



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**  
**Limerick** City  
& County Council

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Forward Planning,  
Economic Development and Enterprise Directorate,  
Limerick City and County Council

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A Chara,

On behalf of the +CityxChange (+CxC) Horizon 2020 project I wish to make the following submission to the Draft Limerick Development Plan 2022-2028.

+CxC aims at enabling the co-creation of the future we want to live in by developing a framework and supporting tools to enable a common energy market supported by a connected community. This is to be achieved by:

- Developing integrated local distributed renewable energy sources and storage.
- Connecting buildings to create local energy communities through the deployment of smart meters and other new technologies.
- Encourage open innovation and digital platforms to support communities to make this transition.

In doing this we hope to see the development of new products and services at a local level that can support a pipeline of investments to enable the development of a new energy market. A fundamental principle of the +CxC project is that citizens are actively encouraged, enabled and empowered to participate in the process and to take ownership of the solutions developed. This citizen centred approach is underpinned by the development of a Bold City Vision Framework that is focused on the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The project and all its partners wish to commend the Council on the preparation of the plan and for its engagement with the project in the course of its preparation. The plan provides policy support for the aims and objectives of the project in particular the development of positive energy districts, building retrofitting and renewables. This support will enable the project achieve its goals over the coming years. Furthermore, the alignment of all the policies in the plan to the UN SDGs is a very positive initiative and places the objectives of the plan within a European and global context.

## **1. Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The plan does not contain a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework. In the absence of such a framework it will not be possible to effectively monitor and evaluate the progress being made on achieving the broader goals set in the plan. The +CxC project would propose that an objective be included in the plan that would enable such a framework to be developed. The framework should address a range of indicators that evaluates the progress being made towards being a sustainable society as well as key environmental and economic indicators. The U4SSC framework developed in partnership with the Un has developed a range of KPI's to measure progress toward meeting the objectives of the UN SDGs. An alternative is the SDG Voluntary Local Review (VLR) process that has been developed by the EU.

## **2. Sustainable Communities and Infrastructure**

The inclusion of a chapter on sustainable communities and infrastructure represents the commitment of the Council to the achievement of this global goal that was identified at issues stage of the plan process and has been incorporated into the vision statement in chapter 1. The chapter addresses the range of community infrastructure required to support communities. Many of these items were raised at the issues stages of the plan and includes recreational facilities and amenities cultural facilities, facilities for the elderly, allotments, public rights of way, burial grounds, health care, childcare and educational facilities. However, we would propose that the concept of community assets be addressed these include for example car clubs which are mentioned in earlier sections as well community energy assets such as small scale river turbines and solar arrays etc.

The chapter recognises Citizen Engagement as a key driver of successful communities. The Social Framework Strategy (Ch 11) contains Objectives which aim to support civic engagement (SF01a & f) and deliver "an economic engagement platform" and platforms for "increased levels of private sector engagement in enterprise, training, work experience and employment development" (EF01b & k). These aspirations are laudable, but they need to be connected to clear target if they are to be meaningful. The +CxC project is helping to develop the capacity within LCCC that is capable of harnessing the infrastructure, frameworks, and experience of this project's engagement activity and make Limerick City & County Council a leader in engagement for sustainable communities. Given the scale of change needed to become a carbon-neutral economy and society by 2050, an engagement platform enabling continuing engagement is necessary to empower people in Limerick to make the changes that are needed in a way that can realise local benefit and ensure no one gets left behind. It is proposed that the draft plan be amended to include a commitment to develop a plan for active and continuous citizen engagement throughout the lifetime of the plan as part of the monitoring and evaluation process.

The +CxC project is developing frameworks and tools that can enable this to happen. The CommunityxChange frameworks developed in +CityxChange describe a mechanism to enable the co-creation of the future we want to live in. The frameworks have been designed to put in place a platform for innovation, which places people at its core. The integrated concepts can initiate positive cycles of collaboration, where obstacles and opportunities experienced by people and communities can be acted on in a meaningful way.

These frameworks will be implemented and refined in the innovation lab located at UL's city centre campus. The innovation lab will comprise programme of activities and events, and a network of virtual and physical locations connected to a citizen observatory system where people can make observations on local environments using mobile digital devices. The Innovation Lab will enable new collaborations between government, academia, business, and civil society to meet the innovation agenda of Limerick in particular in respect of climate change and the just transition. It puts the citizen at the centre of a process where their creativity and knowledge of their place can be channelled to bring about change.

Some of the frameworks developed as part of the project which can support the development of a continuous programme of active citizen engagement include:

- **The Citizen Participation Playbook** supports local authorities in transforming citizen participation into local impact, which increases community engagement and builds citizen trust. It contains best practice guidance for citizen engagement; a catalogue of physical and online engagement tools; and four participatory processes for co-design in the clean energy transition including: Co-design of Urban Interventions, Collaborative Legislation, Participatory Budgeting, and Citizen Proposals.
- **The Framework for Innovation Playgrounds** describes a spatial and socio-economic framework where physical and virtual places and innovation activities are assembled into a coherent whole, where Innovation Playground journeys enable collaboration and empower citizens to innovate to address challenges that matter to them.
- **The Framework for a Positive Energy Champion Network** describes a campaign to initiate a network of people who can help translate the ideas, plans and innovations associated with the clean energy transition into local knowledge and actions. The Champions are co innovators who explore, ideate, design and diffuse the changes in behaviour needed to bring about change. This campaign is currently underway in Limerick.
- **The Framework for DPEB Learning and Education** includes a set of principles and a dynamic portfolio of activities, which integrates youth learning programmes at different age levels with active ageing society programmes.

### 3. Land Zoning

A key component of the +CxC project is the development of community sized renewable energy resources / assets. Examples of these resources include a tidal turbine and small scale solar PV developments that would be owned and operated by communities to support their transition to a carbon neutral future. The project has identified two sites which have the potential to accommodate renewable energy generation. We would request that consideration be given to amending the zoning objective for both these sites to enable renewable energy generation:

- 1) **Longpavement Landfill site.** The Landfill site is presently zoned as “Semi Natural Open Space”. We are asking that the area of the landfill cells, a narrow margin around the cells, and the compound including the landfill gas and leachate management infrastructure be changed to “Utilities”, as per the area highlighted in the attached image. The change of this area to Utilities would reflect the actual purpose of the landfill and facilitate possible solar PV generation on top of the cells.



Site location plan Long Pavement

- 2) **M7/M20 motorway junction**, known locally as “Barry’s field”. This site is presently zoned as “Open Space and Recreation” and we are asking that the zoning be changed to *Agriculture*.



Site Location Barry's Field

Should you wish to discuss any of the issues raised in the submission please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Senior Architect | Head of Urban Innovation  
Limerick City and County Council