



Comhairle Cathrach  
& Contae **Luimnigh**

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**Limerick** City  
& County Council

## **Part 8 Planning Application**

**The Development of an Existing Industrial Site as a  
Fire Service Training Centre at  
Kilmallock Business Park, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick**

**- PHASE 1 -**

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# 1 Proposal

Limerick City & County Council are applying for Planning Permission, in accordance with Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) for the conversion of the existing industrial site at Kilmallock Business Park, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick for use as a Fire Service Training Centre.

The proposed development will be constructed in two Phases.

**This Part 8 Planning Application relates only to Phase 1 of the development** and will include the following works;

## **Phase 1**

- a) The change of use of former gymnasium to a Fire Service Training Centre lecture building and Administrative Support Building.
- b) Public and student/staff car parking
- c) Drill yard with two drill towers
- d) Compartment Fire Behaviour Training complex
- e) Site Fencing
- f) Signage
- g) All associated site works

Subject to funding Limerick Fire & Rescue Service will make a future Part 8 Planning Application for Phase 2 of the development of the Training Centre. The works envisaged to be included in this Phase are

## **Phase 2**

- a) The construction of a two storey educational building incorporating lecture rooms; canteen; male and female changing and showering facilities, Breathing Apparatus Training briefing areas, appliance bays for 4 vehicles and workshop
- b) Breathing Apparatus Training Building
- c) Storage buildings
- d) Site Fencing
- e) All associated site works

# 2 Background

There is currently no dedicated training facility for Limerick Fire and Rescue Services in Limerick. Previously, up to 2015, Limerick Fire and Rescue Service had permission to use a site in Foynes, Co. Limerick; however, this site is no longer available. As a result, Limerick Fire and Rescue Service is required to send all 150 fire personnel to training centres in other fire authority's areas (e.g. Sligo, Dublin and Carlow). This involves substantial additional expense for a number of essential

training courses (e.g. Breathing Apparatus, Compartment Fire Behaviour Training, etc.). Furthermore, training fire fighters in other fire authority's training centres has a negative impact on the numbers of fire fighters available for duty in the six retained fire stations in Limerick, as fire fighters may be required to stay overnight in the vicinity of the training centre for training courses. It should also be noted that, given the shortage of training centres available nationally, existing training centres are normally booked up at least 12 months in advance and may not be available for training Limerick Fire and Rescue Service fire personnel at the optimum periods from an operational, health and safety and scheduling point of view.

In recent years, a number of fire service training facilities have been taken out of service. Where training facilities are in place, their scope may be limited or they may only cater for a limited range of fire service training courses (e.g. Clonmel training centre can provide Breathing Apparatus training but cannot provide Compartment Fire Behaviour Training). Some training centres (e.g. Ballinrobe and Hackettstown) are in very rural areas and have very limited accommodation and services.

Given the above, Limerick Fire and Rescue Service has been actively looking for sites to develop a training centre in Limerick with a view to removing reliance on external training centres, as far as practicable, and to deliver the Limerick Fire and Rescue Service training programme in the most efficient and effective manner.

### **3 Assessment Criteria**

The following assessment criteria would apply to any new Fire service Training Centre site in Limerick:

The proposed training centre will be sited in County Limerick in an area with the minimum number of residential buildings in the immediate vicinity and with the prevailing wind direction away from residential areas as much as possible.

Site to be centrally located with easy access to the proposed training centre from around the country including the road network

Proposed training centre site should be supplied by services e.g. electricity, fibre broadband, mains water and sewerage treatment.

Adequate residential accommodation and services including meals, sandwiches, etc. should be available for students in the immediate vicinity.

A minimum site area of two acres is required for the provision of the full range of fire service training courses and for training courses to run concurrently

## 4 Investigation of Properties

A number of properties were inspected and considered over the last 24 months across Limerick including Drombanna, Rathkeale, Ballysimon, Foynes and Dock Road.

As well as these sites, desktop searches were carried out on Council owned property with the assistance of the Property Services Department of Limerick City and County Council. Health Service Executive and OPW owned sites were also investigated.

These properties did not meet the assessment criteria outlined above or were considered unsuitable or cost prohibitive.

In the investigation of properties carried out by Limerick Fire and Rescue Service, it was determined that Kilmallock Business Park, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick was an ideal property, which satisfied all the assessment criteria, outlined above for a Fire Service Training Centre site. This site would be operated by Limerick Fire and Rescue and is described in more detail below.

## 5 Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2025

### 5.1 Objectives of Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2025

#### **Objective E1: Enterprise and employment**

*It is the policy of the Council to:*

- a) Ensure enterprise development is located on appropriately zoned lands.*
- b) Ensure enterprise proposals do not have adverse effects on transport movement, amenity of adjacent lands, natural and built heritage.*
- c) Demonstrate a high standard of design including signage, entrance and boundary treatment, and quality layout with consideration to smarter travel options for employees, and suitable green energy solutions.*
- d) Reserve sufficient lands on site boundaries to accommodate landscaping using native hedgerow and tree species, to reduce visual impact and as a mitigation measure towards biodiversity loss.*
- e) Ensure that proposals for development on land zoned Enterprise and Employment incorporate active and passive recreational opportunities for employees.*
- f) Encourage new enterprise development to provide the necessary infrastructure for alternative fuelled vehicles including on-site electronic vehicle charging infrastructure for employees. Details will be submitted at design stage when seeking planning permission from the Planning Authority.*
- g) The Council would envisage that future development of enterprise and employment zoned land particularly on Railway Road would serve as a 'landmark', reflecting arrival in the town and would contribute to a 'sense of place' and enforcing a positive image of the town.*

We have endeavoured to meet the criteria as set out in Objective E1. We have engaged with the local businesses to discuss the impact of the use the training centre will bring to this site, have sought to find out the concerns of the neighbouring landowners and the Kilmallock partnership, and have acted to address any of these concerns.

The needs of the training centre will be met within the existing confines of the site. The existing building will be utilised with no major modifications required. The additional structures required by a fire service training centre are a lecture and sanitary facilities building, Breathing Apparatus (BA) Training building, two drill towers and ancillary works. These have been included in the design.

The training centre once built will add to the local area. The centre will be managed and well maintained. AED defibrillators will be available during business hours with trained personnel available if required.

## 5.2 Flood Risk

The site is located adjacent the River Loobagh. The flood maps for the River Loobagh indicate that the developments as part of the Training Centre do not fall within the areas fluvial flooding will occur. The maps detailing fluvial flooding with a high probability of occurrence, Annual Exceedance Probability of 10%, were assessed to ensure the development would not negatively affect the risk of flooding in the area.

## 6 Site Description and Utilisation



*Figure 1 Phased Development*

The site is located just off the R518 Kilmallock to Bruree Road, adjacent to the town of Kilmallock and is very centrally located with easy access to the road network.



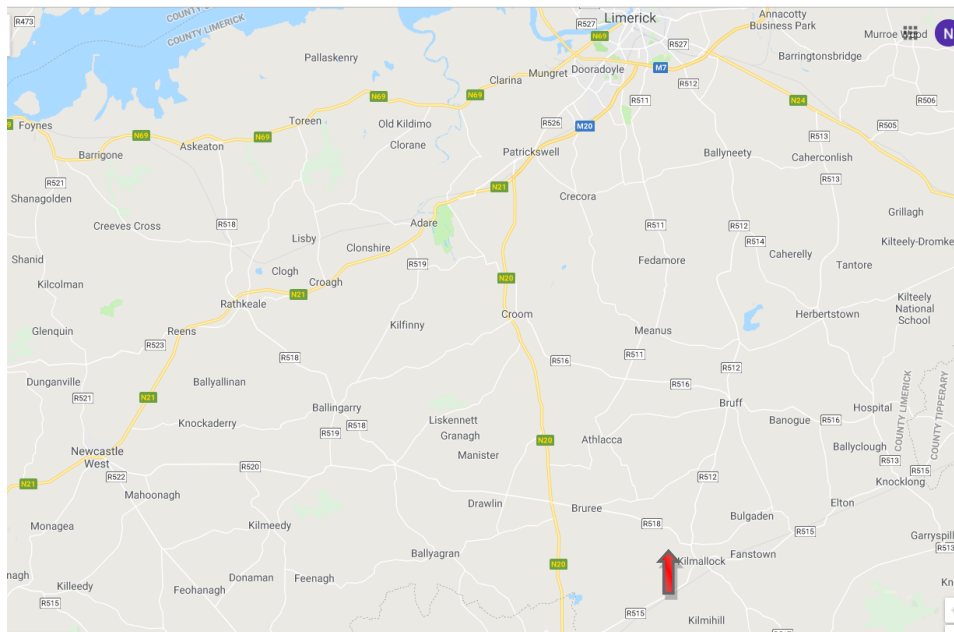


Figure 2 Location in Limerick



Prevailing Wind Direction (SW)



The site is circa 8.5 acres in size. It is an existing fully serviced undeveloped industrial site with an existing industrial unit included. This unit is a former temporary fire station building and more recently used as a gymnasium, which will be renovated internally to create a lecture and administrative building.



*Figure 3 Training Building Aerial View*

The site and the building is serviced by electricity, CCTV, mains water and storm water and foul water treatment.



*Figure 4 Training Building*



*Figure 5 Dill Yard Site*

## **7 Consultation**

Consultation has taken place between Limerick Fire and Rescue Service and a number of departments of Limerick City and County Council.

### **7.1 Economic Planning & Development**

Limerick Fire and Rescue Service has been advised by the planning department that there would not be a requirement for planning permission for the use of this site as a training centre as it is currently zoned as commercial premises and will remain so. Any infrastructural work, which exceeds €126,000, or a change of use of the residential house would require a Part 8 application be made. Consultation with the neighbouring businesses and the Kilmallock Partnership took place in advance of lodging a planning application

### **7.2 Environmental Services**

The Senior Executive Engineer from Environmental Services made no objection to the use of the site subject to adherence with current best practice in obtaining permits for burning, operating within normal business hours to reduce noise issues, and the treatment of fire water runoff. All of these requirements will be met as part of any operation on site.

### **7.3 Property Services**

Property Services were consulted regarding any Council owned properties, which would meet the requirements of a fire service training centre. An investigation was carried out by Property Services. This investigation revealed that there were no suitable sites within the Council, the HSE or the OPW property portfolios.

## 7.4 Interested Parties

Fire Officers from Limerick Fire & Rescue Services met with interested parties in Kilmallock to discuss the proposed works in the development of the site and the management and operation of the day-to-day operations of the fire service training centre. Two meetings took place with the other businesses within the Business Park and with the Kilmallock Partnership, a collection of business owners in the Kilmallock area. The feedback from both meetings were positive and consultation will continue with these groups going forward.

# 8 Training Courses

## 8.1 Initial Training to Refresher Training

The vision for this training centre is to be able to deliver training courses for all fire fighters from their initial training course where they will learn the basic firemanship skills all the way through the specialist training and on-going refresher training in the most realistic means possible. Some of the training course planned to be delivered at this centre include the following.

## 8.2 Initial Fire Fighter Recruits Course

Initial Recruit Training is a 3 week course where the recruits are given the knowledge and develop skills that are required to enable recruit firefighters to safely work within the confines of a fire station and, under strict supervision, attend operational incidents. At the end of the course learners will be able to:

- pitch and climb ladders
- operate portable firefighting equipment, fire hydrants, hose and branches
- use a wide range of fire service pumps
- work around heights and near water in a safe manner
- work at road traffic collisions to stabilize vehicles and extricate casualties

This course would be run within the proposed training yard and using the drill towers.

## 8.3 Compartment Fire Behaviour Training

Compartment Fire Behaviour Training is a 1-week course that demonstrates to firefighters how fires can act in given circumstances. Fire fighters will learn how events such as flashover and back draught can occur and how to safely deal with these events. The training is delivered in custom modified steel containers. The design of the containers will permit the demonstration of other key aspects of fire behavior control such as ventilation, casualty rescue, etc.

## 8.4 Initial Breathing Apparatus Wearers Course (Phase 2 of development)

The Initial Breathing Apparatus Wearers Course is also a 3-week course. This course trains fire fighters how to work in dangerous conditions with zero visibility to methodically search buildings for fires, extinguish them, locate casualties and rescue them from the building. Fire fighters learn how to recognise flashover and backdraught conditions so they can safely assess the conditions within a burning building. At the end of the course, learners will be able to:

- Work in dark and oxygen deficient atmospheres;
- Wear self-contained breathing apparatus and appropriately maintain the BA sets
- Operate and comply with specific control procedures;
- Safely navigate within the risk area;
- Search the risk area and rescue casualties;

## 8.5 Other Training Courses

- Working at Heights
- Emergency Medical Training
- Pump Operator Courses
- Hazardous Materials Course (no hazardous materials are used as part of this training)
- Incident Command Courses
- Road Traffic Collision and Road Scene Safety Courses

## 9 Management of the Training Site

The site will be managed by Limerick Fire & Rescue Service personnel.

Whilst courses are being delivered there will be a course director monitoring the overall operations of the training course.

### 9.1 Hours of Operation

Training courses will run typically from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

### 9.2 Traffic

Students will car share and arrive prior to the commencement of courses and will leave again in the evening in a similar fashion to businesses previously utilizing the site. There is no great demand for traffic outside of these hours

### 9.3 Noise

We will not use sirens other than for testing and short bursts to add realism to a training exercise.

No activities will take place outside of normal business hours.



## 9.4 Fire & Smoke

There will be a need to light fires to demonstrate to the fire fighters the effects of heat and smoke during an incident. Courses involving the lighting of fires are not expected to exceed 80 days of the year. When burning is required the period of time for burning will be low and the production of smoke is minimized by the types of materials used and the training methods developed to reduce the amount of smoke .

The prevailing wind on site is south-westerly taking smoke away from neighbouring houses and businesses.

## 9.5 Water

It is part of our training to use minimal amounts of water to extinguish fires, as this will generate unnecessary amounts of steam. Surface water from training exercise will drain into the existing surface water network on the site.

## 9.6 Site Security

The area of the site being developed as part of Phase 1 will be enclosed in 2.4m high metal mesh boundary fencing and will be secured to ensure no access from the public will be permitted. Areas subject to development under Phase 2 will also be secured to ensure the safety of the public.

# 10 Mobility Management Plan

This site is a sub-threshold development, where the number of employees and students would be well below the limits of a Mobility Management Plan as outlined by the National Transport Authority publication 'Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans Guidance for Local Authorities'.

For any single course being run on site, the number of people using the facility should typically not exceed 25 including students, instructors and staff.

## 10.1 Car Sharing

It is agreed practice within Fire Services nationally to require fire fighters from the same station and/or county travelling to a training course to car share. This practice will continue for courses ran at this centre.

## 10.2 Car Parking

Within Phase 1 of the development car parking is provided in two areas on the site. An area adjacent the training building for staff and students. 26 spaces, including two disabled parking spaces will be provided at this location. Additional overflow parking will be provided within the training yard if required. Parking space dimensions and line marking will be in accordance with Chapter 7 of the Traffic Signs Manual 2019.

With the development of Phase 2 and the construction of a larger two-storey training building dedicated parking will be provided for this building, which will result in the reduction of spaces required for training building of Phase 1.

### **10.3 Cycling**

Secure cycle parking will be provided for up to seven bicycles.

### **10.4 Welfare Facilities**

Showering and changing facilities will be available on site for any person who intends to cycle, run or walk to the training centre. Locker facilities will also be available for students/instructors who wish to leave their firefighting PPE and clothing overnight for the duration of a course, reducing their reliance on a car to move equipment. This will free them up to avail of a more sustainable mode of transport.

## **11 Appropriate Assessment Screening**

Keannelly Wildlife and Ecological Services compiled an appropriate Assessment Screening Report in the June 2020. The report concluded that the development of this site would have no impact on the Natura 2000 sites within Limerick.

A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is not required.

## **12 Landscaping**

A detailed landscaping plan will be developed, as part of Phase 2 of this development to take full account of any planting and screening that may be required or proposed for the entire site. The landscaping plan will be submitted as part of the Part 8 planning application for Phase 2.

We wish to note that the Kilmallock Local Area Plan 2019-2025, has designated the hedgerow to the north of the site as 'Protected Trees and Hedgerows'. This hedgerow will not be impacted on as part of the development. As part of Phase 2 of the development, Boundary fencing will be erected adjacent the hedgerow to assure no activities on the site will be exposed to the hedgerow.

## **13 Surface Water Drainage**

The proposed new connections will be made to existing surface water networks on site. The surface water network is in the ownership of Limerick City & County Council. See DWG 011 for details.

Any proposed water services and connections to the existing water services are to be constructed in accordance with:

- Irish Water Document IW-CDS-5020-01 – Water Infrastructure Standard Details – Connection and Developer Services – Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments.
- Irish Water Document IW-CDS-5020-03 – Code of Practice for Water Infrastructure – Connection and Developer Services – Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments.
- Irish Water Document IW-CDS-5030-01 – Wastewater Infrastructure Standard Details – Connection and Developer Services – Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments.
- Irish Water Document IW-CDS-5030-03 – Code of Practice for Wastewater Infrastructure – Connection and Developer Services – Construction Requirements for Self-Lay Developments

## **14 Wastewater Treatment**

Within Phase 1 of the development, no new foul water connection will be made to the existing network within the Business Park. The fit-out of the training building will not generate a significant change to the current demand on the foul network.

The sewage plant has been upgraded and can now cater for current and future loadings from the town, eliminating downstream pollution effects that existed previously.