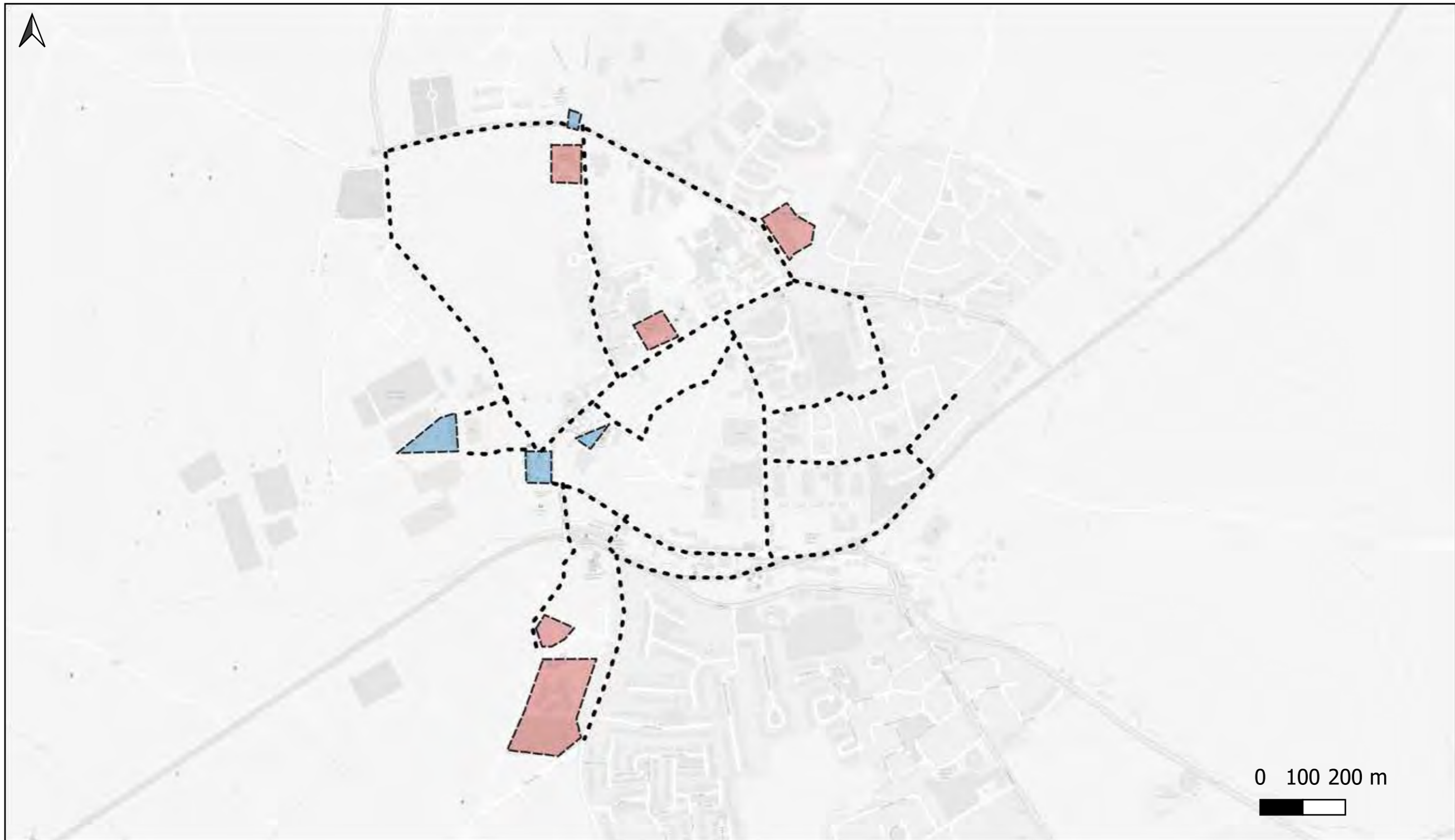
Chapter 10

SUPPORTING MEASURES

In order to achieve the full benefits of the Public Realm and Movement Plan, a wide range of measures are required. The previous chapters have outlined the infrastructure and design proposals that have been identified. This chapter will present measures that will support and enhance the infrastructure for all users.

8.1 Wayfinding for Pedestrians and Cyclists

Wayfinding, or legibility, relates to how people can find their way around an area. For pedestrians and cyclists this is of particular importance as they are more likely to move through an area if the route is clear and legible. Journeys through the network should be relatively straight forward and easy to understand.



Legend

- - - Links Schools Focal point



Figure 10.1 - Wayfinding

The network should be structured to draw people towards focal points, such as civic buildings and spaces. Figure below/above demonstrates movement through Newcastle West is connected with focal points. DMURS recommends that the streets around the focal points are designed on an individual basis, to reflect their importance as focal points. These locations, for example the Square and the Demense, have been previously highlighted in the Public Realm and Movement Plan and figure below/above demonstrates how they are bought together in a legible network. The changes in materials and finishes in the streets around these areas will contribute to forming a clear route through the town for pedestrians and cyclists.

A wayfinding signage scheme is proposed as part of the Public Realm and Movement Plan. Signs indicating the direction of travel towards a focal point, distance and the length of time it takes to cycle or walk contribute to making a journey more straightforward and accessible to pedestrians and cyclists. Wayfinding signage is recommended to be implemented in tandem with the development of the Newcastle West tourism plan to ensure that the signage meets the needs of residents and tourists alike. This will assist in reducing street clutter.

10.2 Encouraging a Cycle and Walking Friendly Town

As discussed in Chapter 4 Walking and Cycling, there are opportunities for encouraging greater levels of walking and cycling in Newcastle West due to its compact size. The options proposed with regards to cycle infrastructure are limited due to the competing demands on the road space. There are many ways in which a culture of cycling can be promoted, which are outlined below. These can also apply to walking and may benefit from being combined.

10.2.1 Walking and Cycling Officer

A walking and cycling officer is regularly promoted as part of transport strategies to ensure that walking and cycling are considered as modes of transport in planning for towns and cities. In the event of a Walking and Cycling Officer being appointed as part of Limerick City and County Council, it is recommended that their remit include larger towns, including Newcastle West.

In order to provide a scalable proposal for Newcastle West, walking and cycling are recommended to be considered as part of ongoing maintenance and infrastructure works in the district.

10.2.2 Walking and Cycling Network Map

As part of the Public Realm and Movement Plan, a walking and cycling network has been reviewed and developed (refer to Chapter 4 Walking and Cycling). All interventions are recommended to be viewed as developing the walking and cycle network, with individual design measures contributing to this. A walking and cycling network map is recommended to be produced, to be available online and in hard copy. This will enable potential cyclists and walkers to identify routes in Newcastle West that they may not be aware of, especially if they are not open to vehicles. For example, Castlevue has a pedestrian and cycle link that connects Gortboy and Sheehan’s Road without the need to use the N21. While local residents may be aware of this, a map highlighting these elements will increase awareness around the alternative or “quiet” routes available to pedestrians and cyclists.

The Walking and Cycling Network Map, alongside the Public Realm and Movement Plan, will also ensure that walking and cycle infrastructure projects are coordinated with the overall network.



10.2.3 Provide Cycle Training

There are a variety of cycle training programmes available in Ireland. Cycle Right is the National Standard for Cycle Training, which provides participants with the skills to cycle on the road or cycle paths. Cycle training can increase cyclist's confidence and ability to incorporate cycling into their transport choices. Cycle training is recommended to be provided to school children, as well other interested groups, such as work place settings or community groups.

Cycle Right is produced and supported by the Department of Transport (DoT), the Road Safety Authority and Cycling Ireland. The DoT part funds the programme.

CYCLE RIGHT

TEN GOLDEN RULES FOR SAFER CYCLING

WHEN GETTING ON YOUR BIKE, ALWAYS REMEMBER TO CHECK YOUR EQUIPMENT IS WORKING PROPERLY BEFORE EACH JOURNEY

- 1**
Wear bright clothes so that you can be easily seen
- 2**
Always wear a cycling helmet
- 3**
Know your 'Rules of the Road'
- 4**
Don't play games or trick cycling on the road
- 5**
Look ahead for uneven road surfaces and either avoid them, or ride over them carefully
- 6**
Look at what other road users are doing and be ready to take action
- 7**
Always ride at a speed which allows you to slow down or stop in time to avoid a hazard
- 8**
Look and signal before manoeuvring to avoid a hazard
- 9**
If you aren't comfortable with conditions or the road, check, pull into the left, stop and get off

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE OF ALL:

10
KEEP ALERT to avoid hazards at all times

www.cycleright.ie

10.3 School Travel

As discussed throughout this report, school travel plays a large role in the traffic movements of Newcastle West.

10.3.1 Encouraging active travel to and from school

Active travel to and from school may take the form of walking, cycling or using a scooter to school. The benefits are many and varied, from the health and wellbeing of the child, to improvements for air quality and the environment. Green Schools Ireland has a Travel theme, which looks at ways that schools can encourage students to partake in active travel. These potentially could include:

- A walking or cycling bus to school;
- Green Schools committee promoting active travel;
- Road Safety lessons / workshops in school;
- Walkability / Cyclability audits with the students so that they are aware of routes to school;
- Park 'n' Stride and Drop 'n' Hop days (see below);
- Discussions with students, parents and LCCC on safe parking.

10.3.2 Park 'n' Stride and Drop 'n' Hop

Options for Park 'n' Stride (primary school children) and Drop 'n' Hop (secondary school children) have been reviewed. Scoil Mhuire agus Íde has significant congestion issues at school drop off and collection time. Drop 'n' Hop operates with parents dropping children within walking distance of the school. Other schemes have operated by providing free parking in car parks for up to 1 hour to allow for drop off. However, as controlled on-street parking in Newcastle West is free for the first hour, this is already an option for parents. The church car park on the corner of the N21 and Bother Buí is used informally as a drop off and collect location at Scoil Mhuire agus Íde, while all schools are within walking distance of Newcastle West town centre and its associated parking.

Park 'n' Stride and Drop 'n' Hop days can be organised by the individual schools to give parents and children an opportunity to try it, with a view to encouraging it on a more regular basis.

Chapter 11

IMPLEMENTATION

The delivery of the Newcastle West Public Realm and Movement Plan will be phased and subject to available funding. A Local Transport Plan is a key infrastructure recommendation for Newcastle West in the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Southern Region. By having this Plan in place, it will provide LCCC and Newcastle West community groups a framework from which to develop individual transport projects. The Plan demonstrates how these individual transport projects build to promote the overall strategy in Newcastle West.

The projects recommended in the Newcastle West Public Realm and Movement Plan have been summarised below.

Walking
Nash's Square
The Square and the Demense
Market Place and Bishop Street Junction
Brewery Lane
Maiden Street and Bridge Street Junction
Maiden Street
Bishop Street
Sheehan's Road and Bishop Street Junction
Sheehan's Road and Assumpta Place Junction
Station Road - South Side Footpath
Station Road / R521 and Churchtown Road
Connecting Residential Areas with Limerick Greenway
Pedestrian Links between Residential Areas
N21 Pedestrian Improvements

Cycling
Gortboy
Station Road
Sheehan's Road
Limerick Greenway Entrance

Public Transport
Accessible Bus Stops on N21
Linking Public Transport with Other Modes
Local Link Bus Stop in Market Yard

Parking
Off-Street Parking in Nash's Yard
Off-Street Parking in Limerick Greenway Entrance on Station
Off Street Parking in Community Centre

Roads
Gortboy and N21
Sheehan's Road and N21 - Traffic Lights
Bridge Street and N21 - Traffic Lights
Scoil Mhuire agus Íde - Set Down Area
R521 / Churchtown Road / Station Road - Improved Junction Design

Supplementary Measures
Walking and Cycle Signage and Network Map
Cycle Training
Active Travel to Schools