

Southern Environs



**Local Area Plan
2011 – 2017**

June 2011

Extended until May 2021



Forward Planning

Pleanáil chun tosaigh

In accordance with the provisions of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 – 2010, Section 20 (4A) this Local Area Plan came into effect on the 20th June 2011, four weeks from the date of its adoption by the elected members of Limerick County Council on the 23rd May 2011.

On 16th May 2016 Limerick City & County Council extended the duration of the Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2011-2017 for a further five years, until May 2021.

Amendments

Amendment number 1 to the Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2011 – 2017, in relation to Neighbourhood Centres.

On the 2nd September 2014 the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government issued a direction pursuant to Section 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). This Plan reflects this Ministerial Direction issued on 2nd September 2014. The variation consisted of an amendment to the written statement in respect of Section 4.5.3 Neighbourhood and Village Centres – Objective ED 8.

Amendment number 2 to the Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2011-2017, was made on 18th April 2016 and came into effect on 16th May 2016 in relation to:

1. Amended zoning and a master plan for the Mungret Loughmore Area.
2. The updated 2011 Census figures.
3. References to Limerick County Council are replaced with Limerick City and County Council (LCCC).

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1.1 What is a Local Area Plan?

The Local Area Plan (LAP) is a legal document consisting of a public statement of Limerick County Council's planning policies for the Southern Environs area. This plan replaces the previous 2005 - 2011 Southern Environs Local Area Plan. The aim of this LAP is to establish a framework for the planned, coordinated and sustainable development of the Southern Environs and for the conservation and enhancement of its natural and built environment over the next six years and beyond. The LAP provides guidance as to how this development can be achieved, what new developments are needed, where public and private resource inputs are required, and guidance for development proposed in the LAP area.

All planning applications for the Southern Environs will be measured against the contents of the 2011 – 2017 LAP. The Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2011 – 2017 was formally adopted by elected members of the Council in May 23rd 2011. This Local Area Plan came into effect on the 20th June 2011, four weeks from the date of its adoption by the elected members of Limerick County Council.

The LAP builds on the review of the Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2005 – 2011. It accounts for recent key development trends, national, regional and local policy developments. As required by the EU, the LAP includes a Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Appropriate Assessment to satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Directive.

1.2 Plan Area

The Southern Environs Local Area Plan covers approximately 21 square kilometres and falls mainly into two Electoral Divisions (EDs) namely Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural. It is located south of Limerick City and stretches east to Banemore, south to Ballycummin and west to Conigar in Mungret. It includes the areas of Dooradoyle, Raheen, Mungret, Gouldavoher, and Rosbrien. Its natural boundaries include the Shannon Estuary and the Ballinacurra Creek along the City boundary. It is an area largely urban in nature that has experienced considerable population increase over the years and it is envisaged to continue to do so. Its locational importance for the county and the region is reflected in the range and scale of land use in the area and the provision of important large scale infrastructural development in the area.

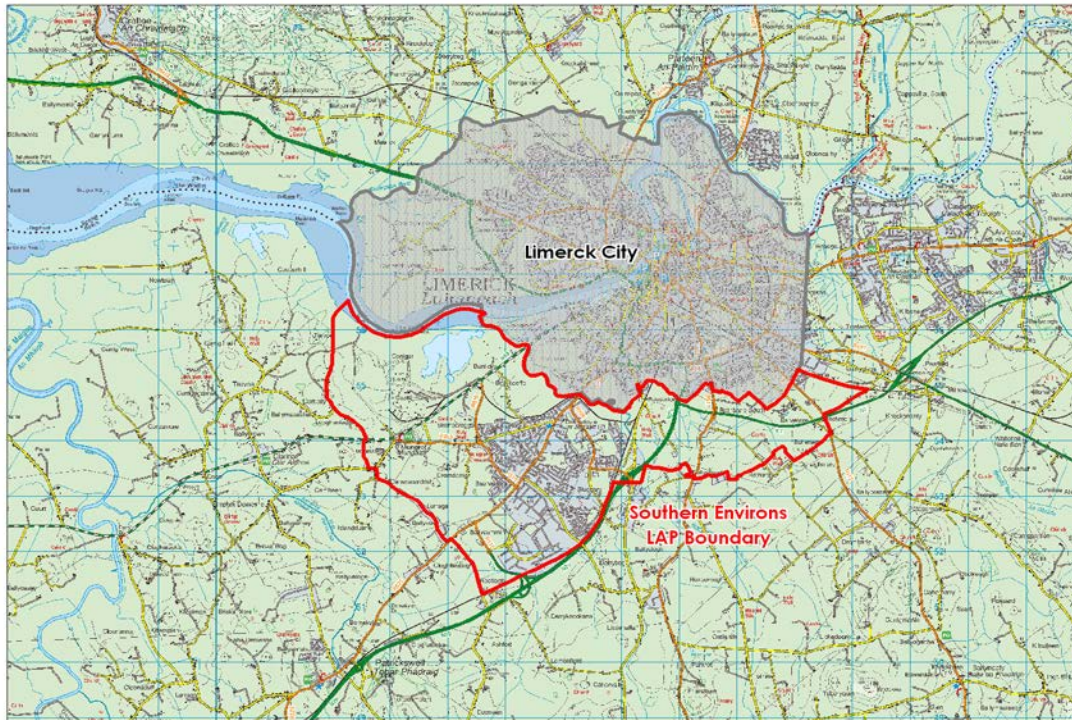


Figure 1: Location of the Southern Environs

1.3 Legal Status of the Plan

This LAP has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010.

The Planning and Development Acts require local area plans to be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan, its core strategy, and any regional planning guidelines that apply to the area. These national, regional and local strategies and policies assist in the identification of the most appropriate location of land uses bearing in mind the principles of sustainable development, value for money and maximizing resources whilst aiming to reduce dependency on private motorised transport and greenhouse gas emissions. Examples of these influential documents are; Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future: A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2012 by the Department of Transport, National Climate Change Strategy 2007 – 2012 by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Midwest Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 – 2022, and the Limerick Regeneration Agency master plans.

The Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010 and the Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG, 2007 requires that a local area plan be consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan. The Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2011 – 2017 shall be read in conjunction with the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.

1.4 Composition of the Local Area Plan and How to Use the Plan

The purpose of the LAP is to set a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Southern Environs over the relevant period. In the absence of specific DEHLG guidance documents on local area plans the format, layout and content of the plan have been guided by the DEHLG publication 'Development Plans: Guidelines for Planning Authorities', 2007. The LAP is presented as one volume consisting of the written statement, maps, a list of Protected Structures in the area, the Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Appropriate Assessment. The written statement contains analysis of statistics, projections and policies and objectives.

The zoning maps provide a graphic representation of the proposals of the Plan, indicating land-use, conservation designations and other control standards together with various objectives of the Council. All maps should be referred to in order to obtain a full list of policies and objectives that relate to each site.

1.5 The review process

As required by the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010, the review of the previous Southern Environs LAP commenced four years after it was adopted in 2005. A public notice was placed in the local press announcing the Council's intention to review the 2005 Southern Environs LAP. Written submissions and observations were invited from the public, statutory bodies and other organisations.

During the discretionary public consultation period an issues paper was made available to the public and a public workshop and information evening took place on the 22nd June 2010. Copies of the issues paper and an invitation to make a submission were sent to local community and voluntary agencies in the area including schools, sports clubs, parish councils and others. Some agencies availed of meetings with Council officials regarding their requirements for development.

The draft LAP was placed on public display at County Buildings, area offices, libraries and on the internet at www.lcc.ie for a period of six weeks and written submissions were invited. At the end of the public consultation period a Manager's Report on all issues arising was prepared and submitted to the Members of the Council. Following consideration of the report, the Council decided to materially amend the draft LAP, and a further period of four weeks public consultation on these material amendments took place between the 19th of March 2011 and the 18th of April 2011 inclusive. A further report on submissions was then prepared for the Council who, having considered the report, decided to make the new LAP with the amendments. The Southern Environs LAP 2011 - 2017 was formally adopted by elected members on May 23rd 2011. In accordance with the provisions of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 – 2010, Section 20 (4A) this Local Area Plan came into effect on the 20th June 2011, four weeks from the date of adoption by the elected members of Limerick County Council.

1.6 SWOT Analysis

The following table sets out the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as identified through public consultation and the site appraisals undertaken as part of the plan preparation process:

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position in respect to Limerick City • Enjoys a pivotal position in the Gateway and Atlantic Corridor • One of the most optimally accessible areas in County Limerick and Mid West Region due to proximity to important national routes – M20, M7, N18 • Availability of development land • Well serviced by retail developments • Has a number of key community services such as the Regional Hospital, County Council, Library and the civic amenity centre on the Dock Road • A number of major employers in the area including the Cement factory, Raheen Industrial Estate and the Regional Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on a few large employers for local employment in the current economic climate • Drainage problems and vulnerability to flooding in parts of the area • Lack of core centre • Lack of public open space • Pressure on school network • Lack of continuous bus lanes into the city centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of pedestrian links • Provision of a neighbourhood park • Provision of well designed open spaces • Re-opening of the railway line • Provision of park and ride facilities • Improved green routes • Improvements to public transport • Provision of additional schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfinished housing estates and other developments • Employment losses associated with the downturn in the economy • Lack of monetary resources

• Availability of water supply and waste water treatment to serve development			
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1.7 Relationship with Other Plans

The LAP has been informed by a hierarchy of national, regional and local spatial planning policies. See figure 2 below.

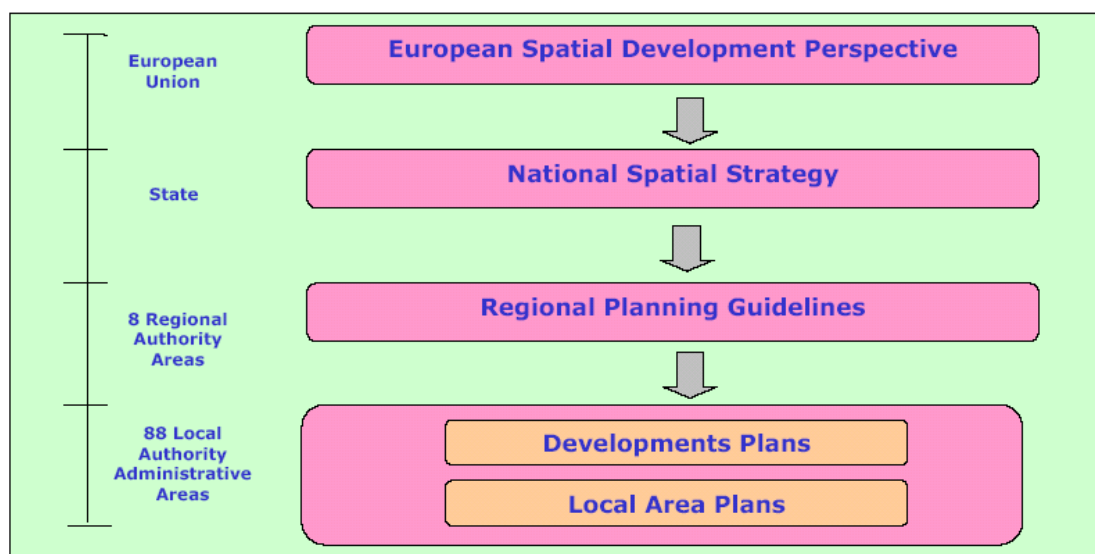


Figure 2 Hierarchy of Spatial Planning Policies

Planning Authorities are required to take account of any policies and guidelines issued by the Minister. Accordingly, in setting out policies and objectives this plan has considered, inter alia, the following guidelines:

- Appropriate Assessment- Circular letter
- Architectural Heritage Protection
- Childcare Facilities guidelines
- Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities and associated Guidelines Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities DEHLG 2007
- Design Standards for New Apartments
- Development Management Guidelines
- Development Plan Guidelines
- Implementing Regional Planning Guidelines- Best Practice Guidance
- Provision of Schools & the Planning system
- Retail Planning Guidelines
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Guidelines
- Taking in Charge of Residential Developments Circular letter
- Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures
- Regional Planning Guidelines- Population targets 2010-2022 – Circular letter
- Wind Energy Development

- Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DEHLG, 2009 and the accompanying Urban Design Manual
- ‘Ready, Steady, Play’, Department of Health and Children, March 2004
- ‘Teenspace – National Recreation Policy for Young People, Department of Health and Children, Sept. 2007
- Government Policy on Architecture 2009 – 2015 (DEHLG October 2009)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (DEHLG 2010)

For a more comprehensive list of other policy documents taken into account refer to the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.

Regional and local plans and strategies include:

- Limerick County Development Board Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development 2002 – 2011
- Replacement Waste Management Plan for the Limerick / Clare/ Kerry Region 2006 – 2011
- Limerick County Council Housing Strategy 2005 – 2011 and the Draft Joint Housing Strategy 2011 – 2017.
- Draft Limerick County Recreational Strategy 2010 – 2015
- Regional Planning Guidelines- Population targets 2010-2022 – Circular letter
- Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 – 2022, Mid West Regional Authority

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

1.7.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020

The National Spatial Strategy for Ireland (NSS) is a twenty year planning framework designed to achieve a better balance of social, economic and physical development and population growth between regions. Its focus is on people, on places and on building communities. The NSS concentrates on a number of specific regions. These regions are envisaged to develop through the identification of Gateway settlements whose role is to support geographically balanced growth away from the Greater Dublin Area. The Southern Environs forms part of the Limerick – Shannon Gateway and Limerick’s designation as a gateway centre in the NSS has implications for population growth in the Southern Environs LAP.

1.7.2 Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 – 2022

This document has been prepared in accordance with the National Spatial Strategy, providing key mechanisms responding to the NSS in respect of a vision, connectivity, world-class places and products, enterprise enablers, balanced development and sustainability within the region. The Regional Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines provide a wider area approach to the development of County Limerick. These guidelines look at Limerick in its regional context with Limerick City & suburbs, Shannon and Ennis acting as a central core and further advances the areas designation as a Gateway. This Local Area Plan accords with the Regional Planning Guidelines.

1.7.3 Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP)

A strategic planning, land use and transportation strategy for the Mid-West region is currently being developed which shall include the County Councils of Limerick, North Tipperary and Clare, and Limerick City Council. MWASP will provide for a comprehensive integrated plan for Land Use Planning and Transportation in the Mid-West Region over the next 30 years.

1.7.4 Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 is the ‘parent’ document for the Southern Environs LAP. Consequently, the LAP is made in accordance with the objectives as set out in the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016.

The Limerick CDP 2010 – 2016 sets out the Council’s policy to steer future development in the County based on a settlement hierarchy reflecting settlement function and outlines population targets for settlements for the years 2016 and 2022.

Within the County Development plan the Southern Environs is designated ‘Tier 1: Gateway’. This area forms part of the Limerick/Shannon Gateway as designated in the NSS and includes Limerick City and Environs. The Environs consist of the Southern Environs and Castletroy. Gateways are designated as the prime foci for growth. The Limerick Gateway is centrally located within the ‘Atlantic Gateway Corridor’ being strategically placed to contribute to the critical mass necessary to sustain strong economic growth and prosperity within the Atlantic Corridor.

Limerick City and Environs acts as a core driver of the region and a focal point for attracting investment into the area. The Southern Environs is the largest settlement in County Limerick.

1.7.5 Limerick City Development Plan, 2010 – 2016

The Limerick City Development Plan puts forward planning and sustainable development objectives for the City Council’s administrative area, which includes Limerick City Centre. The southern boundary of the City plan adjoins the Southern Environs LAP at its northern boundary. The vision of the City Development Plan is for Limerick City to continue to grow as the centre of economic, social and cultural development for the Mid-West Region. Lands in the City adjoining the Southern Environs boundary are, in general, zoned for residential, open space, and light industrial uses and the zoning objectives within the Southern Environs LAP take account of the adjoining city zoning objectives. The Shannon SAC extends from the City Development Plan into the Southern Environs LAP area.

1.7.6 Limerick Regeneration Plan, Limerick Regeneration Agencies

Following the publication of the Fitzgerald Report, commissioned by the Government in 2006 to investigate the issues regarding social exclusion in Limerick City and its environs, new Government Agencies for the Southside and Northside of Limerick City were established by Government Orders in June 2007. The Regeneration Board oversees the planning and implementation of a comprehensive and integrated regeneration programme for Moyross and St.Mary's Park on the Northside of the City and Southill/Ballinacurra Weston on the Southside of the City. Part of the Regeneration Area of Southill is within the boundaries of the Southern Environs.

1.7.7 Retail Strategy for the Mid West Region 2010 – 2016

This strategy was prepared in 2010 on behalf of Limerick, Clare & North Tipperary County Councils and Limerick City Council to address the retail needs, opportunities and issues of the mid-west region and sets out an integrated strategic framework for retail planning in the Mid West over the period to 2016. The Strategy sets out aims which respond to the influences of national & local policy. The Mid West Retail Hierarchy identifies Dooradoyle as a Tier 2 retail centre within the Metropolitan area.

1.7.8 Limerick County Council Housing Strategy 2005 – 2011 and the Draft Joint Housing Strategy 2011 – 2017

Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, places the onus on all Local Authorities to prepare a Housing Strategy for their administrative areas. The Housing Strategy (HS) provides for housing the existing and projected future populations of the development plan area in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. The current housing strategy was adopted by the Council in October 2006. Limerick County Council, Limerick City Council and Clare County Council have prepared a Joint Housing Strategy for the 2009-2017 period which must be incorporated into this LAP. The Planning Authority must ensure that sufficient and suitable land is zoned to meet the requirements of the Housing Strategy and that a scarcity of such land does not occur at any time during the period of the Plan. The Council will commence the variation of the CDP 2010 – 2016 to incorporate the Joint Housing Strategy in July 2011. The Joint Housing Strategy requires that up to 20% of zoned residential land be set aside for social housing.

2.1 Policy Context

The development strategy contained within this Local Area Plan (LAP) has been informed by a hierarchy of national, regional and local spatial planning policy documents as outlined in Chapter 1.

In accordance with the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010, a local area plan shall be consistent with the objectives of the development plan, its core strategy and any regional planning guidelines that apply to the area of the plan. This LAP must take cognisance of its relationship with the County Development Plan (CDP) and relevant aspects of the Regional Planning Guidelines; including population projections, housing strategy, settlement strategy, boundary of the settlement as adopted in the CDP, economic development, flood risk assessment, climate change and biodiversity strategies. Furthermore, the core strategy of the LAP should reflect the role and function identified for the LAP area as identified in the settlement hierarchy in the CDP.

2.1.1 Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 is the ‘parent’ document for this Southern Environs Local Area Plan, and thus the LAP is made in accordance with the policies and objectives as set out in the County Development Plan.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the Southern Environs is located within the Limerick Gateway; a designation having implications for the future development of the area, particularly, population growth and associated development having implications on the wider environment.

The Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 sets out the overarching policies for the development of the Southern Environs area.

Table 3.1 of the CDP outlines the settlement structure for the County with the Southern Environs designated at the top of the settlement hierarchy as a Tier 1 settlement and as part of the Limerick Gateway. The Southern Environs is the largest settlement in County Limerick.

Table 1: Southern Environs within Settlement Hierarchy for County Limerick

Settlement Structure for County Limerick	
Tier 1: The Gateway The City and City Environs	These locations are defined as the City Environs Area comprising the areas covered by the Castletroy Local Area Plan and the Southern Environs Local Area Plan.

The County Development Plan further specifies the Councils policies and objectives with regard to the Gateway as follows:

Policy SS P1: Development of the Gateway

It is policy of the Council to recognise the role of the Limerick / Shannon Gateway as a key driver of socio-economic growth in the County, in the wider Region promoting the Gateway as the main growth centre.

Policy SS P2: Sufficient Zoned Lands

It is policy of the Council to ensure that sufficient land is zoned within the City Environs so that, as part of the Limerick Gateway, they will act as the primary focus for investment in infrastructure, housing, transport, employment, education, shopping, health facilities and community.

Objective SSO1: Provision of Local Area Plans for Southern Environs and Castletroy

It is an objective of the Council to monitor and review the Local Area Plans for Castletroy and the Southern Environs in accordance with relevant legislation.

In accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 - 2010, this LAP is prepared within the context of the objectives set out in the Limerick County Development Plan for the Southern Environs area.

2.2 Southern Environs LAP Development Strategy

The development strategy contained within this LAP is prepared within the context of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 which sets a framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County. In this regard, the following vision statement is put forward:

Limerick County Council will adopt a positive and sustainable approach to balanced development thereby enhancing the lives of people who live in, work in and visit the Southern Environs, whilst protecting the natural and built environment.

The objective of this LAP is to guide the future development of the area in line with this policy.

2.3 Demographic Trends

The County Development Plan puts forward the population targets for County Limerick allocated by the DEHLG at National level and distributed at regional level by the Mid West Regional Authority. The Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines have allocated a population target of 9,000 people to be accommodated within the City Environs areas of the Southern Environs and Castletroy by 2022. Chapter 2 of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-

2016 provides an overall core strategy for the development of County Limerick taking into account these national and regional population targets.

The population targets as they apply to the Gateway area of County Limerick are outlined in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 Population Targets for the Gateway

Settlement Hierarchy				
Hierarchy position	Town	Pop 2006	2016 target	2022 target
Tier 1: Gateway The City and City Environs	Southern Environs	16,000	31,851	35,601
	Castletroy	10,601		

The 9,000 population allocation for the City Environs must be distributed between Castletroy and the Southern Environs area to plan for growth within each of these areas and guide the preparation of the LAP. The 2006 population of the Southern Environs is 1.5 times that of the 2006 population of Castletroy. As both areas are similarly located within the Gateway and City Environs and have a similar function as part of the Limerick Gateway, it is reasonable to assume that they will continue to grow at a similar ratio to one another. Therefore, the 2022 population of 9000 has been allocated at a ratio of 1.5:1 for the Southern Environs:Castletroy.

Table 2.2 Population Targets for Limerick City Environs

	2006 Population	2022 LAP allocation (2006- 2022)	2022 target	2011 Population	Additional Population Estimate 2011-2022
Southern Environs	16,000*	+ 5400	21,465	17,310	4,213
Castletroy	10601	+ 3600	14,201	11,951	2,250
Total	26601	35,601			

* Figures taken from Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016, population of 16,000 is Ballycummin urban area plus half of Limerick South Rural DED

The Southern Environs LAP area falls into two Electoral Divisions (EDs); Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural, although both EDs also include some rural areas in addition to the Local Plan area. The two EDs include the areas of Dooradoyle, Raheen, Gouldavoher, Rosbrien and Banemore¹. These areas have experienced a population increase of approximately 56% over the 10-year period 1996-2006; however reflecting national trends, there was a steep reduction in the growth rate in the subsequent five years. In the 2006-2011 period, the growth that was experienced was 1,252, or 8.1% of the total population.

2.3.1 Population Change

The Electoral Divisions of Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural have demonstrated some of the highest growth rates in the county over the 1996-2006 period. Although all of the Ballycummin ED falls within the Plan area, it is estimated that approximately 50% of the population that reside within the Limerick South Rural ED fall within the Southern Environs development boundary. Tables 2.3 and Figure 2.2 outline the population change in the area from 1981 –2011.

Table 2.3 Past Population Trends in the Southern Environs

Year	Southern Environs	Population Increase	% Increase	% annual average
1981	6,211	-	-	
1986	7,643	1,432	23.0	4.6
1991	8,647	1,004	13.1	2.62
1996	10,283	1,636	18.9	3.78
2002	13,925	3,643	35.4	5.9
2006	16,000	2,075	15.0	3.75
2011	17,310	1,310	7.8	1.54

Source: Central Statistical Services, 1981-2011

¹ For the purposes of this Plan for overall population numbers and trends Limerick South Rural ED is divided in half, but for population profiles including age, Limerick South Rural ED in full is added to Ballycummin ED to give a reasonable approximation of population characteristics.

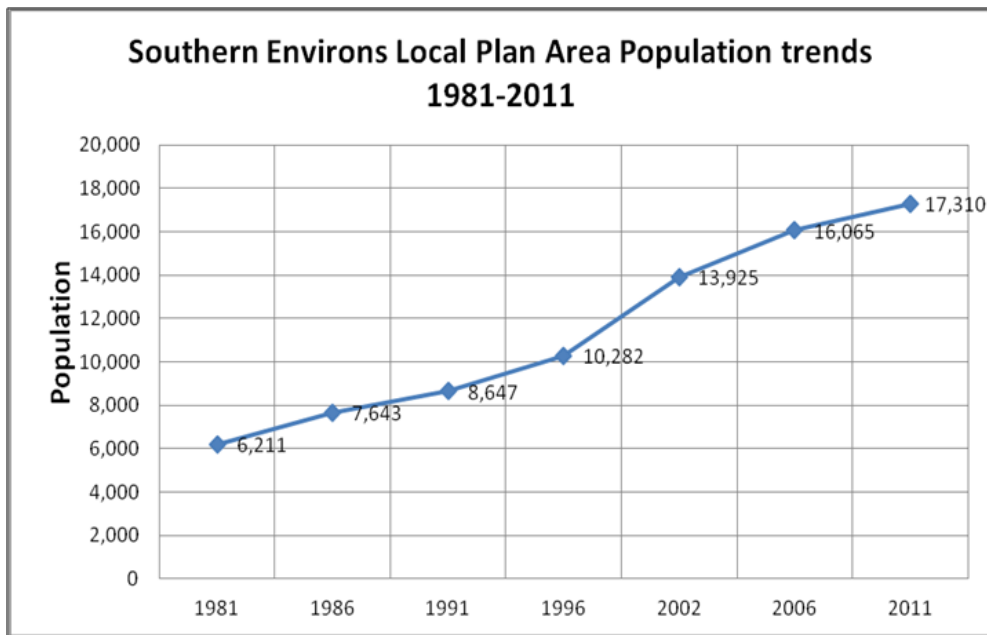


Figure 2.1 Graph showing population trends Southern Environs Local Plan Area

2.3.2 Age Profile

The Southern Environs contains large areas of newer residential developments as reflected by the growth patterns outlined above. The age profile of the Ballycummin ED further demonstrates the characteristics of the area with the largest percentage of the population in the 0-4 age group and the 20-39 age group.

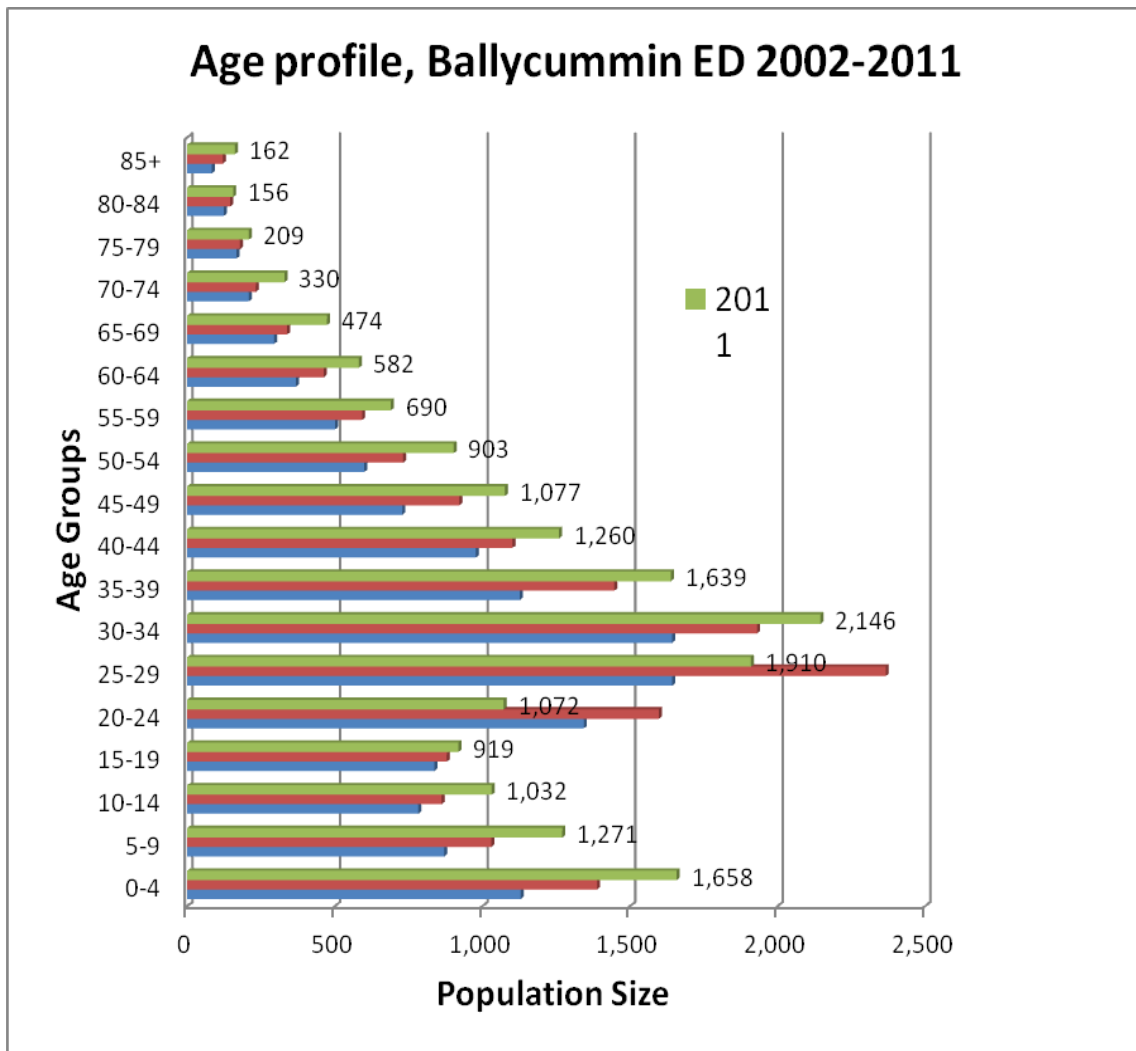


Figure 2.2 Persons by Age Ballycummin DED 2002-2011

The following graph shows a comparison of age profiles of the Southern Environs Local Plan area with the city and State age profiles. The percentage comparisons show that Southern Environs has a distinctive bias in favour of young families in comparison with the national average; and both the State and the city, particularly the latter, have an older age profile than the Southern Environs.

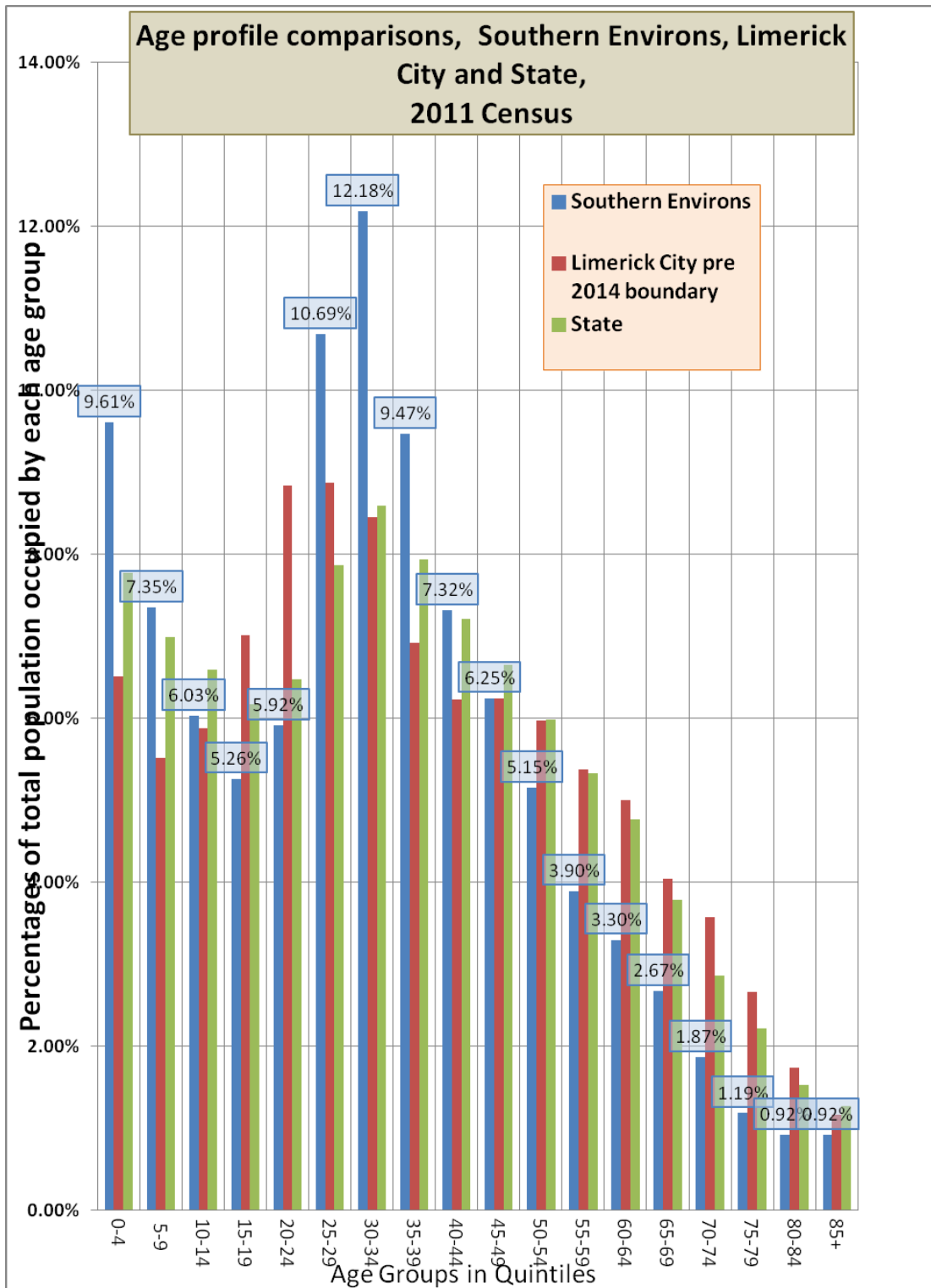


Figure 2.3 Age profile comparisons Southern Environs in context

These figures have implications for the Southern Environs LAP indicating the type of land uses that may be required to serve the existing and future populations; for example, the future needs for education, recreation, health and residential demand.

2.3.3 Socio-Economic Trends

Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural DEDs combined have not been immune to the effects of the national recession. It is likely that the decision to cease assembly line operations in Dell in Raheen in 2009 would have had a particularly significant impact on this area, firstly because a high proportion of the 1,900 jobs lost would undoubtedly have been held by people living in the surrounding area, and secondly because of the indirect affects of loss of local spending power and loss of business to local suppliers.

The following graph Figure 2c, shows the changes to the numbers at work versus those out of work in the two DEDs combined; the pie charts in Figure 2d shows that the percentage of those out of work had risen from c4% in 2006 to 15% by 2011.

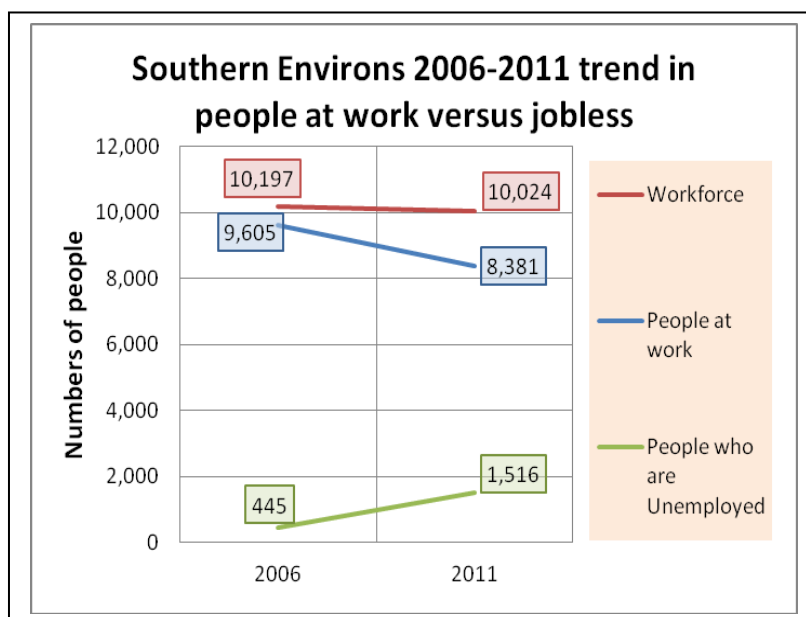
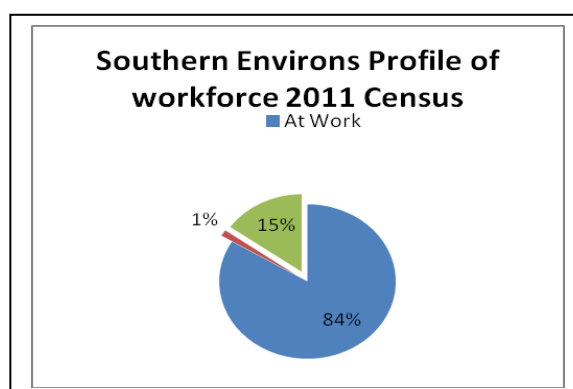
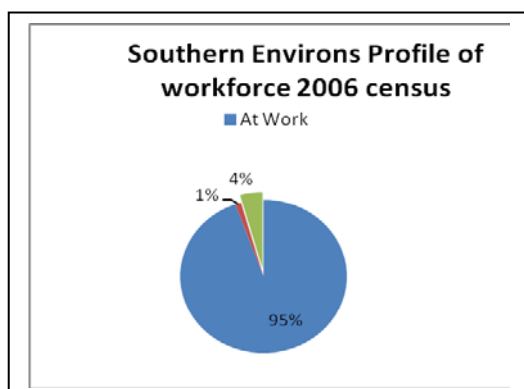


Figure 2.4 Southern Environs (Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural Environs DED) changes to economic status in workforce 2006-2011

Source: Census 2006, and Census 2011 Small Area Statistics, CSO



Figures 2.5 and 2.6 Southern Environs Workforce 2006 and 2011 percentages at work and out of work

2.4 Population Targets & Housing Demand

This LAP will expire in 2017. However, it is necessary to consider the future of the Southern Environs within a longer planning horizon ensuring that sufficient land is zoned for residential use. To zone sufficient residential land for the anticipated needs, allowing an element of choice and reflecting the population targets of the MWRPG, the Limerick CDP 2010 - 2016, has provided population targets to 2022 which are adhered to in this LAP.

The MWRPG note that the following considerations should be used in considering how to manage the making available of residential land for development:

- Land should be zoned on the basis of the population targets that are set for the settlement in question.
- More land should be zoned for residential development than is required to meet these population targets.
- The excess in zoned land over the amount needed should have regard to the history of population development in the area; the likelihood of any major development taking place that would increase the demand for housing; land ownership patterns in the area; the possibility of creating a coherent development pattern even if a second phase of development commences before the first phase is substantially used up. The excess should normally lie between 50% and 150% of the land required though the excess in Phase 1 should not normally be more than 50% of targeted demand.

Table 3 Population Targets

	2006	2011	2022 target total	2011-2022 difference	% difference annually
Population	16,000	17,310	21,465	4,175	1.76

2.4.1 Household size

Limerick City and County Councils and Clare County Council commissioned consultants to prepare a Joint Housing Strategy, which was adopted as a variation to their respective Development Plans in 2011.

The Joint Housing Strategy was prepared within the framework set down in the Mid-Western Regional Strategy 2010, in respect of the estimated number of houses required, and assumptions on household size, in which the average household size was assumed to fall from 2.87 persons in 2006 to 2.4 persons in 2022. The Strategy did make reference to the 2011 Census returns. This updates to the Local Area Plan with reference to the 2011 Census. The average household size is estimated in this report to be 2.58, that is the average between 2.4, the estimated household size in 2022, and 2.76, which is the average household size prevailing in Ballycummin Electoral District (the ED closely corresponding to the Southern Environs) according to the 2011 census.

2.4.2 Future Land Requirements

Future housing land requirements are estimated based on the population targets put forward in the Limerick County Development Plan for the City Environs and having regard to the anticipated household size.

Table 4: Core Strategy as adjusted, Population allocation, housing requirement and land Requirement.

Year	2006 census	2011 census	Expected population 2022 Core Strategy*
Total population	16,000	17,310	21,465
Additional population 2011-2022			4,155
Additional housing units required, Core Strategy 2011-2022			2,387
Zoned land required @ 33 units to the hectare			124.00

* 2,898 was the total figure of additional houses estimated as being required to meet the Core Strategy target between 2006 and 2022. 2,387 is the adjusted figure for 2011, subtracted for houses built between 2006 and 2011, which is 511 (Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural DED, the latter divided by half).

Based on the above there will be a requirement for an additional 2,387 households to accommodate population targets up to 2022. Based on an average density requirement of 33 units per hectare, and assuming that 70% extra land should be zoned as a contingency, there is a requirement for 124 hectares of land zoned for residential development.

Sustainable residential development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG May, 2009) recommend a density of 35-50 units per hectare on outer suburban / 'greenfield' sites, with densities of less than 30 units per hectare in general to be discouraged. The numbers of units used (33 units per hectare) are indicative only and are included to demonstrate that the housing requirement can be met. Detailed proposals for different sites, taking into account constraints such as land quality and natural or historic features, may demonstrate that permission could be granted for a different number of dwellings.

2.4.3 Land Currently Available for Housing Development and proposed alteration to lands available for housing

Changes to land use zoning from the 2011 Local Area Plan are proposed in this Amendment in the Mungret Loughmore area (see Map) to redress deficits in social infrastructure, which necessitates some reduction in the quantum of residential zoned land. Other land in the area is re-zoned for residential use to mitigate for this reduction and comply with the Core Strategy. 68% of all land zoned for new development in the Southern Environs Local Area Plan is in Mungret Loughmore.

Approximately 190 hectares of land zoned for Residential use in the 2005 Southern Environs LAP remained undeveloped in 2010. The bulk of this land was to be found in the vicinity of Mungret College, west of Quinn’s Cross and in the Rosbrien Area. The 2011 LAP proposed the reduction in the amount of land zoned for residential development in order to appropriately accommodate the population targets put forward in the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Mid West Region, 2010-2022 and the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016. A total of 123.9 hectares of land was proposed to be zoned ‘Residential Development Area’ in the Southern Environs LAP, 2011-2017. The actual quantum of residential zoned lands available for housing in the current Plan is 122 hectares.

The population targets in the Southern Environs Local Area plan can now be revised, taking on the full implications of the 2011 census. Housing density is also amended downwards from 35 units to the hectare to 33 units to the hectare to render it consistent with the city average. As indicated in Table 4 above, 2,387 dwelling units are needed to reach the Core Strategy target of 2,898 houses by 2022, adjusting for the 2011 population returns. At 33 units to the hectare, this means there is a minimum requirement for 124 hectares of land to be zoned for new residential development to remain consistent with the Core Strategy and assuming a 70% contingency.

The proposed changes in the Plan could considerably reduce the amount of land available for residential development, as three schools and part of the neighbourhood park must be accommodated on land that was zoned for residential. This shift away from residential zoning is mitigated by compensatory residential zoning in lands zoned for other uses. The details of all the proposed changes in zoning are depicted on maps in Appendix Two. The following summary table (Table 5) shows the amount of land to be zoned for new residential development in the Southern Environs Local Area Plan following the proposed changes, comparing this new total with that actually provided in the current Local area Plan, and the Core Strategy target.

Table 5 Extent of land zoned in hectares for new residential before and after proposed Amendment, and comparisons with Core Strategy target 2022

	2011 LAP	Net change	LAP as amended	Core Strategy Target*	Surplus/ Deficit
Mungret Loughmore	84.56	-2.02	82.54	124	-2
Remainder	39.34	none	39.34		
Southern Environs Total	123.9		122*		

*123.9 hectares is the correct figure for the amount of land Zoned for new residential development in the Southern Environs Local Area Plan, including 5.8 hectares on the Old Cork Road which is undeveloped but zoned Existing Residential.

Overall Strategic Policy

Policy HP1: Housing

It is the policy of the Council to provide appropriately zoned lands to cater for the sustainable growth of the Southern Environs area ensuring all residents can enjoy safe and accessible environments. Quality shall underpin all new development by creating and maintaining a sense of place and local distinctiveness in established and new development areas.

Policy HP2: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan

It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals for housing development shall comply with the policies, objectives and Development Management Standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 and the objectives outlined below.

3.1 Introduction

The demand for the availability of lands for residential development over the next six years and in the longer term has been determined by population targets for the region, set by the DEHLG and distributed within the region by the Mid West Regional Authority. Chapter 2 of this LAP indicates the demand for residential zoned land over the life of the plan and beyond. Based on the Core Strategy projections, 124 hectares of land zoned for residential use is required to accommodate the potential population growth over the life of the plan. 122 hectares of land has been zoned 'Residential Development Area' to accommodate the population targets.

3.2 Housing Objectives

Objective HO1: New Housing

It is an objective of the Council, on serviced land that is zoned 'Residential Development Area', to facilitate sustainable residential development in accordance with the principles and guidelines of the 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas' (May 2009), the accompanying Urban Design Manual, and the Development Management Standards contained in the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016.

Objective HO2: Residential Density

It is an objective of the Council to:

- a) Promote the concept of a 'compact district' by encouraging appropriate densities in suitable locations and by resisting sporadic isolated developments;
- b) Require an average net density of 33 units per hectare on 'Residential Development Area' sites within the plan area;

The dwelling types should be appropriate to the densities; care should be taken to ensure that private amenities, public amenities, parking and access requirements are met through good design in accordance with best practice.

Objective HO3: Residential Development within the zone of influence of National Roads

Planning applications within the zone of influence of National Roads shall identify and implement noise mitigation measures within the zone of influence of the national road where the proximity of the proposed development to the national road would result in the breach of the National Roads Authority's design goal for sensitive receptors exposed to road traffic noise. The costs of implementing mitigation measures shall be borne by the developer

3.3 Social Housing

The Council seeks to provide social housing to meet the needs identified in the Draft Joint Housing Strategy for the administrative areas of Limerick City and County Councils and Clare County Council (2010-2017). All relevant lands zoned for residential development or a mix of uses including residential will be subject to the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2010 in relation to the provision of social housing. The Council will engage in discussions with developers prior to the formal planning process to negotiate details of the operation of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2010.

Objective HO4: Social Housing and Draft Joint Housing Strategy

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

- a) Require that developers comply with Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- b) Require developers to provide social housing on lands zoned for residential use, in accordance with the 'Joint Housing Strategy for the Administrative Areas of Limerick City and County Councils and Clare County Council' and any subsequent amendment.

3.4 Limerick City Regeneration Areas

Part of the Southern Environs is contained within the Southill / Ballinacurra Weston Regeneration Area plan boundary.

It is acknowledged that the regeneration programme is of vital importance for the development of Limerick City, Limerick County, the Gateway and the Midwest region. Thus, Limerick County Council has a strong commitment to supporting the Regeneration Programmes for Limerick City and to working with all the other relevant players implementing the provisions of regeneration.

Objective HO5: Limerick Regeneration Agencies

It is an objective of Limerick County Council to support the initiatives of the Limerick Regeneration Agency and any regeneration initiatives implemented.

3.5 Rural Housing

Part of the Southern Environs area is zoned Agriculture. In these areas it is a priority to retain the rural character.

Objective HO6: Rural Housing in the Southern Environs

It is an objective of Limerick County Council to permit housing on agriculturally zoned land for the long-term habitation of farmers and the sons or daughters of farmers only and subject to the terms and conditions of the rural housing policy as set out in the Limerick County Development Plan.

3.6 Traveller Accommodation

Limerick County Council has prepared and adopted a Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2009-2013 to meet the existing and projected needs of travellers in the County. Objective HOU O9 of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 outlines Limerick County Council's objective to provide housing accommodation for the Traveller Community in accordance with the Traveller Accommodation Programme and any proposals in this regard in the Southern Environs shall comply with this objective.

Overall Strategic Policy

Policy ED1: Economic Development

It is the policy of the Council to encourage and facilitate optimal levels of sustainable economic development promoting the growth of employment opportunities within a high quality physical environment.

Policy ED2: Provision of employment centres in accordance with settlement strategy

It is the policy of the Council to complement the aims of the County settlement hierarchy in a mutually reinforcing and sustainable manner through the recognition of the Southern Environs as part of the Limerick/Shannon Gateway, facilitating employment related development to support the population growth envisaged for the area.

Policy ED3: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan

It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals for economic development shall comply with the policies, objectives and Development Management Standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 and the objectives outlined below.

4.1 Introduction

The Southern Environs area is strategically located, as part of the Limerick Gateway, in close proximity to Limerick City Centre and within the Limerick metropolitan area. The area benefits from direct access to the national road network including the M7, M18, M20 and N69 and Shannon International Airport. The area is served with high quality telecommunications infrastructure.

Demographically, the Southern Environs area experienced one of the highest growth rates in the County in the 2002 – 2006 period. The population of the area in the 25-44 age group is particularly high. These factors have resulted in a higher demand for employment land uses such as commercial and industrial land and supporting infrastructure than other areas of County Limerick.

The area has important assets in its natural resources, its skill base, and in its economic and services sectors. The major employers in the area include Irish Cement, Raheen Business Park, the Regional Hospital and the Crescent Shopping Centre.

Table 4.1 outlines the key employment sectors and the percentage of the population employed in each for the two electoral divisions (End's) within the Southern Environs. This demonstrates that the main employment types in the area are professional, sales, administration, government and manufacturing.

Table 4.1 % of population employment by Sector in the Southern Environs

Sector	Ballycummin ED	Limerick South Rural	Limerick City
Agriculture	0.76%	0.48%	0.28%
Building and Construction	3.83%	2.90%	3.40%
Manufacturing	16.96%	19.16%	12.86%
Commerce and Trade	23.45%	27.86%	25.67%
Transport and Communications	7.80%	7.41%	8.37%
Public administration	5.95%	4.03%	4.66%
Professional services	27.31%	21.74%	24.20%
Other	13.94%	16.43%	20.56%

Source: CSO, Small Area Population Statistics, 2011

4.2 Existing Employment Development

Within the larger Limerick Metropolitan area, the major growing centres of industrial activity are the 120ha of the National Technological Park and the 160ha Raheen Industrial Estate. The latter falls within the Southern Environs, but its economic importance is regional rather than local.

Raheen Industrial Estate, which showed exceptional growth in recent years, is now home to over 35 national and international companies employing over 3000 people and is an important employer in a countywide context. Large employers in the Estate include Dell, Stryker and Analog, although Dell has recently downsized their operations at this location.

Other major industrial activity in the Southern Environs includes the Cement Factory which is typically representative of heavy industry and has been in operation in Castlemungret since 1938. The factory is long established in the area, and it is important to continue to ensure and monitor the balance between the activities on the site and the impact on the surrounding environment. The factory is located on approximately 100 hectares of 'Industrial' zoned land that is bordered by the Dock Road to the south and Shannon River in the north. This land parcel represents approximately 5% of the total Plan Area (2050ha) and includes Limerick City's Treatment Works and other industrial buildings that are located on the same stretch of land.

Land is also zoned for industrial use on the southern side of Dock Road where retail-warehousing developments such as Riverside Park have taken place.

Table 4.2 Lands zoned and developed for industrial/employment use in the Southern Environs

Southern Environs Industrial and Enterprise zoned land 2010				
Zoning Type	Quantity Land Zoned (Ha.)	Quantity Land Developed (Ha.)	Quantity Land Undeveloped (Ha.)	% zoned land developed
Enterprise and Employment	306.92	122.20	140.04	53.4
Industrial	416.31	186.37	229.94	55.2
TOTAL	723.23	308.57	369.98	108.6

4.3 Employment trends and projected requirements

4.3.1 Employment in accordance with population targets

In respect of geographical spread, it is appropriate that industrial and enterprise employment should be distributed in accordance with the County settlement hierarchy outlined in the Core Strategy of the Limerick CDP. This ensures the population distribution outlined in the County Development Plan can be underpinned by economic and particularly employment development, to sustain such a distribution. In accordance with proposed population distribution, 70% of new industrial and enterprise employment should be located in the core area of County Limerick corresponding to the Gateway (the City environs). This concentration is important both to foster the critical mass of the Gateway and to take advantage of its strategic position in the region. The degree of concentration relates to the ratio between population growth allocated in the Core Strategy of the County Development Plan.

It is Government policy to reduce the dependence on private transport by transferring 500,000 trips per day to public transport nationally. Trips associated with employment make up a considerable portion of total trips. In order for these targets to be achieved a greater concentration of employment in central locations would be required. The Southern Environs area is suitably located to attract employment as it is in close proximity to a large population base serviced by public transport links. In the mid west region the Raheen/Dooradoyle area accounts for 12,000 jobs, slightly less than Limerick City Centre which accounts for 13,000 jobs (Source: Draft Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines, December 2009).

4.3.2 Anticipated Future Demand

In early 2009, Forfás undertook a study of the Mid-West Region with the intention of assessing the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the region in terms of the key

development sectors. Forfás concluded that internationally, a number of key sectors are showing substantial growth. In some of these, the Mid-West has significant potential.

A number of areas were highlighted and those that are considered particularly appropriate to the Southern Environs are outlined below:

1 The “Life” Sciences, Biotechnology and Medical Technology

Bio-technology has attracted increasing attention in recent years due to scientific advances, which culminate in the ability of scientists not only to examine biological processes but also to intervene in the use of biological processes for technology.

Applications are in manufacturing, food/crop, pharmaceuticals, environmental and medical uses. Substantial potential exists to position the region as a location for bioengineering and medical technologies.

Proximity to third level institutions, a skilled workforce and medical institutions are likely to be a determining factor in locational choice for such uses.

2 ICT including Software

Dependence on broadband communications influence the location patterns of this sector and the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines note that it will probably cluster in the short-term around the regional core. The Southern Environs benefits from access to high speed, open access through the Metropolitan Area Network (MAN).

3 Logistics and Supply Chain Management

The MWRPG note that due to the location of the Gateway (including the Southern Environs) at a major transport node, and at a midpoint between two other Gateways to the North and South, and close to Shannon International Airport, this area should perform a major function as a distribution and freight centre for a wide hinterland. The MWRPG also note that the development of potential in this area will require the provision of dedicated areas for these purposes in the vicinity of the main transport nodes. The Southern Environs is considered particularly suited due to the availability of land for larger scale development with direct access to the National road network.

4 Food Sector & Agri-business

Associated with rural sub-supply, this sector has been traditionally dispersed, but is showing increasing evidence of concentration, attracted by the infrastructure and services of the regional core.

The MWRPG indicate that local authorities should make provision for economic and employment developments appropriate to the above sectors and that the large-scale land and infrastructure needs of major investment, including foreign direct investments, should be considered and provided for when development plans and strategies are being drawn up.

4.3.3 Employment Land Density

The MWRPG note that for every 100 additional people resident in the County by the end of the MWRPG Plan period, 57 jobs will have to be created (Source: Mid-West Regional Authority, August 2009). With an extra population of 5400 projected for the Southern Environs by 2022 (Mid-West Regional Authority, August 2009) this means that there will be a requirement to facilitate 3078 new jobs by 2022. This is not taking into account any additional requirement to compensate for unemployment. In order to take the current high levels of unemployment into account it is reasonable to add 10% to the above new jobs figure to account for the effect of unemployment on demand for new sites. The accumulated total for new jobs then becomes 3386. (Note this does not include jobs for people travelling from outside the area to work in the Southern Environs). The Limerick County Development Plan calculates employment land density (gross) at 50 jobs for every hectare of land, or 1 job per every 200 m².

Applying the above standards in order to accommodate enough business to support 3,386 jobs, there should be, at least, provision for approximately 68 hectares of land either serviced, or ready for servicing for a suitable range of employment needs. There are certain industries with processes that typically require large sites and have a corresponding low employment to land ratio. It is reasonable to provide additional lands for economic development, to allow for the possibility of these types of industrial establishments within the lifetime of this Plan. Table 4.2 above outlines the availability of lands available for Industry and Enterprise and Employment related development.

Based on existing employment uses in the area, census results indicating the key sectors of employment in the area, and the areas highlighted in the MWRPG, the land use zonings proposed should facilitate a broad range of manufacturing uses, information technology and logistics type uses. The Southern Environs is ideally located to continue to attract these types of economic activities due to the availability of a large labour force, skilled work force, existing infrastructure and proximity to Limerick City centre.

4.3.4 Employment Land Availability and Zoning

4.3.4.1 Employment Land Availability

Table 4.2 above outlines available 'Enterprise and Employment' and 'Industry' zoned lands within the Southern Environs. This LAP includes additional 'Enterprise and Employment' zoning adjacent to the N18/N69 Junction. A total area of 306 hectares of 'Enterprise and Employment' zoned land and 230 hectares of 'Industrial' zoned land is available for development within the Southern Environs.

4.3.4.2 Employment Related Land Use Zonings

The industrial development typified by the cement factory and other heavy industrial development that has occurred along the Dock Road is essentially different to the type of development in Raheen Industrial Estate and envisaged on adjacent lands.

Therefore, a distinction will be made to reflect the differences between these types of industrial developments and their respective development requirements (see Land Use Zoning Matrix for more detail).

‘Enterprise & Employment’ Zoned Land: This zoning is intended to accommodate enterprise and employment related uses.

This includes business parks and industrial estates to facilitate opportunities for clean industry, and general employment uses, logistics, offices and warehousing activity in a good quality physical environment. Developments at these locations should refer to the Development Managements Guidelines for Industrial/Commercial Development in Section 10.6 of the Limerick County Development Plan. The principle aims for these areas are to achieve high quality design, visual continuity and pedestrian/cycle friendly environments whilst ensuring the functioning of business and industrial locations. It is envisaged that these lands will accommodate high quality and sensitively designed enterprise and employment development and complementary uses as indicated in the zoning matrix. These lands are envisaged to facilitate many of the economic development uses outlined in the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines for the area, such as medical devices, ICT including software, warehousing and logistics.

This zoning also relates to smaller areas of ‘enterprise and employment’ zoned lands located on Dooradoyle road, opposite the Crescent Shopping Centre. This area provides for non retail related enterprise uses on a smaller scale than the above mentioned ‘enterprise and employment’ locations. The form and scale of development on these sites shall be appropriate to their location having regard to surrounding land uses and scale.

‘Industry’ Zoned Land: This zoning accommodates existing and proposed heavy industrial use north and south of the Dock Road. The purpose of this land use zoning is to facilitate opportunities for industrial uses, activity and processes which may give rise to land use conflict if located within other zonings.

Objective ED 1: Economic Development Proposals

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

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

- e) would not result in any significant negative impact on the conservation value of any Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation or Natural Heritage Area or any such sites proposed for designation.

Objective ED 2: Boundary Treatment

It is the objective of the Council to ensure that where large scale industrial, enterprise or distribution activities are proposed sufficient land shall be reserved around site boundaries, in both individual sites and industrial parks to accommodate landscaping, softening the visual impact, reducing the biodiversity loss of the development and improving the quality of the environment.

Objective ED 3: Development of Lands West of Raheen Industrial Estate

It is the objective of the Council to ensure that development on 'Enterprise and Employment' zoned lands to the west of Raheen Business Park shall take account of the following:

- a) Residential properties to the north and western side of the site and the adjacent agricultural land.
- b) The southern section of this site is low lying and has wetland vegetation. As a result there may be ponding of surface water in this area. Applications for development in this area should include a flood risk assessment and outline measures for control of run-off and attenuation.
- c) The proposed access point to the 'Enterprise and Employment' zoned land to the west of the R510 will be limited to the existing roundabout to the east of the site.

4.4 Small-Scale Businesses in Residential Area

Proposals for planning permission for small-scale business from people working in their own homes will be considered based on the scale and nature of operations. Uses that might negatively impact on residential amenity such as the repair of vehicles will not be permitted in a residential area. The level of customers/callers will also be taken into account.

Objective ED 4: Small-Scale Businesses in Residential Area

It is an objective of the Council to:

- 1) Permit home based economic activities where, by virtue of their nature and scale, they can be accommodated without detriment to the amenities of residential areas and where:
 - a) The use of the house for business purposes is secondary to its use as a dwelling and the floor area of the business should reflect this; and

- | |
|---|
| <p>b) Adequate parking requirements are met.</p> <p>2) Permit non-residential uses in established and proposed residential areas where they comply with the zoning matrix and are of an appropriate nature and scale for the location proposed. In general, such uses will only be considered where they serve the needs of the neighbourhood within which they are situated.</p> |
|---|

4.5 Retail & Commercial Development

The Southern Environs' proximity to Limerick City allows for easy access to the retail and commercial facilities within the City centre, but the area itself is also home to a range of neighbourhood retail centres that serve the local population and the Crescent Shopping Centre which serves the local population and a larger hinterland.

4.5.1 Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016

Colliers CRE Consultants have prepared a 'Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016'. The Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 incorporates the policy recommendations from the Retail Strategy (RS) as they apply to County Limerick.

The Strategy's primary purpose is to ensure that adequate provision is made for new retail development in the most appropriate locations and that excessive provision of retail space is avoided. The central key objective arising from the Retail Strategy is to support the "town centre first" approach in the context of the retail hierarchy, and to promote the vitality and viability of existing centres. The strategy notes that it is important for Limerick City Centre to maintain its dominant retail function at the top of the Mid West hierarchy, and to recapture some of the market share it has lost to other retail destinations.

With regard to retail centres in the Limerick metropolitan area satisfying the daily needs of a local catchment population through the provision of main food shopping outlets, the strategy advises that these should be supported and reinvigorated where necessary. However, their role should not be allowed to expand to encompass a materially broader range of comparison goods as this could lead to further competition with the City Centre.

The Strategy states that based on its quantitative assessment "there is no need for any further retail floorspace provision in the region as a whole through to 2016 (the end date of the Retail Strategy)". This is "due to the Mid-West already being overshopped, the huge scale of the retail development pipeline and the limited forecast growth in consumer retail expenditure per head through to 2016."

Objective ED 5: Retail development

It is the objective of the Council to facilitate retail development where it is in accordance with:

1. Retail Planning Guidelines, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) 2012 and the accompanying Retail Design Manual 2012.
2. The Joint Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016 insofar as it applies to the county, including any subsequent amendments thereof.

Objective ED 6: Co-operation with other authorities

It is the policy of Limerick County Council to co-operate with all neighbouring Local Authorities and within the area of its remit, the Limerick Regeneration Agency, to ensure a balanced pattern of retail provision in accordance with the Retail Strategy for the Mid-West Region 2010-2016, and with national retail policy.

The County Retail hierarchy is defined in two steps: the first step refers to the county as a whole and distinguishes the city centre from retail centres in the county. The second step refers to the metropolitan area. Table 4.3 below outlines the retail hierarchy for the Limerick metropolitan area as outlined in the Joint Retail Strategy in which Dooradoyle (Crescent Shopping Centre) is designated a Tier 2 Level 1 retail centre.

Table 4.3 Retail Hierarchy for the Limerick Metropolitan Area

Limerick Metropolitan Area		
Tier 1		Limerick City Centre
Tier 2	Level 1	Dooradoyle (Crescent Shopping Centre)
	Level 2(District Centres)	Caherdavin Castletroy Parkway Roxboro Moyross

4.5.2 Dooradoyle (Crescent Shopping Centre)

The Crescent Shopping Centre, Dooradoyle is the only Tier 2 Level 1 Retail centre in the Limerick metropolitan area. The main components of the centre are the Crescent Shopping Centre, the cinema, Limerick County Council buildings, a public library providing a mixture of retail, commercial, leisure, and public and community facilities.

The Crescent Shopping Centre functions as a major retail destination in the Limerick Metropolitan area and the region. It enjoys a strategic and accessible location with its

combination of comparison and convenience shopping, and accessibility to the national road network attracting custom from a wide catchment area.

The retail strategy responds to the effects of recent development by re-establishing the importance of Limerick City Centre at the top of the regional hierarchy, and just as importantly, the preferred location for new retail development in the Limerick Metropolitan Area. The intention is for Limerick City Centre to recapture trade it has lost to the Crescent Shopping Centre and to out of centre shopping facilities.

Objective ED 7: Dooradoyle (Crescent Shopping Centre)

It is the objective of Limerick County Council in relation to Dooradoyle (Crescent Shopping Centre) to:

1. encourage re-investment, upgrading and limited expansion of retail floor space within the Crescent Shopping Centre where it does not alter its role and function with respect to Limerick City Centre and the retail hierarchy; and
2. allow additional floor space for ancillary facilities such as banks and other financial services, restaurants and public houses, offices and leisure, social and community uses.

This objective provides scope to improve the area as a location for financial services, restaurants and public houses, offices and leisure, social and community uses. There is significant scope to provide for an improved civic amenity at the Crescent Shopping Centre, particularly in tandem with the provision of the above facilities. In particular, the Centre has potential for the following;

- Provision of a civic square within the shopping centre site appropriately located to take advantage of existing and potential public transport links and community uses. This could make provision for the existing weekly farmers market operating from the site as well as other cultural and civic uses such as an outdoor theatre;
- Pedestrian connections between the various uses within the Shopping Centre and to the wider Dooradoyle area;
- Public transport connections including the quality bus corridor serving the site and the potential future use of the Limerick-Mungret spur railway line for commuter passenger services and the potential for a public transport interchange between these two public transport routes;
- Potential for traffic calming and pedestrian priority on the access roads to the shopping centre;
- Hard and soft landscaping and street furniture.

4.5.3 Neighbourhood and Village Centres

Local Centres or Neighbourhood Centres are defined in the Retail Strategy as small groups of shops typically comprising a newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population.

Within the Southern Environs Area, neighbourhood centres comprise small local parades with very limited car parking which meet the daily needs of a very local area. Their function is extremely important locally to meet 'top-up' convenience goods shopping needs (i.e. those products which need replacing between main food shopping trips) and to provide local services, including the provision of takeaway food. From a policy perspective they are also important as they constitute a sustainable provision of retailing, removing the need to travel and also thereby reducing levels of congestion.

There are a number of village and neighbourhood centres within the Southern Environs area:

- Mungret Village
- Courtfield Shopping Centre, Gouldavoher
- Racefield Centre, Father Russell Road
- Dooradoyle Road Neighbourhood Centre, Sluggary
- Ballycummin Neighbourhood Centre

Land is zoned for a Neighbourhood Centre at Kilmallock Road, Crossagalla and it is also proposed that a neighbourhood centre be accommodated at Mungret College to serve future residential development in this area.

Objective ED 8: Neighbourhood and village centres, and local shops

"It is an objective of Limerick County Council in relation to

1 Neighbourhood and village centres, to:

a. Support the provision of modern convenience goods stores, of an appropriate scale, and associated retail and service units to enable these centres to meet the day to day needs of their local catchment population.

In the context of Limerick City and its environs the priority shall be to locate large retail developments in town and city centre locations.

Any future development in neighbourhood centres will be required to ensure that the neighbourhood centre complies with the definition of neighbourhood centres at set out at Page 54 of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012, which is that neighbourhood centres "comprise a small group of shops, typically comprising newsagent, small supermarket/general grocery store, sub-post office and other small shops of a local nature serving a small, localised catchment population".

b. Within Neighbourhood Centres the entire gross convenience shopping floor area shall not exceed 900sqm in area, (600sqm in area, net). The role of neighbourhood centres should not be allowed to expand to encompass a materially broader range of comparison goods than currently exists in such areas as this could lead to further competition with the City Centre. In addition, any comparison floor space in a neighborhood centre shall comprise a secondary element of the overall floor space representing not more than 20% of the net floor area of a single unit.

2 Local shops, to

- a. Support the provision of small-scale shops to meet the day-to-day requirements of local people.
- b. Promote local shops to meet a gap in provision where this would achieve regeneration benefits.

Objective ED 9: Retail Development

It is an objective of the Council to require the following in relation to proposed retail developments:

- a) That proposals at ground floor level in retail areas within the District and Neighbourhood centres are restricted to shopping (where permitted in accordance with the Retail Strategy) and service activities. Storage use will not be permitted as the primary use in this location.
- b) Encourage the use of upper floors in retail premises for commercial and / or residential use.
- c) Ensure that new retail development is of a high standard of architectural design, finish and layout.
- d) Encourage the retention of traditional shop fronts where they exist and discourage the use of external roller shutters, internally illuminated signs and inappropriate projecting signs.

Objective ED 10: Out of Centre locations

In relation to Out of Centre locations it is an objective of the Council:

- a) Not to permit any more retail floor space;
- b) Not to permit any new food stores, including discount stores. They should be part of existing or new centres;
- c) To consider new neighbourhood centre and /or local shops where they would serve new areas of housing development or to meet areas of deficiency.

4.6 Other Commercial & Retail Facilities

There is a scattering of retail facilities within the Southern Environs which do not form part of Neighbourhood centres, some of which serve nearby local residents and others serving a wider catchment area like the retail and commercial developments along St. Nesson's Road in close proximity to the Hospital.

Outlets such as pubs, offices, etc. will generally be required to locate within the district or neighbourhood shopping centres or within existing commercial areas.

Overall Strategic Policy

Policy T1: Transport

It is the policy of the Council to seek to improve the overall quality of life by improving levels of accessibility; reducing dependence on private car transport; reducing the need to travel; encouraging the use of energy efficient forms of transport and alternatives to the private car.

Policy T2: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan

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

5.1 Introduction

This Local Area Plan is being formulated at an important time of transition both in the economic sphere and in the policy context. In the latter regard, the Government's policy 'Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future', the newly adopted Mid-West Regional Guidelines, the County Development Plan 2010, and the emerging 30 year Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) all point in the direction of bringing about cumulative improvements of existing fixed infrastructure and in the design of new infrastructure that will make non-car transport modes more attractive.

At national level, 'Smarter Travel' (DEHLG) has as a target that by 2020 the percentage of those travelling to work by car will decrease from 65% to 45%: to this end, it recommends a range of actions, much of which will be implemented through the National Development Plan. Limerick County Council is acting in close co-operation with transport providers, Limerick City Council, the University of Limerick and other stakeholders to deliver on these actions under the umbrella of the Regional Planning Guidelines and the emerging Mid-West Area Strategic Plan.

The accessibility of the Southern Environs to the wider region has improved with the completion of the Limerick Southern Ring Road, as part of the M7 to Dublin, and the completion of the Shannon tunnel which links the M7 to Shannon Airport, Clare and Galway bypassing Limerick City centre. The scheme provides for a high quality roadway around the southern periphery of Limerick City and its environs between the N7 (Limerick-Dublin Road) at Annacotty and the N18 (Limerick-Galway), linking all national routes converging on the city as follows:

- N18 Limerick-Shannon-Ennis-Galway
- N69 Limerick-Foynes-Tralee

- N20 Limerick-Cork
- N21 Limerick-Newcastlewest-Tralee via N20
- N24 Limerick-Waterford
- N7 Limerick-Dublin.

Improvements to the national road network have released more capacity in the remaining road network, and this contributes to reducing traffic congestion, and creating more space and facilities for transport modes other than the car.

The Council is committed to the protection of the capacity of the national road network. To this end, the Council shall have regard to all relevant Government guidance including DoECLG 'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines' (DoECLG, 2012) in the carrying out of its functions. In addition, care shall be taken in the carrying out of its statutory functions, to ensure development does not prejudice the future development or impair the capacity of the planned core network under TEN-T Regulations, which includes the Foynes to Limerick Road improvement scheme.

This chapter should be read in conjunction with map 3 which outlines the existing and proposed transport provisions for the area.



View of the Limerick Southern Ring Road Phase 2, Bunlickey Lake in the foreground, Ballykeeffe in the Background

Objective T 1: Protection of junctions onto the Southern Ring Road

It is an objective of the council to protect the junctions onto the Southern Ring Road by not permitting new access onto these junctions, or developments which would effectively rely on these junctions or create traffic levels that would reduce their design life.

Objective T 2: Advertising adjacent to major transport routes

It is the objective of the Council to prohibit advertising signage adjacent to major transport routes.

Objective T 3: Protection of selected stretches of regional or local road

It is the objective of the Council to prohibit frontage development or the creation of new access points along the following sections of road except where expressly identified in this plan:

- a) The Dock road from the Bunlicky roundabout eastwards to Bawneys Bridge on the City Boundary; and
- b) From the Raheen Roundabout to Ballycummin Junction.

Objective T 4: New link roads

(a) It is an objective of the Council to ensure safe and adequate access to existing and developing districts within the Environs by seeking the provision/ improvement of new link roads and junctions as shown on Map 3 as shown on the Masterplan map and Map 3. In the layout and design of link roads attention shall be given to the context and interface with surrounding land uses in compliance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DoECLG,2014).

(b) Proposals should make provision for the accommodation of bus services along the most significant link routes, which shall include identification of bus stopping and turning areas, as well as carriageway capacity and through routes.

(c) Consideration shall be given to preparing a Supplementary Development Contributions Scheme to secure the provision of new link roads in the area.

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

Objective T5 Alternative to Blackberry Lane / Dock Road Junction:

It is the intention of Limerick County Council to close vehicular access from Blackberry lane onto the Dock road once an alternative junction is available. In this regard, development of lands zoned 'Enterprise & Employment' south of the Dock road and east of the R510, which exceeds capacity on the existing Blackberry Lane / Dock Road junction, shall provide for and utilise the new proposed road junction onto the Dock road in place of the existing Blackberry lane – Dock road junction as shown on Map 1A.

Objective T6 Access to Limerick City:

It is the objective of Limerick County Council to accommodate the provision of access to Limerick City from the south having regard to proposals put forward by the Limerick Regeneration Agency in this regard.

5.2 Public Transport

Bus Éireann operates a regular service in the area which runs every ten minutes every day except Sundays, which is every twenty minutes. This links Colbert railway station in the City centre with the Crescent shopping centre, Regional hospital, and Raheen industrial estate, and exploits the advantage of the Quality Bus Corridor along St.Nessans road. In addition to this service, Bus Eireann operates regular local services to the major residential areas of Ballycummin/Dooradoyle to the southeast of St. Nessans road and to Gouldavoher on the Father Russell road. Mungret village is not served by any City services per se: it is the last stop on a rural bus service from Glin and Foynes before Limerick bus station. It stops at Mungret five times a day on average.

A dedicated bus lane ('Quality Bus Corridor') has been constructed and follows a new bridge over the M7 to link the City with Dooradoyle and Raheen, and the major centres of the Crescent Shopping Centre, the Regional Hospital and Raheen Business Park along the main road (St. Nessans road). One lane is proposed as an extension to the existing quality bus corridor (QBC) on St. Nessan's Road, to link the indicative park and ride at Loughmore roundabout with the Raheen Roundabout which is the terminating point of the existing bus lane from the city. This will include the provision of an inbound bus lane, cycle lanes, footpaths, pavement, drainage, etc. The Council supports the development of a bus lane from the Raheen roundabout to link with the City centre.

The Council recognises the importance of protecting existing infrastructure to promote sustainable forms of transport. It has included an objective in the County Development Plan, 2010 (Objective IN06), to work with Iarnrod Eireann to improve the Limerick - Mungret spur railway line including consideration of stations and park and ride to enable it to be used for commuter passenger services.

Objective T 7: Movement and accessibility

It is the objective of the County Council to:

- (a) Encourage the development of a safe and efficient movement and accessibility network that will cater for the needs of all users and to encourage priority for walking, cycling, public transport provision and accident reduction;
- (b) Ensure that adequate facilities and access provision are provided for those with disabilities in the community. The Council will strive to ensure that the provision of such facilities will be in line with current good practice in relation to such issues.

Objective T 8: Protection of spur railway line to Mungret

It is an objective of the Council to protect the existing spur railway line to Mungret and co-operate with landowners, Iarnrod Eireann, Bus Eireann, Limerick City Council, and the Southside Regeneration Agency under the aegis of the Mid-West Area Strategic Plan, to investigate the appropriate use of the freight railway line and corridor as a quality bus corridor or for commuter train traffic.

Objective T 9: Measures in support of public transport

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) protect existing dedicated bus lanes and support the development of further quality bus corridors, in particular from the Raheen roundabout and Loughmore roundabout to link with the City centre.
- (b) Work with Bus Eireann to ensure that the provision of bus services is responsive to need including the emergence of new developments,
- (c) Ensure that the provision of regular and quality public transport facilities in the vicinity and the quality of pedestrian and cycle connections to these facilities are material considerations in proposals for new developments.
- (d) Ensure there is provision for possible extension of bus services into new developments by having penetrable layouts.
- (e) Prioritise the location of bus and rail corridors and stops in the layout of pedestrian and cycle access ways.

5.3 Strategic Park and Ride

It is an objective of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 to identify, protect and promote sites for park and ride facilities at strategic entry points at the radial routes into Limerick City. The County Council therefore will support the creation of park and ride (P+R) facilities on the Dock Road (N69) in the vicinity of the new Dock Road Interchange and at Loughmore roundabout where it can serve to reduce the overall length of car journeys into Limerick and the City Centre. Sites will be identified having regard to the emerging Mid-West Area Strategic Plan.

Objective T 10: Park and Ride

It is an objective of the Council to promote and support the provision of park and ride facilities at two strategic entrance points to the city, within the Southern Environs, one in the region of Castlemungret on the N69 and the other at Ballycummin close to the existing Loughmore Common roundabout.

5.4 Walking and Cycling

The Council has identified key pedestrian routes within the area and will seek the provision of these routes as opportunities arise (see map 2). Map 3 shows the existing and proposed cycle lanes for the Southern Environs and should ultimately form part of a coordinated cycle and walking strategy for the Southern Environs.

Since 2005, much progress has been made by the installation of cycle-ways along St. Nessans road (from the City boundary to Raheen roundabout) and along Dooradoyle road from the junction with St. Nessans road as far as the N20; along St. Nessans road from Raheen roundabout as far as the City boundary. The proposed routes as shown in Map 3 are designed to extend the network further, placing emphasis on routes to schools and shops and forming links to the City and along open space amenities. Ultimately it is hoped that there will be a coherent network of off road and on-road cycleways, linking Mungret, Raheen and Dooradoyle to the Crescent Shopping Centre and Limerick City. The proposed cycle network for the Southern Environs Area will link up with the City Council's proposed cycle network. Having regard to the Mungret-Loughmore area's designation as the primary development area in the Southern Environs -with objectives for development of residential, education, open space and community uses- priority shall be given to developing the proposed cycle lane and walk way along the regional road R859 from Quinn's Cross to Mungret Village as indicated on Map 2 and Map 3.

Furthermore, an opportunity exists to provide a landscaped shared-surface footpath and cycleway along the Ballinacurra Creek, segregated from roads that could link up with the City's proposed Dock Road Cycle Route.



To comply with the requirements of 'Smarter Travel' (DEHLG) the Council will continue to seek the development of cycle and pedestrian routes throughout the plan area.

Objective T11: Provision of cycle routes

It is an objective of the Council to seek to improve and create additional facilities for pedestrians and cyclists as opportunities arise as part of new developments. The Council will seek to secure the provision of pedestrian routes identified on map 3.

CHAPTER 6: INFRASTRUCTURE

Overall Strategic Policy

Policy IN 1: Water services and waste management

It is the policy of the Council to provide adequate water and sewerage facilities in the Southern Environs; raise awareness of waste management issues and encourage the minimisation, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste.

Policy IN 2: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan

It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 in relation to infrastructure and the objectives outlined below.

6.1 Introduction

There is a need for a modern and comprehensive infrastructure to facilitate development. Since the adoption of the 2005 Southern Environs LAP the area has benefited from considerable investment in advanced civil engineering such as the Shannon Tunnel, the Southern Ring Road Phase 2, the upgrade of the Clareville water plant, the Bunlickey waste water treatment plant, and in a smaller scale - but which is important nevertheless - the Mungret Civic Amenity Centre to accommodate responsible waste disposal. The Council will continue to strive to maximise the use of the existing infrastructure over the lifetime of this LAP.

6.2 Water Supply

Limerick County Council currently obtains its water supply for the Southern Environs from the City Council water treatment works at Clareville, which draws water from the River Shannon. The overall level of service within the Southern Environs area is satisfactory.

6.3 Foul Sewerage

The Southern Environs waste is directed to the Limerick City Council plant at Bunlickey, which over the last ten years or so has been substantially upgraded. The plant has recently been granted a wastewater discharge licence by the EPA.

The village of Mungret is the main area, which is developed and not yet covered by sewers in the Southern Environs. The Council have prepared the Mungret Sewerage scheme to address this deficit.

Objective IN 1: Sewerage facilities within Mungret

It is the objective of the Council to:

Ensure that waste water infrastructure is adequate and appropriate and will keep pace with development that takes place in the plan area, in collaboration with Irish Water, to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters into which any discharges from such plants might take place.

6.4 Surface Water Drainage

There is an issue with the disposal of surface water within the plan area which needs to be addressed. Much of the surface water in the Southern Environs has to go into the Ballinacurra Creek/Ballynacloough river which is itself subject to flooding due to tidal surges. In addition the Limerick mains waste water treatment plant at Bunlicky is dealing with volumes for which it was not designed, due to storm and foul water mixing in the sewerage system. Every effort must be made to ensure that surface water is not routed through the plant which would further compromise its functioning.

Objective IN 2: Surface water disposal and current development

It is an objective of the Council to deal with the issue of disposal of surface water being generated by current development in the area. This could be achieved by attenuation ponds, the application of sustainable urban drainage techniques or by maximising the amount of unpaved surfaces as the opportunity arise.

Objective IN 3: Surface water disposal and proposed development

It is an objective of the Council to require the submission of surface water design calculations establishing the suitability of drainage between the site and a suitable outfall in order to establish whether the existing surface water drainage can accommodate an additional discharge generated by a proposed development(s).

Objective IN 4: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

It is the objective of the Council to require that all applications for development demonstrate that appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems are examined and where feasible provided.

6.5 Flood Risk Management

Flood risk management is a problem in the Southern Environs area due to the low lying topography of the area and the extent of development.

The Southern Environs includes areas that are subject to a number of different types of flooding:

- 1) Seasonal groundwater flooding, in Loughmore Common and Moneteen turlough adjacent to Mungret parish church.
- 2) Pluvial flooding (through rainwater and/ or urban generated) and Riverine flooding in a tributary of the Barnakyle at the southwest of Raheen.
- 3) Coastal and tidal flooding from the Shannon estuary and up the Ballinacurra creek/ Ballinacloyh River.

Predictive Flood maps show the following:

- Flood Zone A - shows the area that could be affected by flooding from rivers, if there were no flood defences. This area contains river flooding from a flood that has a 1% (1 in 100) or greater chance of happening each year.
- Flood Zone B - shows the additional extent of an extreme flood from rivers, without the influence of flood defences. These outlying areas are likely to be affected by a major flood, with between a 1% (1 in 100) and 0.1% (1 in 1000) chance of occurring each year.

The JBA flood maps are a screening tool for planning authorities. Accuracy of the flood mapping is directly correlated to the Digital Terrain Model (DTM), and individual structures, such as bridges, culverts, weirs and sluices, are not explicitly modelled. The maps are therefore not a substitute for detailed hydraulic modelling, such as may be required to assess the level of flood risk for a specific development. The purpose of the flood maps is to guide decision making when determining whether a detailed Flood Risk Assessment is required for any given site. The Predictive Flood Zones Map is intended for guidance, and cannot provide details for individual properties.

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

As part of the plan preparation process a flood risk assessment was carried out and the precautionary approach has been adopted in terms of zoning (see flood risk assessment in appendix 5 and the appropriate assessment report in appendix 4, which accompanies this plan). Re-zoning has taken place as a result of the assessments undertaken.

Having regard to the flood risk information available such as the newly obtained predictive flood maps indicating flood vulnerable zones the Planning Authority will require applications in areas at risk of flooding to be supported by a comprehensive flood risk assessment. All flood risk assessments should have regard to national flood hazard mapping, predicted changes in flood events resulting from climate change and the River Shannon CFRAM when completed by the OPW and the flood vulnerability zones indicated by the mapping available on the Councils website.

Objective IN 5: Flood risk assessment

It is an objective of the Council to require a comprehensive flood risk assessment for proposals in zoned areas at risk of flooding or areas adjoining same. The effects up and down stream shall be considered as should the cumulative effects of these developments.

Flood risk assessment shall be carried out to the appropriate level of detail to demonstrate that flood risk to and from the development can and will be adequately managed. Such assessment will have to be guided by the contents of the *The Planning Systems and Flood Risk Management (November 2009)* guidelines and any subsequent guidance on the topic.

Where development is permitted in areas subject to flooding, flood mitigation requirements will be required by the Council in terms of design, both internal and external and in layout and in the provision of appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Infrastructure (SUDS).

Objective IN 6: Flood risk and the Shannon CFRAM report

It is an objective of the Council to be guided by the measures proposed by the forthcoming Shannon CFRAM report.

6.6 Waste Management

Since the adoption of the last Local Area Plan a Civic Amenity Centre has opened in Mungret. The centre won the Civic Amenity Site/Recycling Centre of the Year 2010 at the annual Repak Recycling Awards ceremony. The centre is provided primarily for the householders of the region to recycle their waste. County Limerick's household recycling rate reached over 30% in 2009 helped by the waste recycling services provided by the Mungret Civic Amenity Site. Emphasis is now on prevention as each inhabitant of the region produces approximately 2.5kg of food waste every week which now must be diverted from landfill to become a reusable resource. Limerick County Council will continue to promote waste prevention and minimisation as part of the local planning process.



Mungret Recycling Amenity Site

Objective IN 7: Waste Management

It is an objective of the Council to require the provision of recycling facilities and adequately screened waste storage areas for new residential and commercial developments.

Objective IN 8: Waste recycling systems

It is an objective of the Council to ensure the implementation of waste recycling systems on all construction, infrastructure and demolition schemes of five or more housing units or commercial or industrial development on sites in excess of 0.5 hectares through provision of waste management plans as part of the planning application process.

Objective IN 9: Provision of composting facilities

It is an objective of the Council to ensure developers provide new housing with effective composting facilities by applying suitable planning conditions to new residential development.

Objective IN 10: Shared Bin Spaces

It is an objective of the Council to require all commercial and residential developments be provided with adequate internal and external space (this space should be covered, ventilated and allow servicing directly from this location) for the correct storage of waste and recyclable materials. This is particularly important in relation to shared bin spaces such as apartment developments. In such cases the following must be provided for:

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

6.7 Energy and Electricity

The Southern Environs is the location of overhead 110kV transmission lines and four substations. All transmission lines (i.e. 110kV above) are the responsibility of Eirgrid while ESB is responsible for the distribution lines. The substations are located at Ballycummin (newly installed in the Raheen business park), Sluggary (adjacent to the Crescent College grounds), in Moneteen (adjacent to the cemetery at Castlemungret) and in Mungret (which serves the Cement factory). The lines cross undeveloped and industrial areas and do not transverse any areas that are zoned for residential development in the LAP, with the sole exception of a short corridor between developed areas on either side of the line to Sluggary.

Eirgrid have plans to create a loop onto the Moneteen Limerick line from the Ballycummin substation.

The network should facilitate the exploitation of renewable energy resources, improve energy security, and make energy products available at reasonable cost to people in accordance with their needs. The Council will work with Limerick-Clare Energy Agency to improve energy conservation and renewable energy use.

Objective IN 11: Small-scale Renewable Energy

It is the objective of the Council to consider applications for individual wind turbines in lands zoned for enterprise and employment, industrial or education and which are related to an existing development primarily to serve the energy needs of the applicant. Such applications will need to demonstrate that they will not detract from the amenity value of nearby residential areas and will be subject, where necessary, to the provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive which may require appropriate assessment of such developments. Such applications will also be subject to normal planning criteria. Domestic scale renewable energy proposals will be encouraged where appropriate.

6.8 Access to Natural Gas

There are two important gas pipelines, elements of the national gas network, which traverse the Southern Environs. One goes north and traverses in part a green field residential zoned area at Cahernardrish (near Mungret) and the other follows St. Nessan's road to serve Limerick City. It is important that cognisance is taken of the gas pipeline in the planning of layouts.

6.9 Access to Broadband

The Southern Environs benefits from access to high speed, open access and reliable broadband, through the Metropolitan Area Network (MAN). The broadband is delivered through fibre optic cable. It is important that in all new development schemes including road improvement schemes, the correct protocol is laid down at the outset to ensure that fibre optic cables are installed to deliver the benefits of this high speed network to homes.

6.10 Telecommunications

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

Objective IN 12: Telecommunications

It is the objective of the Council to facilitate proposals for telecommunications masts, antennae and ancillary equipment where it can be established that there would be no negative impact on the surrounding area and that no other mode or location can be identified which would provide adequate telecommunication cover to the standard required by local land uses.

Overall Strategic Policy

Policy EH1: Environment and Heritage

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the archaeological, architectural, natural and built heritage of the Southern Environs is protected.

Policy EH2: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan

It is the policy of the Council to ensure all proposals shall comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016 in relation to environment and heritage and the objectives outlined below.

7.1 Introduction

The demands being placed on our environment, both natural and built, to satisfy the needs of farming, forestry, industry, housing, transport, leisure and urban growth are ever-changing and increasing. It is the intention of the Planning Authority to maintain a high quality environment while satisfying economic and social needs. The planning system guides the development and use of land in the public interest and the common good in a sustainable fashion.

7.2 Archaeological Heritage

The place names in the Southern Environs tell the story of the area's topography, economic history, and the structural development of its built heritage of the past. A number of townlands suggest of the presence of water in one form or another. Ballykeefe, the anglicised form of Béal an Chaoith which means "the mouth of the swamp" and An Slogaire (Sluggary in the anglicised form) means "The swallow hole". A number of place names indicate that the area that we now know as the Southern Environs has provided homes for people for centuries. Caheranardrish and Rathbane speak of stone and earthen forts, which would have given shelter to farmers and their livestock in the early periods of Limerick's history. Gabhal an Dá Bhóthar, Gouldavoher today, tells us of the existence of a fork of two roads - the junction surviving to this day. These place names indicate local conditions which are still present today. There are parts of the environs which are low lying and which are protected by the Office of Public work and privately owned embankments along both the Shannon and the Ballinacurra Creek.

7.2.1 Archaeological Remains

The physical remains of the archaeological heritage are considerable, despite much development over the years. The evidence that can survive in and around these sites is extremely valuable and every step to preserve it or at a minimum to recover it must be taken. Recent research programmes have identified the Estuary of the Shannon as a

valuable source of archaeological evidence for past fishing practices. On land there are several significant archaeological sites, such as the monastic complex at Mungret. These, and all other known archaeological sites are detailed on an accompanying Map 4 and listed in Appendix 6.

The location of each archaeological monument is provided in the Record of Monuments and Places which is maintained and up-dated by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, a branch of the National Monuments Service. The 1994 amendment to the National Monuments Act established the Record of Monument and Places on a statutory basis with a set of maps and a catalogue of sites, copies of which are available for public consultation in the Council's Planning Department and in all the county libraries. Under the provisions of Section 12 of the National Monuments Amendment Act 1994 any person proposing any works (this includes exempted development) 'at or in relation to such a monument' has to give two months notice to the National Monuments Service. Sites continue to be discovered and some of those found subsequent to the publication (1997) have been included in the Site and Monuments Database which is available on the website archaeology.ie.

There are certain sites in State ownership or guardianship or which have been served with temporary preservation orders. These sites are included in Appendix 6. Under the 2004 Amendment to the National Monuments Act, any of these sites or sites deemed National Monuments in the care or guardianship of the Local Authority will require ministerial consent for works in their vicinity.

Objective EH 1 Preservation of the Recorded Archaeological Heritage

It is the objective of the Council to seek the preservation of all known sites and features of historical and archaeological interest. This includes all the sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places as established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994

Objective EH 2 Preservation of Unrecorded/Newly Discovered Archaeological Heritage

It is the objective of the Council to protect and preserve all sites and features of historical interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.

Objective EH 3 Protection of the Setting of Archaeological Monuments

It is an objective of the Council to ensure that any proposed development shall not have a negative impact on the character or setting of an archaeological monument.

Objective EH 4 Area of Special Development Control at Mungret Monastic Complex

It is an objective of the Council not to permit future development in the Special Control Area other than leisure uses and moderate extensions to existing dwellings.

Objective EH5: Protection of Monuments within areas of Proposed Open Space

It is the objective of the Council in relation to sites listed in the Record of Monuments and Places and other sites and features of historical interest, to require the following:

- a) the area of a monument and the associated buffer area shall not be included as part of the open space requirement demanded of a specific development but should be additional to the required open spaces; and
- b) if appropriate, where such a monument lies within a development, a conservation and/or management plan for that monument shall be submitted as part of the landscape plan for that development.



Mungret Abbey – Part of the Area of Special Development Control

7.3 Architectural Heritage

7.3.1 Record of Protected Structures

The Record of Protected Structures for the Southern Environs is particularly rich and ranges over a wide spectrum of site types from thatched farmhouses, to Roche Castle, to examples of 20th century architecture, such as the Roman Catholic Church in the Brothers of Charity complex at Banemore. See Map 5 for the locations of the sites entered on the Record of Protected Structures within the Southern Environs Local Plan Area.

Objective EH 6 Sensitive Re-use of Older Buildings and Structures

It is the objective of the Council to encourage the rehabilitation, reuse and change of use of existing older buildings and protected structures where appropriate, in order to give a continued viability to the existing building stock.

7.3.2 Architectural Conservation Area

It is considered that the designation of an Architectural Conservation Area in and around the Regional Hospital, Dooradoyle is necessary to secure the appreciation of the setting of the Regional Hospital campus. The assignment of Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) status to a place does not preclude future development but the development permitted must be of a high standard and complement the surviving architectural styles, in accordance with the provisions of the County Development Plan 2010.

7.3.2.1 Description of the Regional Hospital Architectural Conservation Area

Though work on building the Regional Hospital did not commence until 1951, the genesis of its design stretches back to the 1930's with the acquisition of sites straddling the Cork Road in 1939, and the entrusting of its design to Limerick architect Patrick Sheehan. A building of high design merit, influenced by the Modern Movement style of architecture coupled with the best of contemporary thinking in patient care and hospital design, was completed in 1954. Monies from the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes funded construction of the building and it's fit-out and the first patients were admitted in September, 1955.

Features of particular significance include the actual layout and orientation of the buildings whereby the maximum potential for utilising daylight was achieved. Crucial to this is the fact that all the wards faced south. Large windows and glazed doors that gave access to projecting sheltered balconies, emphasising the perceived benefits of sunlight in patient care. Other features of note, directly related to the architectural trends of the period of design, were the emphasis on horizontal lines in the windows, wrap around balconies and the flat roofs found throughout the structure. A technical feature of interest, highlighted by the late Professor Sean De Courcy in a paper published in 1970, was the use of movement / expansion joints that prevent cracks occurring throughout the building, which is constructed mainly of reinforced concrete.

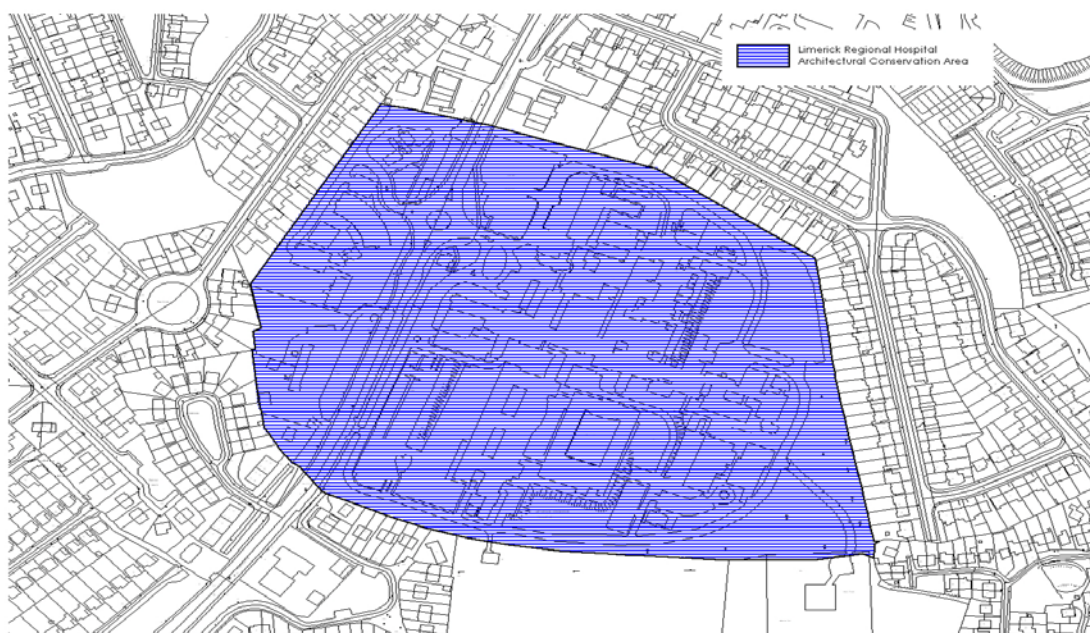
The hospital campus has not stood still in the intervening years and there have been many developments on either side of the Cork Road, some of high architectural merit, others being less successful. The principal objective in establishing the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) for the Regional Hospital is to permit the hospital, its grounds, and the health services provided there to develop while protecting features of special interest. The planning authority recognises that the hospital's operators are cognisant of the institution's heritage value, and the dividend therein, having prepared a Protective Development Control Plan for the campus in 2004.

Objective EH 7: Regional Hospital ACA

It is the objective of the Council to ensure the following:

- (a) The principal buildings within the Regional Hospital Campus reflect the periods in which they were designed and / or constructed. The planning authority will seek to have this developmental process maintained as the hospital's operators formulate plans for future construction within the campus.
- (b) The Planning Authority will not permit insensitive developments that compromise the evolved character of the Architectural Conservation Area.
- (c) Development proposals on sites in the vicinity of the Regional Hospital Architectural Conservation Area will only be permitted where it can clearly be demonstrated that the development will not materially affect the character or the integrity of the ACA.

Figure 3 Regional Hospital Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)



7.4 The Southern Environs Natural Environment

7.4.1 Bio-diversity in the plan area

The River Shannon has been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), while the Ballinacurra Creek is also locally important as a tributary of the Shannon, the upper reaches of which are also part of the Special Area of Conservation site. The presence of designated sites will have implications for development, in terms of buffer zones for which some re-zoning of land from previous development uses to semi-natural open space has taken place.

The River Shannon and the Ballynaclough River are of particular importance due to a number of reasons:

- 1 The presence of the Shannon is important in adding an ecological value to the northern portion of the Southern Environs. However, from an access perspective the difficult

nature of the terrain immediately to the south of the river, and the presence of the cement factory place access restrictions on the river banks not least from a safety perspective.

2 The Ballinacurra Creek is a tributary of the River Shannon. The wet grasslands on the floodplain provide a wildlife corridor and a feeding ground in late autumn and winter for wildfowl. Numbers of waders such as snipe also use the areas close to the river as a breeding site. The creek provides an opportunity for an attractive walkway. This is dealt with in more detail in the section on open space.

3 It has become accepted practice in flood risk management internationally, for river flood plains to remain undeveloped and to allow them to flood naturally in order to decrease the flooding risk to populated areas and developed zones.

The open space / semi natural open space and agricultural zoning of lands immediately adjacent to these river corridors provides a buffer zone that adds to the bio-diversity interest of the area and provides land which can be used as additional feeding areas for the wildfowl populations of the Shannon and tributaries.

Objective EH 8 Integration of natural and landscape features into developments

It is an objective of the Council to promote the integration of existing natural and landscape features and habitats into future developments through careful design and mitigation measures where necessary. In addition, to complement this measure, the Council will focus on the provision of zoning appropriate land uses in proximity to such areas.

Objective EH 9 Roosting or Settlement Facilities for Species

It is an objective of the Council to require the provision of alternate roosting or settlement facilities for species, such as bird or bat boxes, artificial holts, or other artificially created habitats in developments, where considered appropriate.

Objective EH 10 Ecological Assessment

All residential developments over 5 housing units, industrial/commercial developments over 1000sqm, or developments below this threshold where there are species of conservation concern, will be required to submit an ecological assessment of the effects of the development on the site and nearby designated sites, suggesting appropriate mitigation measures, and establishing, in particular, the presence or absence of the following species; the otter, badger, bats, lamprey and protected plant species such as the Triangular Club Rush, Opposite Leaved Pond Weed.

Objective EH 11 Creation of New Habitats

It is an objective of the Council to seek the creation of new habitats by encouraging wild green areas and new water features such as pools and ponds. Management plans for green areas are encouraged to use the minimum of pesticides and herbicides, while the creation of areas that are not subject to public access in order to promote wildlife use is strongly encouraged.

7.4.2 Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Areas

Two designated areas exist within the plan area. These are the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation site, and River Shannon and River Fergus Special Protection Area. These are summarised in the table below.

Table 5.1 SAC and SPA in Southern Environs

Site Code	Site Title	Special Protection Area.	Special Area of Conservation	Comments
4077	River Shannon and River Fergus SPA	X		Part of the largest estuarine complex in Ireland
2165	Lower River Shannon SAC site		X	Part of Shannon catchment. Important for Salmonids

7.4.2.1 Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

This SAC site is unusual in that it covers a number of different counties. It is a riverine designation with its principal aim being the conservation of aquatic life. Several listed species such as lamprey exist in the stretch of river covered by the LAP and the Shannon is also important for salmonid species. It is also an important feeding and breeding ground for wintering wildfowl, perhaps less so here than further down stream. Nonetheless, it is important to ensure that any activities undertaken in the LAP area would not have an impact on water quality and habitats either within the LAP area or downstream. A variety of additional designations apply to the site at downstream locations (e.g. Special Protection Areas, Natural Heritage Areas) reinforcing the importance of ensuring that activities within the Southern Environs have no downstream consequences for natural history designations. One step towards this is the provision of a buffer zone along the embankment side of approximately 30m in width. This would also be necessary to ensure access for maintenance and monitoring purposes by the Office of Public Works personnel to monitor and maintain flood defences.

7.4.2.2 River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA)

This site consists of the estuaries of both the Fergus and the Shannon and together this comprises what is one of the most important and largest wetland sites in Ireland. The invertebrate community in the mudflats, which are a feature of the site, provides a food source for wintering wildfowl, as does the vegetation that fringes the estuary. The SPA is internationally important for the amount of wintering wildfowl that it hosts, with excess of 50,000 wintering wild fowl counted each year.

7.4.2.3 Bunlickey Lake

The site, the eastern part of which has been proposed for designation as part of the River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area, is a man made lake created by the activities of Irish Cement. The lake, which is surrounded by heavily modified ground composed of extracted material from quarries, is an important inland roosting site for cormorants. In addition, the lake itself provides a feeding and breeding area for common wildfowl and waders. The site helps to complement the variety of habitats provided by the river Shannon located approximately 500m to the north, and as such is part of the important complex of habitats along the lower river Shannon for resident and wintering wildfowl.



Views of Bunlickey Lake, the Shannon Tunnel, and the Shannon Estuary

Objective EH 12 Protection of SACs and SPAs

It is an objective of the Council to preserve and protect the River Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the River Shannon and River Fergus Special Protection Area (SPA) from inappropriate development, to maintain its importance in terms of ecology, and as an amenity area both for the Southern Environs, the City and the Environs as a whole. It is also considered important to preserve it and appropriate parts of the Ballynaclough flood plain as a flood risk management zone.

Objective EH 13 Nature Conservation Sites

It is the objective of the Council to:

a) Maintain the conservation value of those sites as defined in the Planning and Development Act 2000-2010 (SPAs, SACs) or lands proposed for inclusion by the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government, as well as any other sites that may be so designated during the lifetime of this plan.

b) Ensure that development projects and development plans likely to have significant effects on European Sites (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) are subject to an appropriate assessment and will not be permitted under this plan unless they comply with article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

c) Maintain the conservation value of all Natural Heritage Areas and also Natural Heritage areas proposed for designation by the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht through the National parks and Wildlife Service, as well as any other sites that may be so designated during the lifetime of the plan through land use zoning of the proposed Loughmore Common Natural Heritage Area that reflects its importance for conservation and sensitivity.

7.4.3 Turloughs and lakes within the Southern Environs

At least two turloughs exist within the Southern Environs area. One is the Loughmore Common, which is a turlough or seasonal lake. In recognition of its importance it is a proposed Natural Heritage Area by the Government through the National Parks and Wildlife Service (reference 000438). Closely associated with the turlough itself are species, which depend on the shallow flooding patterns that are a feature of this site. In terms of bird species mallard, snipe and lapwing are to be found in the area, while in the past all three swan species in Ireland (Whooper, Bewicks and Mute) have been recorded here. Such a site is of course also of interest to the Common Frog, while in the drier portions of the site migrants such as fieldfares also frequent its hedgerows in the winter months.

The plant communities of the turlough are more typical of those of marsh than other turloughs and this is one of the reasons for the ecological importance of the site. This site is a small one and lies entirely within the boundaries of the Southern Environs area.

The main dangers to the site are the gradual encroachment of housing and other development with consequent changes in hydrology. The functioning of the hydrological regime is poorly understood and for this reason caution in terms of development in close proximity to the site is advised. The presence of polluted waters in the drains, which

traverse the site, is also an issue. Some on site flora are dependent on salt in the water feeding the turlough, which reaches the site from the tidal movements of the Shannon, itself a Special Area of Conservation site. This emphasises the interconnected nature of the hydrology of the Southern Environs. Local sources indicate that Moneteen turlough is connected with Loughmore commons. Therefore, additional disturbance to Loughmore Commons and the Moneteen turlough and associated hydrology should be avoided. This is achieved through special zoning in the case of Loughmore Common coterminous with the proposed Natural Heritage Area and the re-zoning of Moneteen turlough from residential to Semi-Natural Open Space.

Table 6 Known Turloughs in the Plan Area

Turlough	Location	Comments
Loughmore Commons	Loughmore Townsland,	Proposed NHA
Moneteen	To rear of Mungret Church	Floods in conjunction with Lough More Commons Turlough. As such they may be interconnected.

Loughmore Common pNHA

Through the Plan as amended (Amendment no.2), the area of Loughmore Common proposed Natural Heritage Area is zoned ‘Semi-Natural Open Space’.

The opportunity was taken to alter the designation on the zoning map to reflect the areas status as a Proposed Natural Heritage area. Some on site flora are dependent on salt in the water feeding the turlough, which reaches the site from the tidal movements of the Shannon, itself a Special Area of Conservation site. This emphasises the interconnected nature of the hydrology of the Southern Environs.

Local sources indicate that Moneteen turlough is connected with Loughmore commons. Therefore, additional disturbance to Loughmore Commons and the Moneteen turlough and associated hydrology should be avoided.

7.4.4 Trees for Preservation within the Plan area

Trees can be as visually prominent as buildings and are an important landscape component. They are able to integrate with building structures providing important landscape features and visual variety. From an ecological viewpoint, whatever the species, it is important to ensure that an adequate tree stock remains within the Southern Environs area.

Closely related to the question of trees in the landscape is that of hedgerows. Within the LAP area there is a presumption against the removal of these landscape features. These are part of the fabric and history of the landscape. Apart from their visual contribution they are also important habitats in their own right. In order to ensure their continued vitality and

usefulness as landscape features and habitats they require continuous management, particularly, if they are to be integrated within new developments.

The link between the quality of the local environment, of which trees are an important component, and human well-being is one that is increasingly recognised. With that in mind the trees and groups of trees listed below are selected as being of significance within the LAP area. These were selected for a number of reasons including from a natural history perspective (e.g. one small group of trees is a rookery), and also from the point of view that trees and landscape features are important cultural, and indeed historical landmarks.

The following trees and groups of trees have been selected as being of landscape interest i.e. part of older landscape features and planted as ornamental trees (See Amenity Map 2):

- 1 Beech lined avenue entrance to Rathurd Castle.
- 2 Beech tree surrounding the Golf Course Club House at Rathbane.
- 3 Beech and Cypress trees around St. Enda's Community School.
- 4 Lime trees in open space off Fr. Russell Road.
- 5 Ornamental trees part of demesne planting, in the grounds of Mungret House. Species include Beech, Maple Horse Chestnut and Cypress.
- 6 Beech and Horse Chestnut trees, to the rear of Mungret Sports ground. These may be a continuation of the planting in the grounds of Mungret House.

The following trees and groups of trees have been selected because of their bio-diversity interest:

- 7 Alder trees on boundary of Mungret pitch and putt course.
- 8 Orchard in Skehacregau townland. Orchards are an increasingly scarce feature of the modern Irish rural landscape. Their retention is particularly important from an ecological viewpoint.
- 9 Roadside Ash trees in Caheranardrish, the site of a small rookery.

Objective EH 14 Incorporation of trees and hedgerows into new developments

It is an objective of the Council to preserve, maintain and incorporate into new development proposals, where appropriate, the existing stands of mature trees and field boundaries.

7.5 Climate Change

Promoting land use patterns and economic activity that minimises effects on climate change is an objective of Limerick County Council. As part of this objective the Council will endeavour to provide local delivery of national policy documents on energy efficiency and climate change. Towards this end, Limerick County Council has established a local energy agency in partnership with Clare County Council and the Limerick Clare Energy Agency (LCEA). The LCEA Climate Change Strategy is an important starting point in this regard.

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

Objective ZD 15: Adaption to Climate Change

It is the objective of the Council to encourage development patterns and designs, both in terms of individual buildings and larger developments and projects and economic activity, which minimise the uses of fossil fuels and makes the best use of local or renewable resources.

Overall Strategic Policy

Policy C1: Community and Recreational Facilities

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the education, health facilities, recreation, open space and community needs of residents, both new and existing, can be provided for and that future development in the Southern Environs will be accompanied by a corresponding expansion of these facilities and amenities.

Policy C2: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all developments in relation to community infrastructure, education, childcare, health facilities, open space, and recreational facilities comply with the policies, objectives and development management standards of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 and the objectives outlined below.

8.1 Introduction

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

8.2 Community and Recreation

Since the adoption of the Southern Environs LAP in 2005 the county library headquarters has been relocated to Lissanalta House in Dooradoyle. The Limerick Studies Service is an important modern archive facility located in Lissanalta House incorporating local history and genealogy and is open to the public by appointment.



Lissanalta House, Dooradoyle Road

Sporting facilities are generally confined to private clubs in the Southern Environs. Approximately 20 hectares of lands in the Southern Environs are private pitches and approximately 5 hectares of Council lands in the area is leased to similar bodies for sport.

While there is a shortfall in the provision of public open space and playgrounds in the Southern Environs area the Council continues to seek the provision of such facilities. However, the downturn in the economy with the consequent reduction in income from development contributions places a serious constraint on this response.

The Council has continually prevented encroachment of development onto the land designated for neighbourhood parks in Ballykeefe and Mungret. In 2009 a Part 8 procedure under the Planning and Development Acts was completed for lands in Ballykeeffe. This included a proposal for a park of approximately 5.7 hectares with a children's play area, grass pitch, floodlit all weather pitch, lake feature, natural habitats, walkways and cycleways.

This plan zones additional lands for open space to facilitate the expansion of sports and community facilities in Mungret. Provision is also made for the development of playgrounds/playlots in tandem with new residential development. The identification of possible amenity walkways and cycle routes also forms an important part of the plan.

Objective C1: Protection of lands designated for Open Space

It is the objective of the Council to:

- a) Reserve the land for the provision of neighbourhood parks in Ballykeeffe and Mungret to ensure that the current and future open space needs of the Southern Environs residents are met.
- b) Protect existing open space, by not permitting development, which would result in the loss of or reduce the recreational value of open space, including public and private playing fields, allotments and informal open space, unless a replacement site is provided which is equivalent in terms of accessibility, size and quality.

- c) Protect designated semi-natural open space areas from development, for the enjoyment of the community and flood protection.
- d) Retain existing areas of amenity open space, such as woodlands, archaeological monuments and visual landmarks throughout housing areas.

Objective C 2: Open space hierarchy and playground provision

It is the objective of the Council to:

- (a) Require residential development to adhere to the requirements regarding open space within housing estates in accordance with Table 7 Open Space Hierarchy in Residential Estates.
- (b) Require applications for residential developments to demonstrate clearly that sufficient consideration by the developer has been given to the provision of functional open space as per DEHLG 2009 guidelines on design of urban residential development.
- (c) The Council will seek to ensure that every new residential unit in new housing estates is located within 100m walking distance of a pocket park / play lot, small park, or local park. Such facilities must be clearly delineated on planning application drawings and demarcated in advance of the sale of any of the units.

Table 7 Open Space Hierarchy within Residential Estates

Type of Public Open Space	Area	Accessibility from residential units	Note
Play lot/ pocket park – primarily catering for play for younger children	400sqm – 0.2 hectare	Every home within 100m walking distance	To be provided in all cases in housing estates, overlooked with passive surveillance by as many houses as is practicable. Not permitted to side or rear of dwellings. Developers will be required to provide a minimum of two permanent play features on site.
Small Park	0.2 ha – 2 ha	Every residential unit within 400m walking distance	To accommodate a small play ground with a minimum of 4 play

			features, kick around space, and passive recreation. Must be overlooked with passive surveillance by as many houses as is practicable. Not permitted to side or rear of dwellings.
Local Park	2 hectares – 20 hectares	Residences to be within 1km	To accommodate a wide range of uses including playing pitches, passive recreation and biodiversity areas

Objective C 3: Walkways

It is the objective of the Council to:

- a) Continue to facilitate the development of walkways as indicated on Map 2 in co-operation with local interested parties including the private, voluntary and public sector. Any proposed development adjacent to such walkways must incorporate connecting pathways into the designated walkway in their design. Developments shall be designed to ensure that properties over look proposed walkways.
- b) Facilitate a riverside walkway between Tervoe Creek and Ballinacurra Creek.
- c) Seek the provision of a walkway and a pedestrian right of way on the Black Walk in the Grounds of Mungret College, and from the Black Walk to the GAA grounds to Moneteen Turlough adjacent to Mungret Church.

Objective C 4: Allotments and Community Gardens

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

8.3 Education

The area is currently served by five primary schools, a special needs school and one secondary school. Demand for educational facilities continues to rise in the Southern Environs.

The Department of Education and Science have indicated that two additional sites are required for primary schools and one new second level school in the Southern Environs area to accommodate permanent sites for the Gaelscoil and Lets Educate Together and a secondary school. The plan has zoned additional lands 'Education and Community' for this purpose.

Two permanent buildings are planned for Limerick Educate Together and for the Gaelscoil Raithin in the Mungret Loughmore area in lands zoned for education and community in the amended Plan; an additional site over 5 hectares in size has been zoned for Education Community to facilitate a post primary school also in Mungret Loughmore.

Objective C 5: Educational Facilities

It is the objective of the County Council to:

- a) Ensure that there are sufficient educational places to meet the needs generated by proposed developments by requiring the completion of a Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment for residential developments of 5 or more dwellings.
- b) Restrict further residential development where there are insufficient school places in the area to meet the requirements of additional developments until such time as work has commenced on a new permanent school or extension of an existing school.

Objective C 6: Educational facilities within Mungret - Loughmore opportunity site

It is the objective of the Council to ensure that any application for residential development shall be accompanied by proposals to provide a permanent school site on lands zoned 'Education/Community' within the Mungret – Loughmore opportunity site.

8.4 Health

The primary role of the Planning Authority with regard to healthcare is to ensure that (a) there is an adequate policy framework in place inclusive of the reservation of lands should additional services be required and (b) healthcare facilities would be permitted subject to good planning practice. The Council will continue to support further economic and social progress with regard to health services and the HSE West Regional Hospital, including capital investment in hospital infrastructure, as well as primary, community and continuing care services in the Southern Environs.

Objective C 7 Provision of Healthcare Facilities

It is an objective of the Council to:

- (a) Support the Health Service Executive (West) and other statutory and voluntary agencies and private healthcare providers in the provision of appropriate healthcare facilities and the development of both the system of hospital care and the provision of community based care facilities, at appropriate locations, subject to proper planning considerations and the principles of sustainable development.
- (b) Facilitate the Health Service Executive (West) in the provision of healthcare facilities in the Southern Environs, where specific needs have been identified by the HSE.
- (c) Encourage the integration of appropriately scaled local healthcare facilities within new and existing communities and to discourage proposals that would cause unnecessary isolation or other access difficulties, particularly for the disabled, the elderly and children.

Overall Strategic Policy

Policy ZD1: Land Use Zoning

It is the policy of the Council to determine applications for development in accordance with the Land Use Zoning Map and Zoning Matrix and other guidelines set out in the Plan in order to:

- a) Promote development and direct compatible land uses to the areas reserved for such purposes;
- b) Ensure that that the environmental quality of land use zones are protected from intrusion by competing or incompatible uses.

Policy ZD2: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan Development Management Guidelines

It is the policy of the Council to determine applications for development in accordance with the policies, objectives and development management standards set out in the Southern Environs LAP and the Limerick County Development Plan in order to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

9.1 Introduction

The Southern Environs Local Area Plan shall be read in conjunction with the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016. In particular, regard shall be had to Chapter 10, 'Development Management Guidelines' which will be applied to any development proposal within the LAP boundary.

9.2 Land Use Zoning

9.2.1 Purpose of Land Use Zoning

The proposed Land Use Zoning Map is included in Appendix 2. The land use zonings will be used to guide development to appropriate locations and should be read in conjunction with both the Zoning Matrix and the Limerick County Development Plan, Chapter 10, Development Management Guidelines. The purpose of land use zoning is to indicate to property owners, developers and the general public the types of development that are considered most appropriate in each area. These designated land use zones avoid competing and incompatible uses in the area. Thus, they promote greater environmental quality and thereby, rationalise the land use pattern of the area. In this context, the zoning objectives allow developers to plan proposals with some degree of certainty, subject to other conditions and requirements as set out in the Plan.

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

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

9.2.2 Non Conforming Uses

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

9.2.3 Land Use Zoning Categories

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

9.2.3.1 Retail/Commercial

The purpose of this zoning is to protect and enhance the character of the Southern Environs' retail centres and to provide for and improve retailing, residential, commercial, office, cultural and other uses appropriate to these centres. Any proposed retail development shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Retail Strategy for the Mid West Region, 2010-2016 as amended by the elected members of Limerick County Council on 1st November and the Limerick County Development Plan, 2010-2016.

9.2.3.2 Established Residential

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

Objective ZD 1 Established Residential

It is the objective of the Council to:

- a) Promote development that supports the predominant land use in the surrounding area;
- b) Accommodate a range of other uses that support the overall residential function of the area where an acceptable standard of amenity can be maintained and where the amenities of existing residents/occupiers are protected;
- c) Encourage a high standard of residential design in new residential developments and to improve permeability and accessibility;
- d) Discourage the expansion or intensification of existing uses that are incompatible with residential amenity;
- e) Permit non residential uses in established and proposed residential areas where they comply with the zoning matrix and are of an appropriate nature and scale for the location proposed. In general, such uses will only be considered where they serve the needs of the neighbourhood within which they are situated; and
- f) Have regard to appropriate densities as set out in the DEHLG document 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (May 2009) and the accompanying Urban Design Manual.

9.2.3.3 Residential Development Area

This zoning provides for new residential development and other services associated with residential development. While housing is the primary use in this zone, recreation, education, crèche/playschool, clinic/surgery uses, sheltered housing and small corner shops are also envisaged, subject to the preservation of neighbouring residential amenity. Permission may also be granted for home based economic activity within this zone, subject to the preservation of residential amenity, traffic considerations and compliance with objective ED 4 Chapter 4.

Objective ZD 2 Residential Development Area

It is the objective of the Council to:

- a) conserve and enhance the quality and character of the wider area;
- b) protect residential amenity and allow for development appropriate to the sustainable growth of the area;
- c) promote the provision of community and other facilities such as childcare as an integral part of residential areas subject to overall residential amenity;
- d) provide for a range of house types and sizes to meet the various housing needs of existing and future residents;
- e) facilitate the expansion of the area in a balanced and sustainable way;
- f) have regard to appropriate form and densities as set out in the DEHLG document 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (May 2009).

9.2.3.4 Open Space & Recreation

The areas zoned as “Open Space & Recreation” are dispersed throughout the area, and include playgrounds, parks, areas for outdoor activities, sports centres, sports pitches, and landscaped areas.

Objective ZD 3 Open Space and Recreation

It is the objective of the Council to;

- a) protect, improve and provide for recreation, open space and amenity provision through the preservation of green space to be dedicated to active or passive recreation, i.e. sports fields, playgrounds, local areas of play (LAP)s and local equipped areas of play (LEAPs);
- b) protect, improve and maintain public open space;
- c) preserve private open space; and
- d) provide recreational and community facilities.

9.2.3.5 Education & Community

It is recognised that these facilities are vital to the quality of the life in the Southern Environs and must expand accordingly in tandem with population growth. The purpose of this zoning is to facilitate the necessary development of these facilities.

Objective ZD 4 Education & Community

It is the objective of the Council to ensure that adequate community and education facilities are provided for through appropriate zoning including health centre/clinics; places of worship; cultural uses; schools; community halls; sports clubs; recreational buildings and parks/playgrounds.

9.2.3.6 Enterprise & Employment

The Southern Environs needs to maximise and develop enterprise and employment as one of its existing strengths. The Southern Environs is fortunate to have a diverse range of enterprises and employers both national and international, and the infrastructure and skills base to support these activities.

Objective ZD 5 Enterprise & Employment

It is the objective of the Council to facilitate opportunities for clean industry and general employment uses, offices, logistics and warehousing activity in a good quality physical environment through appropriate zoning. Such opportunities include software development, information technology, telemarketing, commercial research and development, data processing, publishing, and media recording. General employment areas should be highly accessible, well designed, permeable and legible.

9.2.3.7 Industrial

The Southern Environs is an important industrial location in terms of connectivity with international markets, its infrastructure and its skills base. It is of paramount importance that the Southern Environs as part of the Gateway continues to strengthen its position in terms of industrial productivity and employment. Industrial land use designation is intended to facilitate general industry / transport / logistics type uses, thereby facilitating important employment opportunities within the area.

Objective ZD 6 Industrial

It is the objective of the Council through appropriate zoning to facilitate the development and expansion of existing and new industrial uses within the Southern Environs.

9.2.3.8 Agricultural Areas

The purpose of this zoning is to provide for the development of agriculture by ensuring the retention of agricultural uses, protect them from urban sprawl and ribbon development, and to provide for a clear physical demarcation to the adjoining built up areas. Uses which are directly associated with agriculture or which would not interfere with this use are open for consideration. In accordance with Objective HO6 of this LAP dwellings will be considered for the long-term habitation of farmers and their sons or daughters and subject to the terms and conditions of the rural housing policy as set out in the Limerick County Development Plan.

Objective ZD 7 Agricultural Areas

It is the objective of the Council to ensure the protection and retention of agricultural uses, from urban sprawl and ribbon development and to provide for a clear physical demarcation to the adjacent urban area.

9.2.3.9 Semi Natural Open Space

These areas are necessary for the integration of areas of natural character to complement the extensive development which has taken place. Semi-natural open space in urban areas acts as 'green lungs' for the enjoyment of the local community.

Objective ZD 8 Semi-Natural Open Space

It is the objective of the Council to ensure that the designated Semi-natural Open Space Areas in the Southern Environs will be protected free from development for the enjoyment of the community and flood protection.

9.2.3.10 Special Control Area

The purpose of this special control area is to preserve in situ any potential subterranean archaeological remains associated with the monastic complex / deserted settlement. Within this area development will be limited to leisure uses and moderate extensions to existing dwellings. All other forms of development and non conforming uses within this zone would be resisted.

Objective ZD 9 Special Control Area

It is an objective of the Council to reinforce the heritage significance of Mungret Monastic Complex through the introduction of a special control area.

9.2.3.11 Utility

The purpose of this zoning is to provide for essential public services, existing and planned, such as Waste Water Treatment plants.

Overall Strategic Policy

Policy UD1: Urban Design

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

Policy UD2: Compliance with Limerick County Development Plan Development Management Guidelines

It is the policy of the Council to determine applications for development in accordance with the policies, objectives and development management standards set out in the Southern Environs LAP and the Limerick County Development Plan in order to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.1 Introduction

Good urban design is essential for attractive places to live in, work in and relax in. It is achieved by the arrangement of streets and spaces, the mass, scale, design of buildings, the materials used, colour scheme and finishes of buildings, roads and footpaths. Street furniture also contributes to urban design, as does a mix of appropriate complementary land uses. A well designed urban area has a clear and distinct sense of place instilling a sense of community and pride with a clearly defined centre which is desirable to walk around and feels safe.

This chapter of the Southern Environs LAP is intended to provide guidance to assist prospective applicants in drawing attention to aspects of planning and design that the planning authority will be taking into account when assessing applications for future development.

Since the adoption of the 2005 Southern Environs Local Area Plan there has been a number of guidance documents issued which deal with urban design. Perhaps the most influential are the publications by the DEHLG (2009) of 'Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' and the accompanying 'Urban Design Manual', and 'Government Policy on Architecture 2009 – 2015, Towards a Sustainable Future: Delivering Quality within the Built Environment', DEHLG 2009. The DEHLG also recommends using the UK's "Manual for Streets" (Dept of Communities and Local Government, 2007) in designing residential streets. Other considerations that affect the design of proposals include the guidelines on flood risk management published by the DEHLG in 2009.

Other relevant guidelines include 'Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities' (DEHLG, 2007) and 'Sustainable Urban Housing; Design Standards for New Apartments' (DECLG,2015).

In relation to access and layouts, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) has, in partnership with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, issued the following guidance in 2013: 'Design manual for Urban Roads and Streets' (DMURS); this complements an earlier document 'Traffic Management Guidelines' (2003) which was jointly published by the Dept of Environment, Transport and the Dublin Transport Office (the latter is now part of the National Transport Authority NTA). It supersedes the National Road Authority's 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges' (DMRB) insofar as it applies to urban streets and roads. Layouts should be as open as possible, with emphasis on enabling people to gain access to such amenities and services that they would use everyday, preferably by sustainable modes of transport. To this end, it is recommended that any developer would refer to the National Transport Authority's guidance 'Permeability Best Practice' (NTA, 2015).

Other considerations that effect the design of proposals, include the guidelines on flood risk management published by the DEHLG in 2009 and the governments policy on transport 'Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020', published by the Department of Transport. Due cognisance has to be taken of the concept of universal design and access for all, and the National Building Authority's 'Building for Everyone – Inclusion, Access and Use,' 2002.

10.2 Themes and principles of Urban Design

A successfully designed urban area would generally be governed by the following themes.

- 1. A commitment to achievement of a high design quality.** It is considered essential that there would be a commitment to good design as a sustainable and cost effective means of accommodating suitable land uses in a way that enhances a local sense of place and creates vibrant communities. Design should be both comprehensive in its scope with respect to its brief and thorough in its attention to detail.
- 2. Sensitive response to context and insertion of distinctive character:** The key questions are how does the development respond to its surroundings? How do proposals create a sense of place?
- 3. Accommodation of an appropriate type and variety of uses and tenures:** A key challenge is how to accommodate and facilitate a variety of uses that will nurture a sense of community and vitality to a neighbourhood.
- 4. Ensuring connectivity and inclusivity:** How well is the new neighbourhood / site connected? How easily can people use and access the development? How will parking be secure and attractive?
- 5. Environmental efficiency and responsibility:** How does the development make appropriate use of resources, including land?
- 6. Ensuring adequate amenities for private and for public needs:** How does the layout of the development safeguard the privacy of its residents and provide for their amenity needs? How does the proposal create people-friendly streets and spaces? How safe, secure and enjoyable are the public areas?

On a local level the Limerick CDP 2010 – 2016 has placed greater emphasis on appropriate design in its development management guidelines. It is a requirement that a design statement is submitted as part of a planning application for 5 or more dwellings, or commercial / industrial developments over 1,000 sq. metres. A 'Design Statement' is a

short document which enables the applicant to explain why a particular design solution is considered the most suitable for a particular site. The design statement should outline a justification for the development as proposed and any alternative design options considered. The accompanying Sustainability Statement and Social Infrastructure Assessment should also demonstrate the design considerations having regard to the transport, energy, ecology, and social quality.

In respect of qualifying development proposals, the design statements required should make explicit reference to up to date national guidelines, how the site and context is appraised, and how the design meets the objectives and follows the site specific guidelines of this Plan as relevant to the site or opportunity.

10.3 Design at Landmark Locations

High quality urban design which makes a statement in terms of ‘distinctiveness’, ‘landmark feature’, and ‘sense of place’ will be expected at locations of high visibility in the built environment of Limerick. The Council will encourage quality innovative modern design in terms of its context with the surrounding urban area.

Any development proposals at landmark locations within the Southern Environs and on the approaches to Limerick City should be of a high quality design. These proposals should, therefore, demonstrate innovative architectural design principles, contribute to a sense of distinctness, reflect arrival at a city and ‘sense of place’, and thereby, enforce a positive image of the Southern Environs and the greater metropolitan area.

Landmark locations include development lands at the interchange of the M7/Southern Ring Road/N69 and the interchange of the Southern Ring Road/ N20 Limerick – Cork, and lands adjacent to the Loughmore roundabout in the R526 Raheen-Patrickswell road.

Objective UD 1	Landmark locations on the approaches to Limerick City
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<p>It is the objective of the Council to require development proposals at landmark locations within the Southern Environs and on the approach to the City to demonstrate high quality innovative design in and adjacent to these locations.</p>

Objective UD 2	Design of Landmark Locations
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<p>Landmark locations/focal points/gateway buildings i.e. street corners or road junctions should be emphasized by form and massing and/or a complementing detail (i.e. higher density development/an additional storey, design feature etc). In housing developments in particular this would also act as a natural method of traffic calming where there is not full visibility around a corner.</p>
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Landmark buildings are essential to creating a sense of place in terms of mental maps that people associate with a certain place.

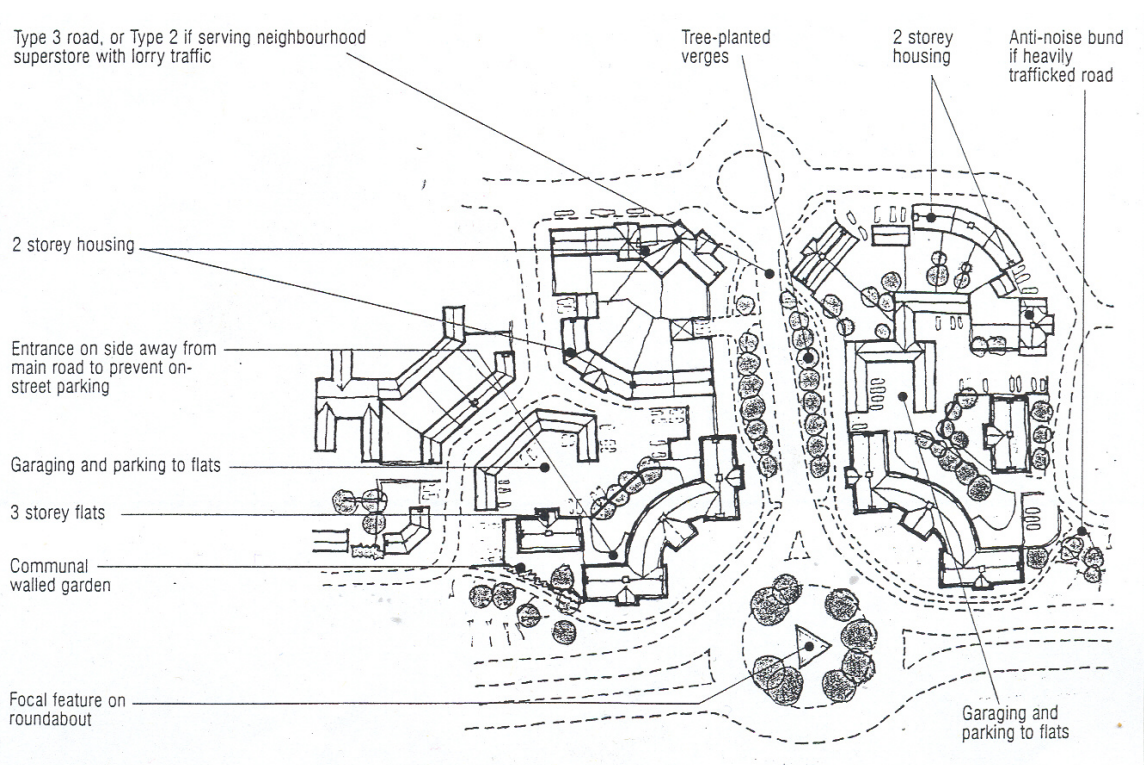


Figure 10.1: Landmark locations/focal points/ gateway buildings

10.4 Southern Environs Opportunity Sites

A number of opportunity sites have been identified within the Southern Environs area, the development / redevelopment of which represents opportunities for delivering environmental and economic benefits to the area. The identified opportunity sites are:

Site 1: St.Nessans Road

Site 2: Mungret Loughmore (incorporating Mungret village)

Development objectives and indicative site development briefs have been prepared for these sites to guide redevelopment ensuring that future development proposals adhere to the principles of good design.

In the context of changes since 2011, only the development brief for St.Nessans road remains unchanged. In respect of Mungret Loughmore, a broad Master plan covers a cohesive area encompassing 290 hectares of land, adjacent to the existing built up area of Gouldavoher and Raheen and which is considered of strategic importance in the Local Area Plan. The area has been broadened by this Amendment from the original Opportunity site, to incorporate Mungret village and Loughmore Commons proposed Natural Heritage Area,

and the entire area is subject to a Masterplan. The Masterplan consists of development objectives, a development framework and design guidelines.

In relation to Mungret village, most of the public realm works proposed within the 2011 adopted Local Area Plan have been completed. The Amendment to this Plan provides a Masterplan for the Mungret-Loughmore area, which incorporates Mungret village.

Applicants are referred to the development objectives outlined below should be incorporated into development proposals for these areas. The design briefs shown below provide an indicative framework of how the objectives can be achieved and alternative proposals will be considered where they meet the objectives of this LAP.

Opportunity Site 1 : St. Nessans Road

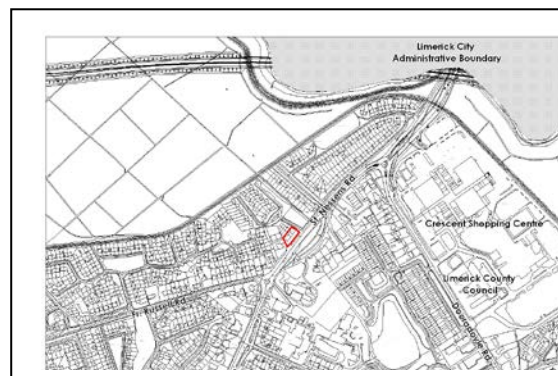


Figure 10.2 Site Location Map

Site Description

The site is located on the northern end of St. Nessan's road and 300 metres south west of the Crescent Shopping Centre.

The site contains a part two storey, part single storey flat roofed building. At ground floor level there are three commercial units which consist of an movie rental store, dry cleaners and one vacant unit. The first floor is in use as a restaurant & take-away.

There is a parking and vehicle circulation area to the front of the building, parallel to the public road. There are two vehicular entrances to the site and there is a bus lane on St. Nessan's road to the front of the site travelling in the direction of Limerick City.

Immediately to the south of the site there is a part three storey, part two-storey dwelling (converted to apartments). Directly behind the site there are two storey dwellings. Immediately north of the site along the sites side boundary is the access road to Maypark housing estate. Immediately north of this access road is a vacant site owned by Limerick City and County Council, which is to be zoned 'Community & Education' in the 2011 Southern Environs LAP.

The existing building on the site is of poor quality. Design proposals to upgrade or redevelop this site would be welcome. The character of buildings in the area is generally modern

residential and commercial use. On the opposite side of the road there is a landscaped green space.

St. Nessan's road is the direct route from the Southern Environs areas of Raheen and Dooradoyle towards the Crescent Shopping Centre and Limerick City centre and therefore this site has the potential to enhance the built form of the approach to the Regional Hospital, Crescent Shopping Centre and City centre.

There is also a public footpath along the front boundary of the site.



Figure 10.3 Existing Site Layout

St. Nessans Road Opportunity Site Development Objectives

Objective NRO1: Any proposed development should be sympathetic to the amenity of surrounding residential properties. Design proposals for this site should accommodate a high quality both in building design and finishes used.

Objective NRO2: The site is zoned 'Retail/Commercial' in the Southern Environs LAP. Development which supports the regeneration of this site, that does not change the role or scale of its retail function and is in accordance with the provisions of the Mid West Retail Strategy will be considered. Uses proposed range from replacement retail / services at ground floor to commercial at first floor. Residential use will also be considered at first floor where it can be successfully incorporated without damaging the residential amenities of surrounding properties.

Objective NRO3: Any redevelopment on this opportunity site should address the existing built form positively, sensitively knitting the various building heights together. In this regard there may be an opportunity for increased building height on the south western end of the site where there is an existing part 3 storey (flat roofed) structure on the adjoining site to the south. Moving north eastwards, any proposed building heights must take account of the two storey residential properties to the rear.

Objective NRO4: There is scope here to locate a replacement structure forward of the footprint of the existing structure on site. This could have the benefit of creating a stronger

urban edge, potentially relocating parking to the rear and reducing the potential impact of redevelopment on the residential properties to the rear.

Objective NRO5: Environmental improvements could be facilitated without the need for an overall redevelopment of the site. These could include improvements to signage by replacing the existing haphazard signage with a more consistent and co-ordinated approach to signage. Consideration in this regard should be given to consistency in terms of typeface, colour and materials used, shape, proportions and even heights of signs. Improvements to fenestration should also be considered (See sketch below).



Figure 10.4: photograph of St Nessans road site

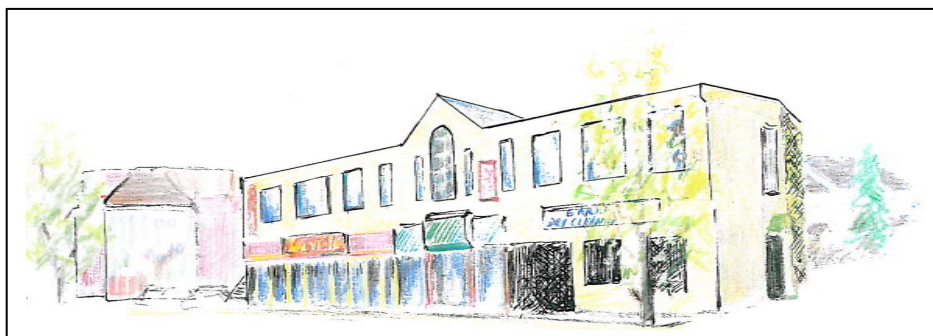


Figure 10.5 Suggested improvement works
St.Nessans road site

Opportunity Site 2: Mungret – Loughmore



Figure 10.6 Aerial photograph showing opportunity site

Site Description, Location and Context

The Mungret – Loughmore Opportunity Area is located in the west of the Southern Environs around the former institutional grounds of Mungret College. It includes the townlands of Baunacloka, Dromdarrig, parts of Moneteen, and Loughmore. It also includes Mungret village, and an area defined by Moore’s lane and the N69. The boundary to the north is the regional road R859 Quinn’s Cross to Mungret and the N69. The eastern boundary consists of lands along the regional road R510 Quinn’s Cross to Raheen roundabout. The southern boundary runs along the regional road R526 Raheen – Patrickswell and the Caher road. The lands contain a mix of land uses as follows: ‘Residential Development Area’, ‘Mixed Use’, ‘Open Space and Recreation’, ‘Education and Community Facilities’, ‘Enterprise and Employment and ‘Retail/Commercial’ and ‘Special Control Area’. There is important architectural and archaeological heritage present in the area and this is reflected by the number of national monuments and protected structures located in these townlands. This includes Mungret village, Mungret College and associated demesne, medieval buildings and structures on the site of Mungret historic town. The area’s natural heritage is also important; it includes two turloughs including one, that of Loughmore Commons, which is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA), and the other Moneteen turlough, which is zoned as a semi-natural open space.

The scale and nature of these lands merit a strategic approach. The objective is to guide, promote and facilitate, but not prescribe future development in the area. The designation seeks to establish parameters for development proposals providing an overall design concept addressing open space, transport, and social infrastructure. This approach aims to

maximise the development potential of the area bearing in mind the principles of sustainability and the criteria as determined by the Sustainable Urban Residential Development – Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Design Manual, DEHLG, May 2009 and the Retail Planning Guidelines, and accompanying Design Manual, DECLG, 2012.

Mungret - Loughmore Masterplan Objectives

Objective ML01 Mungret naming and identity

It is an objective of the Council to respect and enhance the identity of Mungret as a place, community and communal centre and as a visitor attraction, by ensuring appropriate consideration of context that reflects the following priorities:

- The protection and enhancement of Mungret College as a community resource and neighbourhood hub
- The protection and enhancement of Mungret Monastic complex as an important historic site
- Pedestrian and cycle linkages between the college, abbey and village
- The naming of new developments, which should reflect local features, views, and placename heritage

Objective MLO2: Mungret – Loughmore Land Use Zoning.

It is an objective of the Council to facilitate the development of the area identified as the Mungret – Loughmore Opportunity Site in accordance with the masterplan outlined on Map 6 of this LAP, the policies and objectives set out in the Limerick County Development Plan and in this LAP.

Objective MLO3 Masterplan

It is an Objective of the Council to require developers to prepare detailed development proposals prepared by a suitably qualified person, with accompanying design statements showing how the design concepts are consistent with the Masterplan principles. These proposals shall demonstrate using drawings the internal organisation of land uses, amenities and the layout of each block; the detailed design of individual buildings and spaces including private and collective amenity areas; hard and soft landscaping; choice of materials and finishes, street furniture, signage and lighting.

Objective MLO4 Density and housing type mix

1. **Average densities:** It is an objective of the Council to require an average density of 33 residential units per hectare on the Mungret – Loughmore lands.
2. **Range of house types:** Proposals should, depending on the site and context, a range of house types, including 2 bedroom terraced or bungalow dwellings to larger detached houses, and include provision for a range of small starter homes.
3. **Range of densities and criteria for appropriate densities:** It is expected that there will be a range of densities throughout the lands. The densities of individual sites or

blocks should have regard to the predominant grain and densities already established in the surroundings, to the proximity of the site to the neighbourhood hub, and to the predominant building type.

4. Proposals shall clearly demonstrate compliance with the criteria outlined in the Sustainable Urban Residential Development – Guidelines for Planning Authorities and the accompanying Urban Design Manual, DEHLG, May 2009 through the means of supplementary documents such as detailed master plans, **design statements**, traffic assessment studies, sustainability statements and social infrastructure assessment and any other diagrammatic means.
5. Standards for apartments: Where apartments are being proposed, they should be planned with a range of apartment sizes, and shall be consistent with DECLG guidance under s28 ‘Sustainable Urban housing: Design Standards for New Apartments’ (DECLG, December 2015) in all respects including size, internal storage, private amenity space, ceiling height and aspect, and communal facilities etc.

Objective MLO5: Sustainable siting and building principles.

At every scale and at every phase of planning and construction, from internal room layouts, to the siting of buildings, to the inclusion of elements such as district heating systems, regard shall be had to sustainable development principles. Developers should consider at all stages of design how to minimise the requirement to use fossil fuels, non-renewable materials, and mechanical interventions for the enjoyment of the building, by incorporating such aspects and devices as the following:

- i. solar aspect and shelter in spaces for popular day time uses and amenities;
- ii. the use of dual aspect, corner aspect, and cross ventilation for the main living spaces;
- iii. materials from renewable and sustainably managed sources (wood);
- iv. Rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling for non potable water.
- v. Developers are advised to refer to Sustainable Energy Ireland for guidance on all relevant aspects, and to the Building Research Establishment (BRE) document ‘Site Layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice’ (PJ Littlefair) for additional technical guidance on design for daylight.

Objective MLO6 Access infrastructure and permeability

There shall be clear connectivity between proposed new residential pathways and the indicative walks indicated on Map 2 of this LAP. Layouts should address natural contours as far as is practicable.

A network of pedestrian and cycle routes shall be provided through the lands and shall provide appropriate links to adjoining areas; the main link roads shall also provide pedestrian and cycle routes and shall be designed to accommodate bus stops. The connector route to the neighbourhood hub shall also include provision for bus stops. Proposals seeking planning permission shall demonstrate consideration of same following discussion with Bus Eireann.

Objective MLO7 Provision of schools

The Council has made zoning provision sufficient to accommodate two primary schools and one post-primary school. The design and siting of schools within these sites shall adhere to the requirements for the 'Provision of Schools and the Planning System', Department of Education & Science, DEHLG 2008, and will be subject to normal planning considerations such as traffic safety, residential amenity and public health.

Objective ML08 Neighbourhood Park

The Mungret neighbourhood park shall be developed as a park to serve the community and shall remain accessible to all members of the public.

An area of parkland landscape 11 hectares in extent, in front of the college and part of the original demesne, is to be developed as a neighbourhood park to serve the wider community of the Southern Environs as well as those in the vicinity. The landscaping of the park is to respect the open parkland setting of the college, the visual interconnectivity between the college and Mungret abbey, and the Special Control Area which traverses it in its north-west. Ecological considerations are also taken into account in planting and layout. The park shall be accessible to all members of the public. The park is to include a large fully equipped playground; and a cycleway and walkway loop to be integrated with a wider access network. Existing mature trees within the park and bounding the park site are to be protected except where their felling is justified for sound arboricultural reasons.

Objective MLO9 Open Space provision

Open space within residential areas shall be provided within these areas in accordance with Objective C2 and Table 7, and include children's playgrounds/playlots, at the developer's expense and accessible to all residents. These shall be operational in tandem with the occupation of nearby dwellings. The location of the playlots or playgrounds will be determined by passive surveillance by as many houses as is practical without being too close to interfere with residential amenity. The distribution of playgrounds/playlots, and their size will be determined by the number of residential units they serve in accordance with Table 7 Open Space Hierarchy in Residential Estates and Objective C2 Open Space Hierarchy and Playground Provision in Chapter 8 Community and Recreation of this LAP.

In the case of housing developments which are permitted on land, which is directly adjacent to (within 100 metres of) the Neighbourhood park, the developer is required to:

- i. Provide 25% of the required open space (3.75% of the total site) within the development and
- ii. Pay a contribution in lieu of the remaining 75% of the required open space.

In the case of housing developments which are permitted on land not directly adjacent to but 400 metres from the Neighbourhood park, the developer is required to:

- i. Provide 50% (7.5% of the total site) of the required open space within the development, and
- ii. Pay a contribution in lieu of the remaining 50% of the required open space.

Objective MLO10 Protected structures

The existing protected structures in this area, Mungret College and Mount Mungret House shall be preserved. Any proposals for these lands shall illustrate how the structures will be protected and accommodated in the overall development. Proposed building design shall respect existing architectural styles where relevant and careful consideration shall be given to the use of materials in any proposal.

Objective MLO11(a): Special Control Area Mungret Monastic Complex

1. The special control area at Mungret Monastic Complex identified on Map 1 shall ensure the preservation in situ of any potential subterranean archaeological remains associated with the monastic complex / deserted settlement.
2. Shall preserve the setting for the range of up- standing archaeological remains.
3. It is an objective of the Council not to permit future development in the Special Control Area other than leisure uses and moderate extensions to existing dwellings (refer to Objective EH4 in Chapter 7).
4. The visual connectivity in the historical landscape established between the National Monuments and the Protected Structures shall be safeguarded from proposals that would unduly sever or disrupt the inter-visibility between these sites. A Visual Impact Assessment will be requested to fully determine the effect of any proposal on the monastic site and Mungret College.
5. The Mungret Steering Group was formed in 2011. It consists of representatives from the National Monuments Service OPW and DAHG, the Local Authority, and from community groups with the aim to: 'Build Community through Heritage'. The Group is advancing a Conservation & Management Plan incorporating the Early Monastic Settlement and the later medieval manor. The Master Plan acknowledges that many useful and important objectives and policies will be provided in the final document and that it has the potential to act as a guide to sustainable development in the area.

Objective MLO11(b): (refer to map 4 for location of Recorded Monuments)

The protection of Archaeological Monuments shall be as set out in the County Development Plan (Objectives EH025-027) including *inter alia* archaeological impact assessments and appropriate buffers. In regard to the bi-vallate ringfort, LI013-007, this shall be provided with a 50 m buffer to properly protect its setting (refer to Map 6 Mungret Master Plan), and plans for its future management and its ongoing maintenance shall be devised in co-operation with the National Monuments Service, DAHG.

Objective MLO12: Incorporation of natural features

Layouts will be expected to take advantage of the existing natural features, in particular existing structures and vegetation including the mature tree stands associated with the Black Walk in the grounds of Mungret College and in the open space area to the front of the College. Mature trees, hedgerows and walkways indicated on Map 2 and Map 6 shall be incorporated into the overall development. Landscaping shall be considered at the initial planning stage of any given development proposal in order to obtain the maximum benefit from existing features and views.

Objective ML013 Proposed NHA

As stated in Objectives EH13 and ZD8 in reference to the proposed Natural Heritage Area of Loughmore Commons the Council is committed to the protection and conservation of both the proposed NHA in the interests of conservation of this important wetland. Consistent with this objective, the Council is committed to ensuring that the proposed NHA is managed appropriately and in this regard:

- There shall be no development or artificial lighting.
- Additional measures to protect the proposed NHA from disturbance by excessive activity including hedgerow planting and fencing will be considered.

Mungret College complex:

Mungret College complex is composed of the main college building, rear outbuildings and a Gothick annex: the total assemblage is of importance principally for what it represents in terms of architectural and historical significance. The complex also has potential to accommodate, with sensitively designed development to the rear, a neighbourhood hub for both the existing and future residential communities in the area. The complex is ideally located to serve as a neighbourhood hub, with possible uses including community uses, convenience retail, cafes and arts and crafts, and employment uses. The location is appropriate taking into account its nodal position in relation to the lands zoned for new residential development, within a 800 metres 'pedshed' (ie a pedestrian catchment with a radius corresponding to a 10 minutes walk); the projected population growth in these zoned lands; and the prominent location of the main college building and annex vis-à-vis the Neighbourhood Park.

Relevant criteria that will guide the phasing are outlined below.

Objective MLO14: Conservation and enhancement of Mungret College complex

It is an objective of the Council to:

1. protect features essential to the character of Mungret college and complex from unsympathetic developments;
2. protect the setting of the main building and annex from intrusion by inappropriate works or landscaping;
3. endeavour to secure viable uses for the building and complex that will assist in its conservation and upkeep.

Design Concept

Indicative layout and illustrations

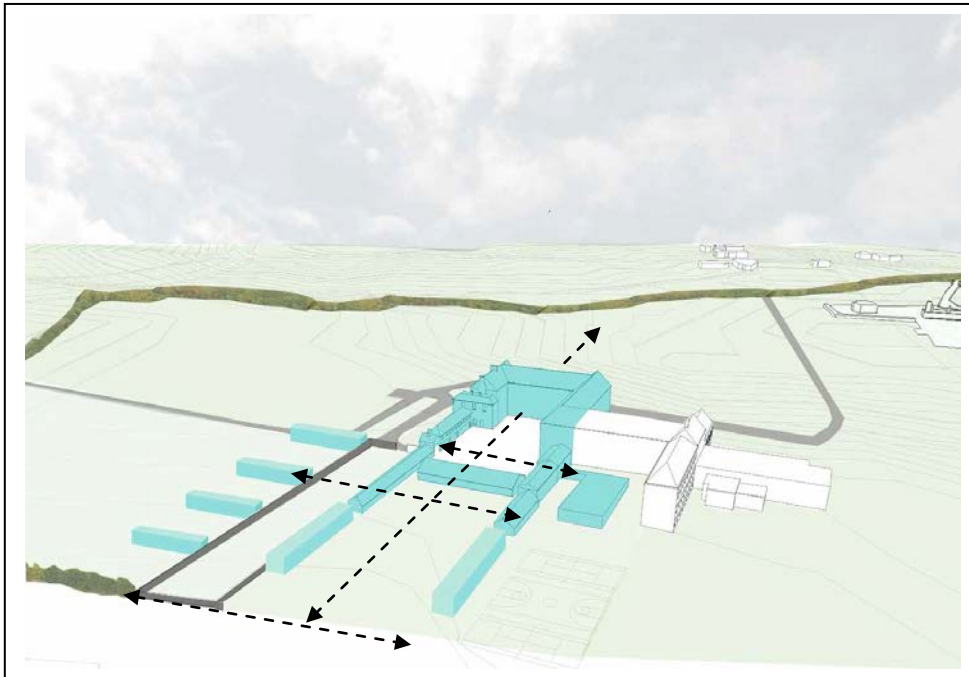


Figure 10.7: Isometric projection of Mungret complex from south, showing principal pedestrian access routes

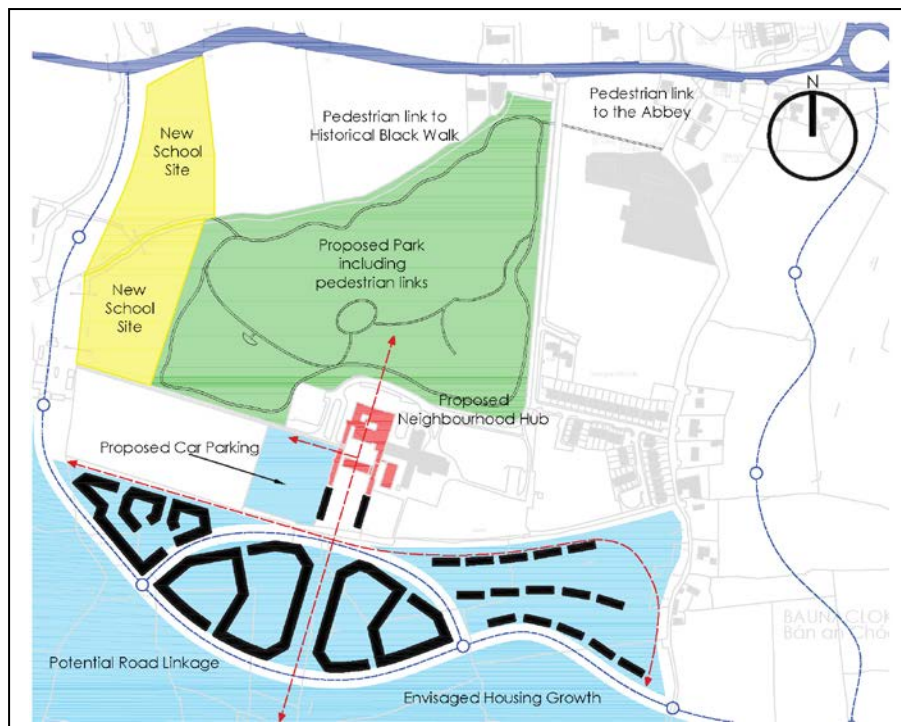


figure 10.8: Mungret Design Concept

Fig.10.9 Key map showing position of viewpoint and direction of photograph

Fig 10.10: Photograph of the rear of Mungret college complex showing outer courtyard

Fig.10.11 Concept illustration of development of outer courtyard

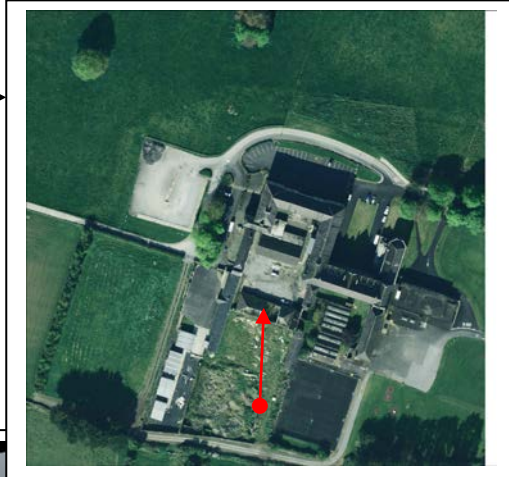


Figure 10.12: Roof layout of Mungret college complex with indexed blocks, showing position of viewpoint and direction of photograph

Figure 10.13: Photograph of archway and outbuildings from within inner courtyard

Figure 10.14: Illustration showing one development concept and possible use of inner courtyard

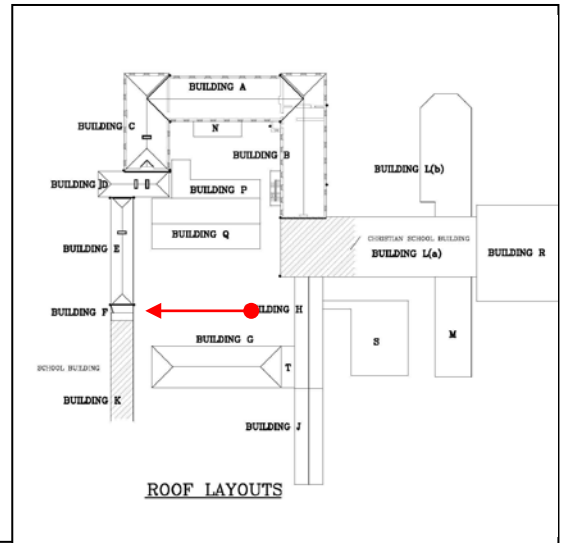
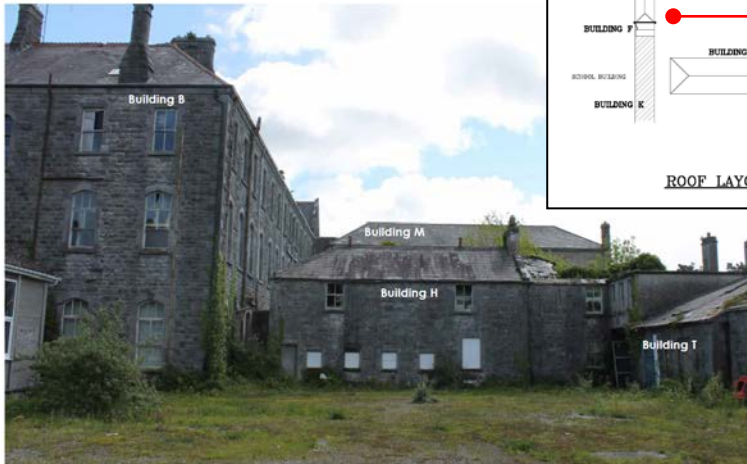
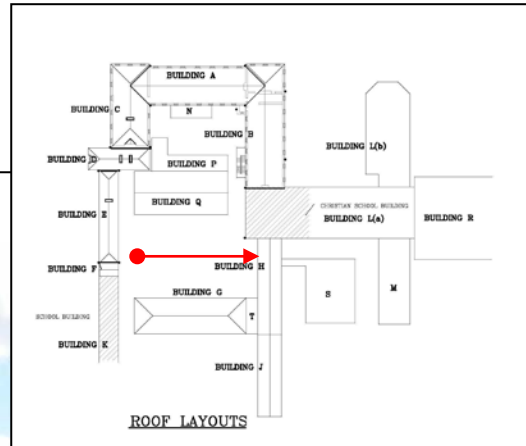


Figure 10.15: Roof layout showing position and direction of photograph

Figure 10.16: Photo from within inner courtyard looking east

Figure 10.17: Development concept



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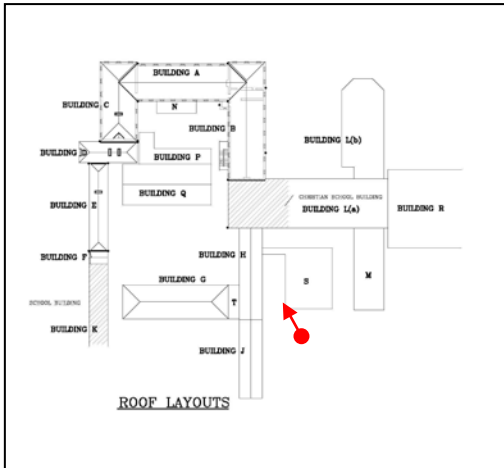


Figure 10.18: Roof layout showing position and direction of photograph.

Figure 10.19: Photo showing existing former swimming pool.



Figure 10.20: Photomontage showing option of art gallery

Figure 10.21: Photomontage showing option of library



Figure 10.22: Photomontage showing option of scout hall.



Mungret village

Village description: Mungret village is a small local settlement located on the R859 on the western boundary of the Southern Environs. The village has a rural character and is separated from the built up area of the southern environs by undeveloped land, much of it zoned for agriculture, and open space to create a greenbelt between the suburban area and the village. The village contains a traditional core area characterised mainly by buildings dating from the 19th and first half of the 20th Century which are a mix of single and two storey buildings in use for residential and commercial purposes. There is a mixture of land use zonings within the village. Existing commercial premises within the village comprise of a post office, hair and beauty salon, fast food outlet, credit union and furniture workshop along with approximately three vacant commercial units. The village extends onto the N69 where there are two public houses and two commercial premises.

Built Form & Existing Facilities

The main features of the village centre are the traditional structures and modern church on the main street; and the dispersed linear pattern of development along some of the local roads that radiate out from the centre. The N69 is very heavily trafficked, with high numbers of HGV's which creates a more hostile environment at this side of the village creating environmental problems. In contrast, the R859 where the main focus of the village is located is subject to localized traffic and so is a more pleasant environment.

Significant improvements were made to the village in 2013 through a village renewal scheme, with re-surfacing in the village centre, some tree planting to give a greater sense of unity and enclosure, new public lighting with underground wiring, and a combined cycleway-footpath along with road improvements as far as the entrance to Castlemungret cemetery and Mungret-St.Pauls GAA club.

The Limerick Mains sewerage network was extended to include the village in 2013.



Figure 10.23
OS Map of Mungret village



Figure 10.24 Village centre prior to
2013 improvements



Figure 10.25 Village centre after improvements

Significant progress has been made through improvements to the village centre in a 2013. There is scope for further development and improvements to the environment of Mungret village. The Council is committed to the following objectives:

Objective MLO15: To protect and enhance the public realm of the village centre (defined on map), with emphasis on minimisation of through traffic, inclusive access, and improvement of pedestrian safety and environment.

Objective MLO16: To provide for an improved streetscape while protecting existing traditional built features.

Objective MLO17: To protect the existing village heritage and built features by sensitive infill development.

Objective MLO18: To enhance the commercial function of the village.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Zoning Matrix

Appendix 2: Maps

Appendix 3: Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, Flood Risk Assessment 2011

Appendix 4: Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement for Amendment No. 2 - 2016

Appendix 5: Archaeological Sites

Appendix 6: Protected Structures

Appendix 7: Glossary and Abbreviations

Appendix 1: Zoning Matrix

The following use classes apply in the Land Use Zoning Matrix:

/ = Generally Permitted

A use which is generally permitted is one which the Council accepts in the relevant zone. However, it is still subject to the normal planning process including policies and objectives outlined in the Plan.

O = Open for Consideration

An Open for Consideration use is one which the Council may permit where it is satisfied that the suggested form of development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, will not conflict with the permitted uses and conforms with the proper planning and sustainable development in the area.

X = Generally Not Permitted

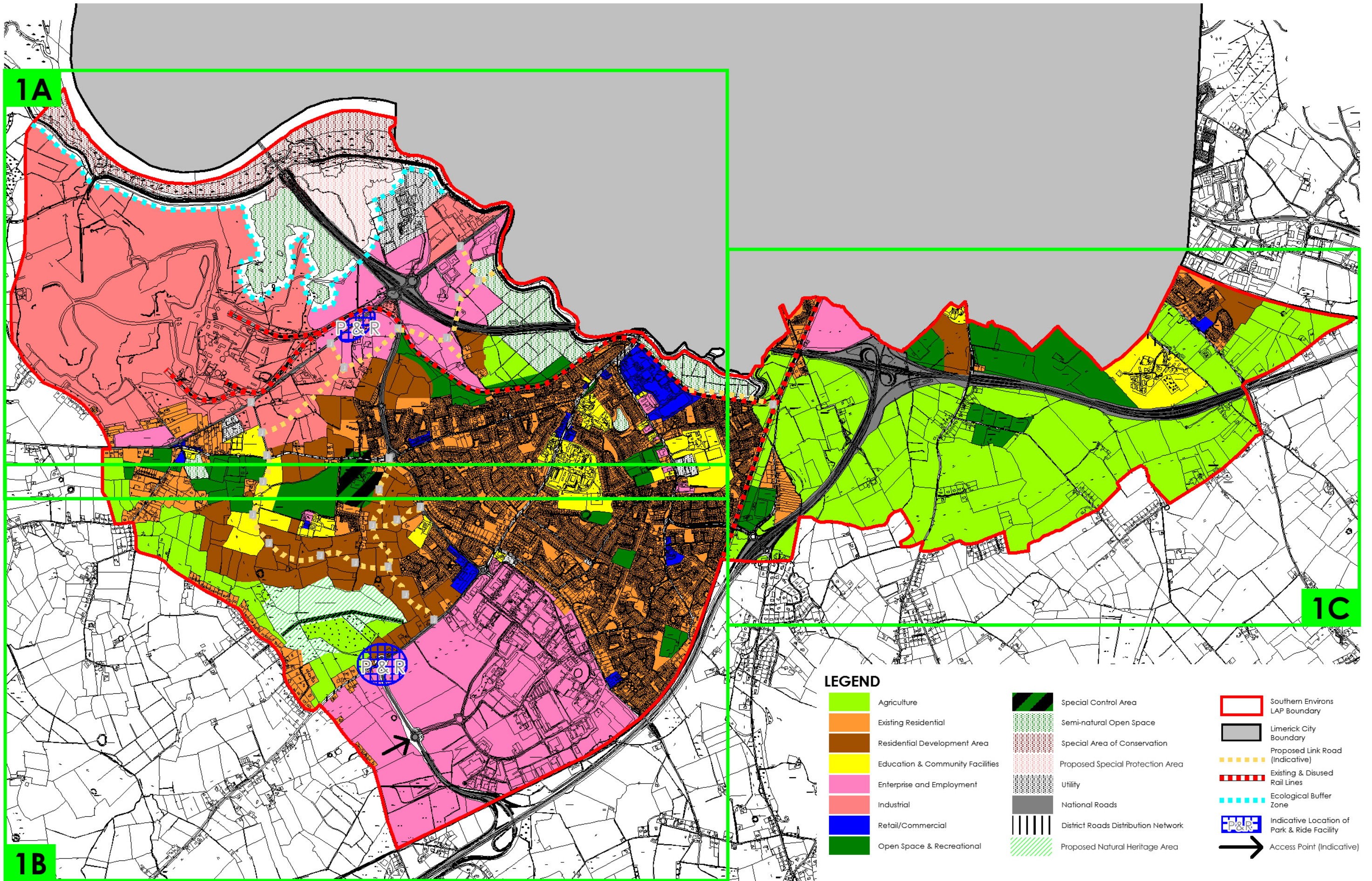
A use Generally Not Permitted is one which would be incompatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, would conflict with the permitted uses and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Southern Environs Land Use Zoning Matrix Table

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

* = Except for farmer, son or daughter - see Housing Chapter. *** = Retail Warehousing & car repair/sales not permitted in Raheen Business Park or land zoned 'Enterprise & Employment' west of the Raheen Industrial Estate **** = To serve the local working population only. Key = / Generally Permitted O Open for Consideration X Generally not permitted

Appendix 2: Maps


























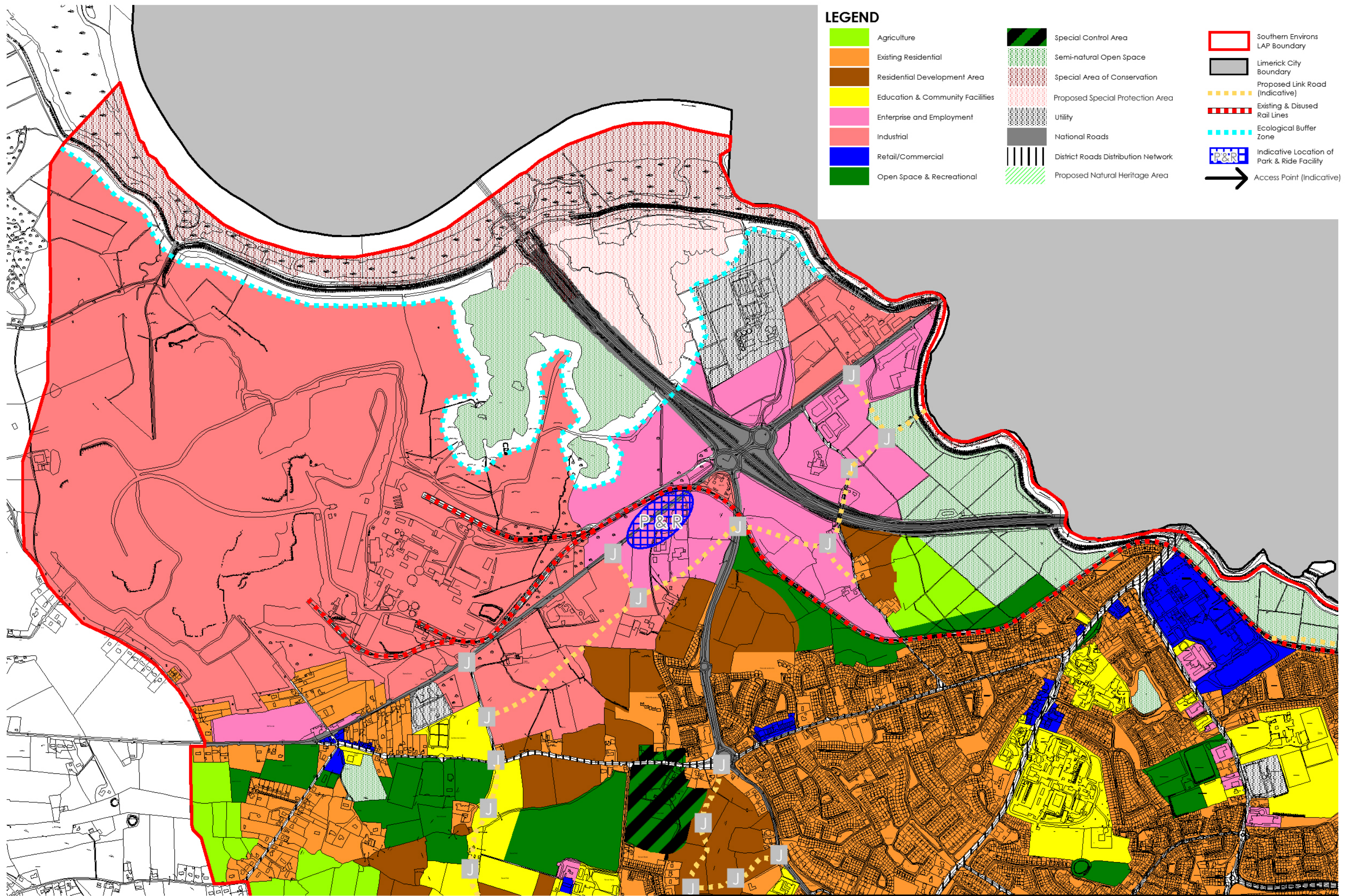
1A

1C

1B

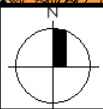
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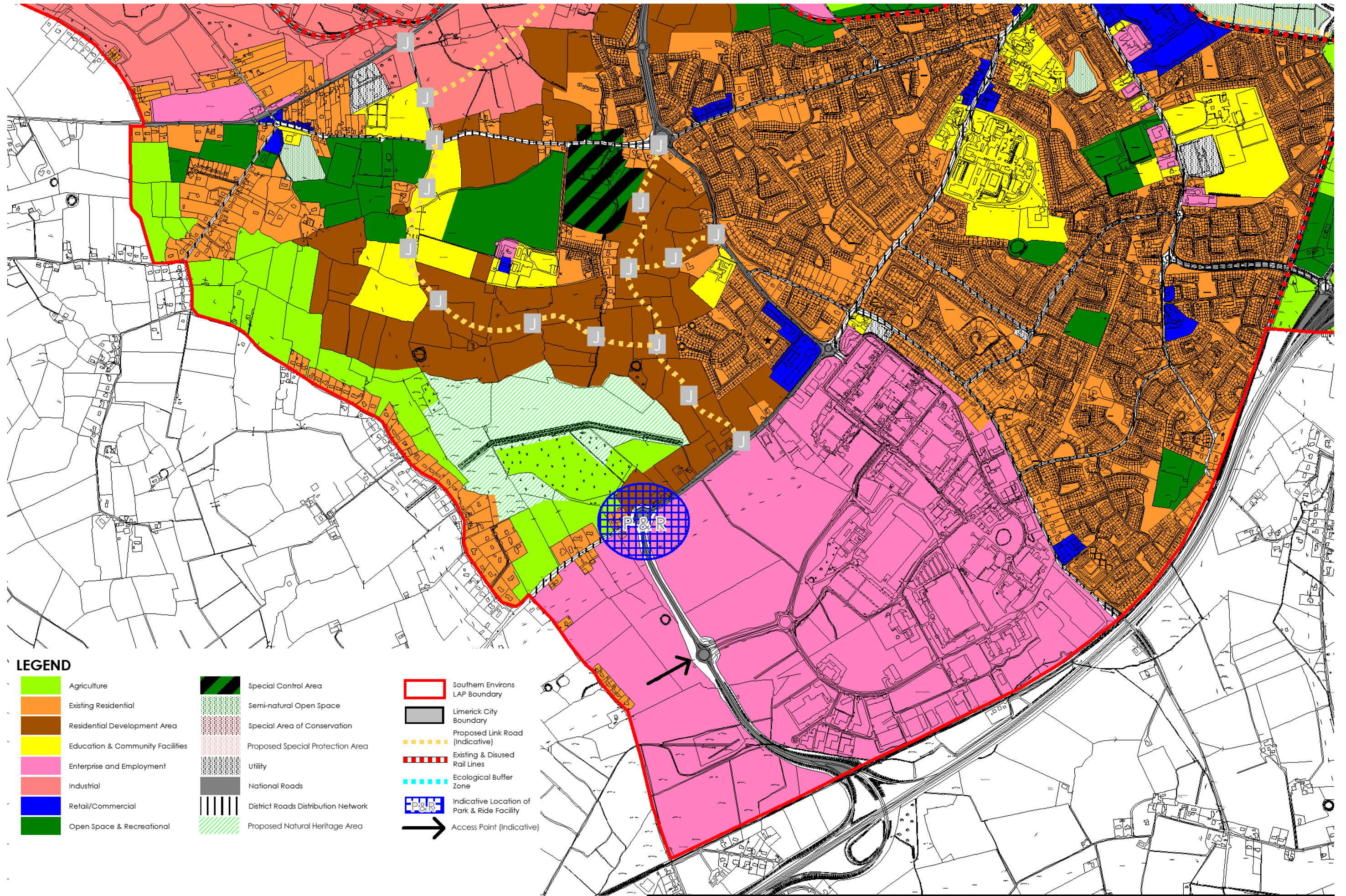
 Agriculture	 Special Control Area	 Southern Environs LAP Boundary
 Existing Residential	 Semi-natural Open Space	 Limerick City Boundary
 Residential Development Area	 Special Area of Conservation	 Proposed Link Road (Indicative)
 Education & Community Facilities	 Proposed Special Protection Area	 Existing & Disused Rail Lines
 Enterprise and Employment	 Utility	 Ecological Buffer Zone
 Industrial	 National Roads	 Indicative Location of Park & Ride Facility
 Retail/Commercial	 District Roads Distribution Network	 Access Point (Indicative)
 Open Space & Recreational	 Proposed Natural Heritage Area	



LEGEND

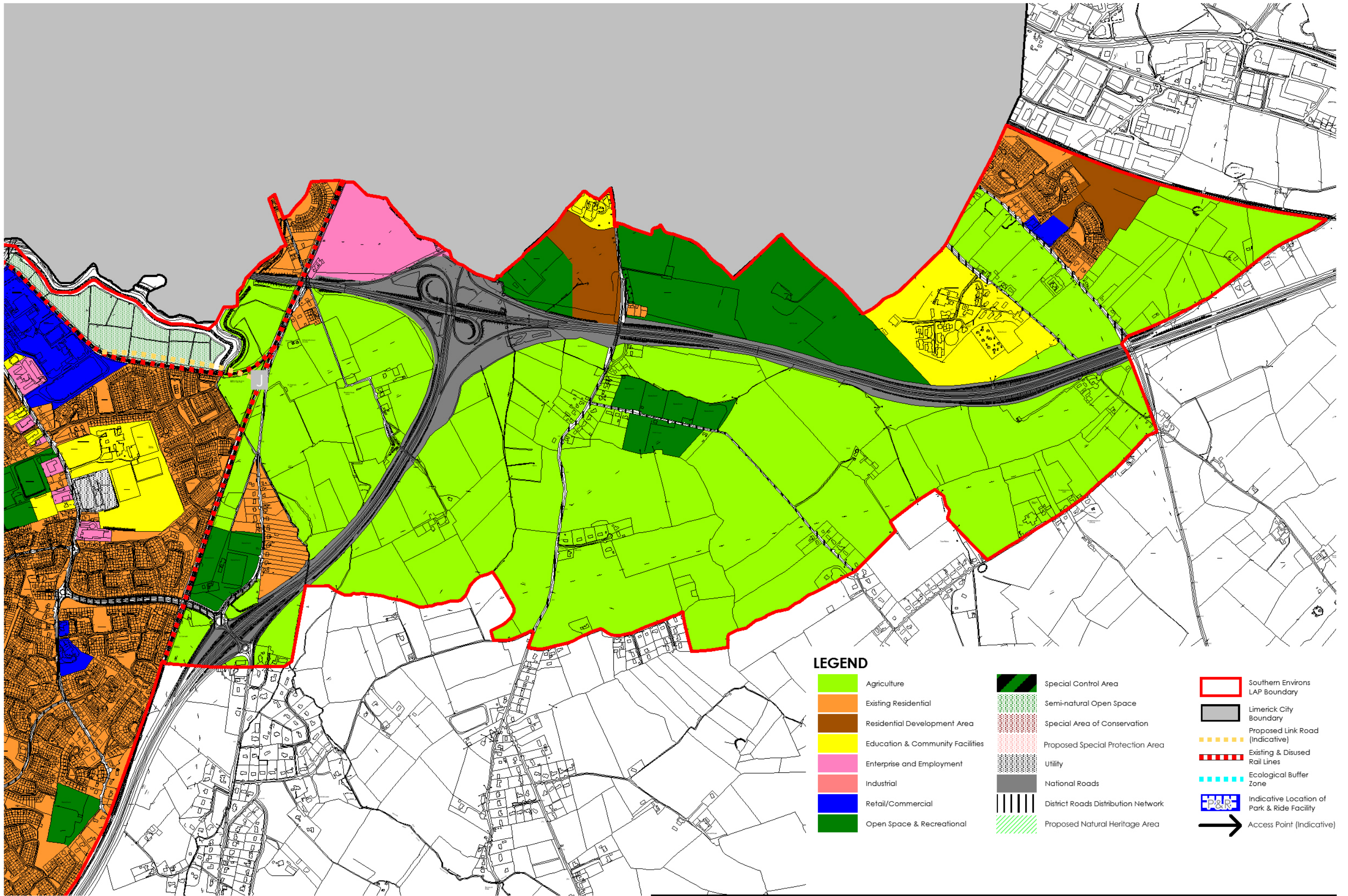
- Agriculture
- Existing Residential
- Residential Development Area
- Education & Community Facilities
- Enterprise and Employment
- Industrial
- Retail/Commercial
- Open Space & Recreational
- Special Control Area
- Semi-natural Open Space
- Special Area of Conservation
- Proposed Special Protection Area
- Utility
- National Roads
- District Roads Distribution Network
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area
- Southern Environs LAP Boundary
- Limerick City Boundary
- Proposed Link Road (Indicative)
- Existing & Disused Rail Lines
- Ecological Buffer Zone
- P&R Indicative Location of Park & Ride Facility
- Access Point (Indicative)





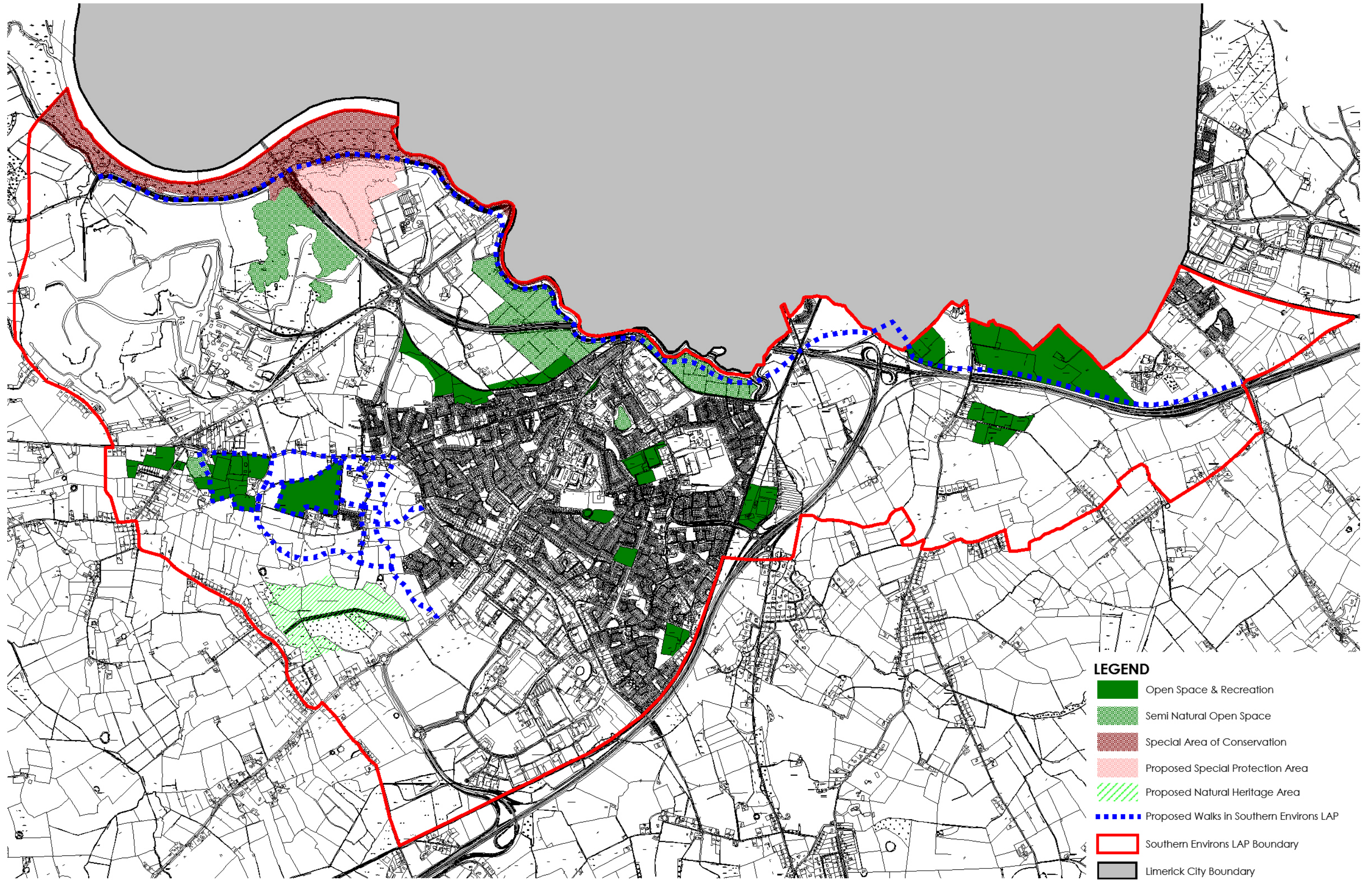
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- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|
|  | Agriculture |  | Special Control Area |  | Southern Environs LAP Boundary |
|  | Existing Residential |  | Semi-natural Open Space |  | Limerick City Boundary |
|  | Residential Development Area |  | Special Area of Conservation |  | Proposed Link Road (Indicative) |
|  | Education & Community Facilities |  | Proposed Special Protection Area |  | Existing & Disused Rail Lines |
|  | Enterprise and Employment |  | Utility |  | Ecological Buffer Zone |
|  | Industrial |  | National Roads |  | Indicative Location of Park & Ride Facility |
|  | Retail/Commercial |  | District Roads Distribution Network |  | Access Point (Indicative) |
|  | Open Space & Recreational |  | Proposed Natural Heritage Area | | |

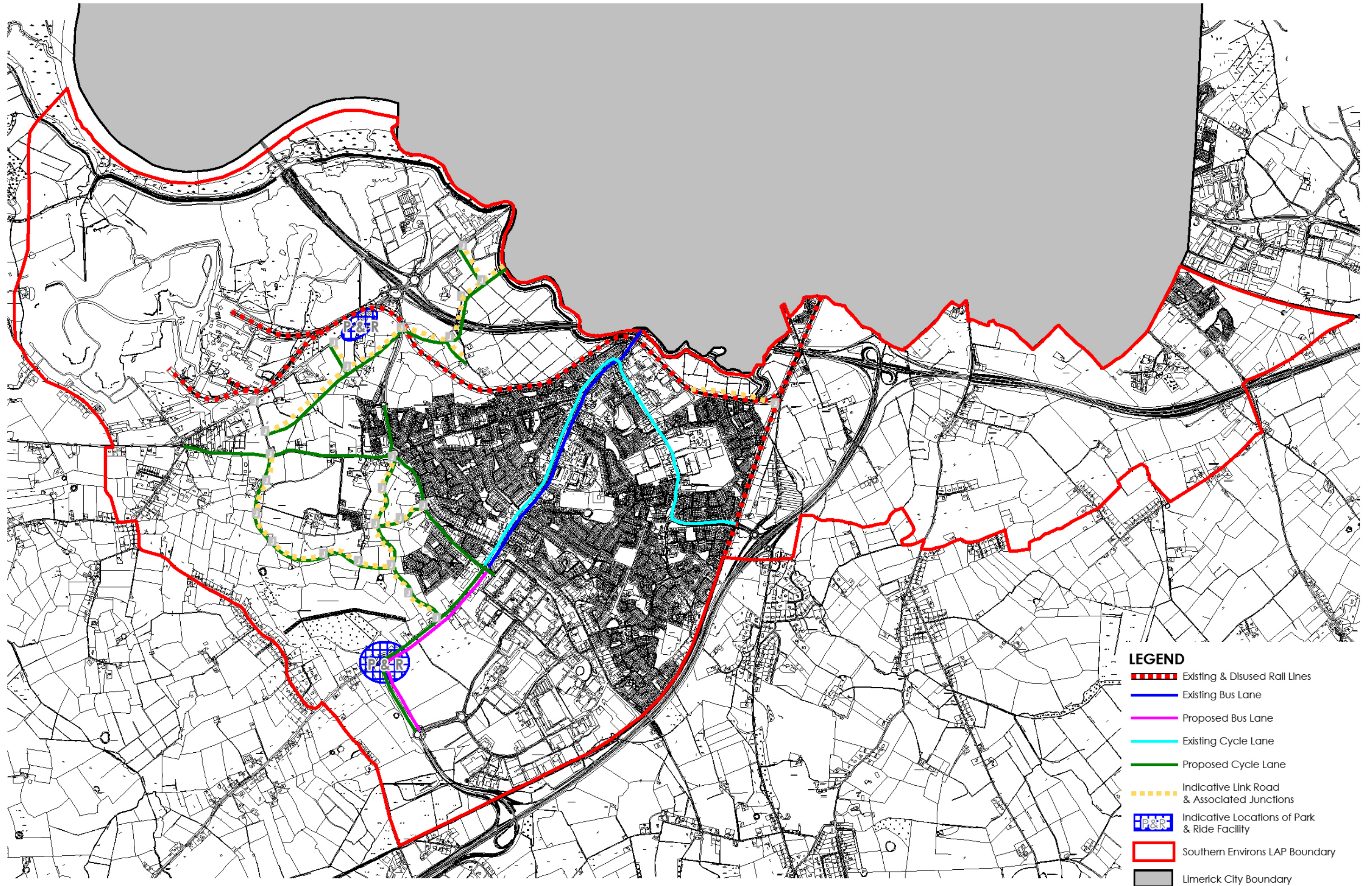


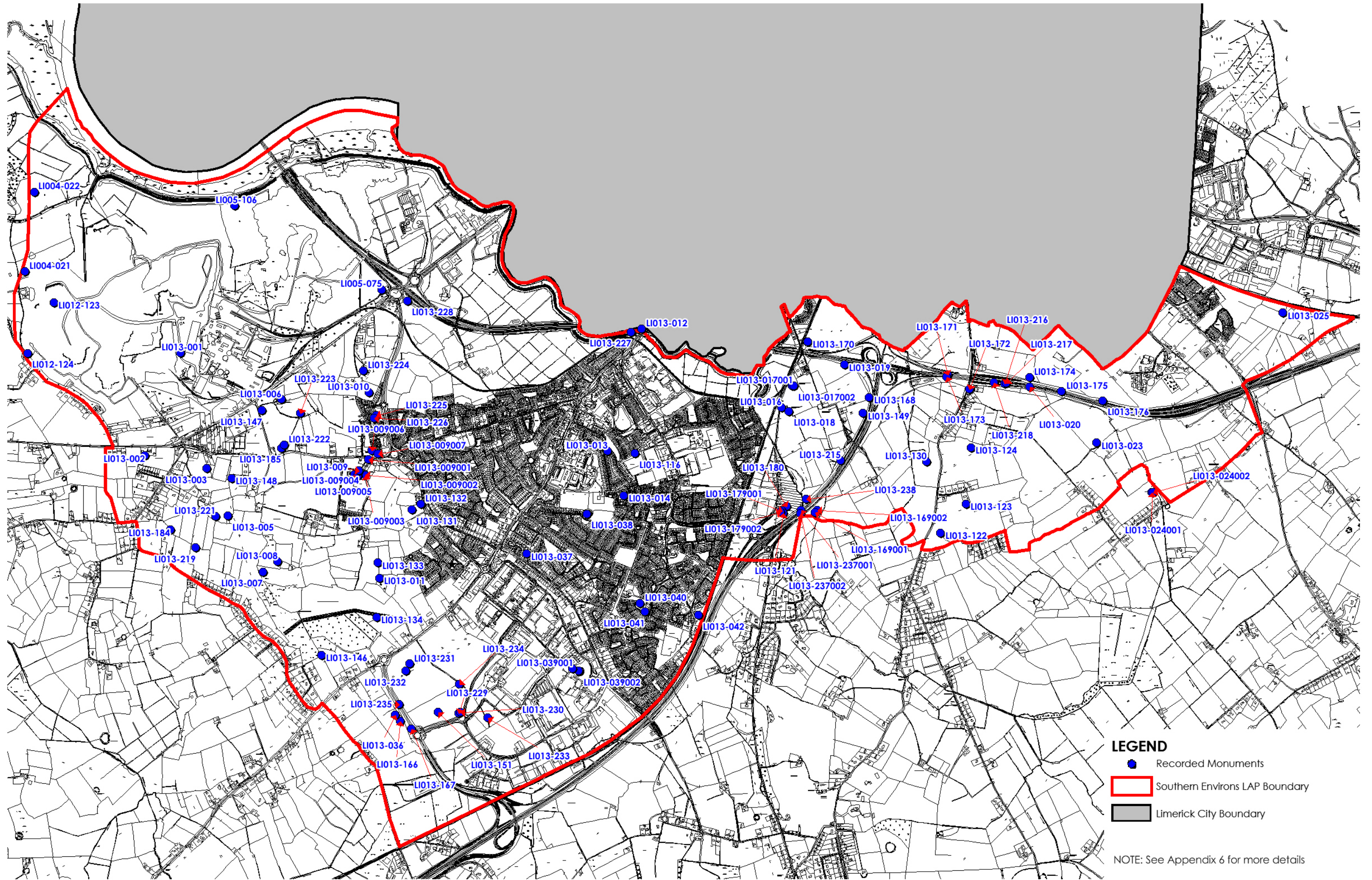
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- | | | |
|--|---|---|
|  Agriculture |  Special Control Area |  Southern Environs LAP Boundary |
|  Existing Residential |  Semi-natural Open Space |  Limerick City Boundary |
|  Residential Development Area |  Special Area of Conservation |  Proposed Link Road (Indicative) |
|  Education & Community Facilities |  Proposed Special Protection Area |  Existing & Disused Rail Lines |
|  Enterprise and Employment |  Utility |  Ecological Buffer Zone |
|  Industrial |  National Roads |  Indicative Location of Park & Ride Facility |
|  Retail/Commercial |  District Roads Distribution Network |  Access Point (Indicative) |
|  Open Space & Recreational |  Proposed Natural Heritage Area | |



- LEGEND**
- Open Space & Recreation
 - Semi Natural Open Space
 - Special Area of Conservation
 - Proposed Special Protection Area
 - Proposed Natural Heritage Area
 - Proposed Walks in Southern Environs LAP
 - Southern Environs LAP Boundary
 - Limerick City Boundary

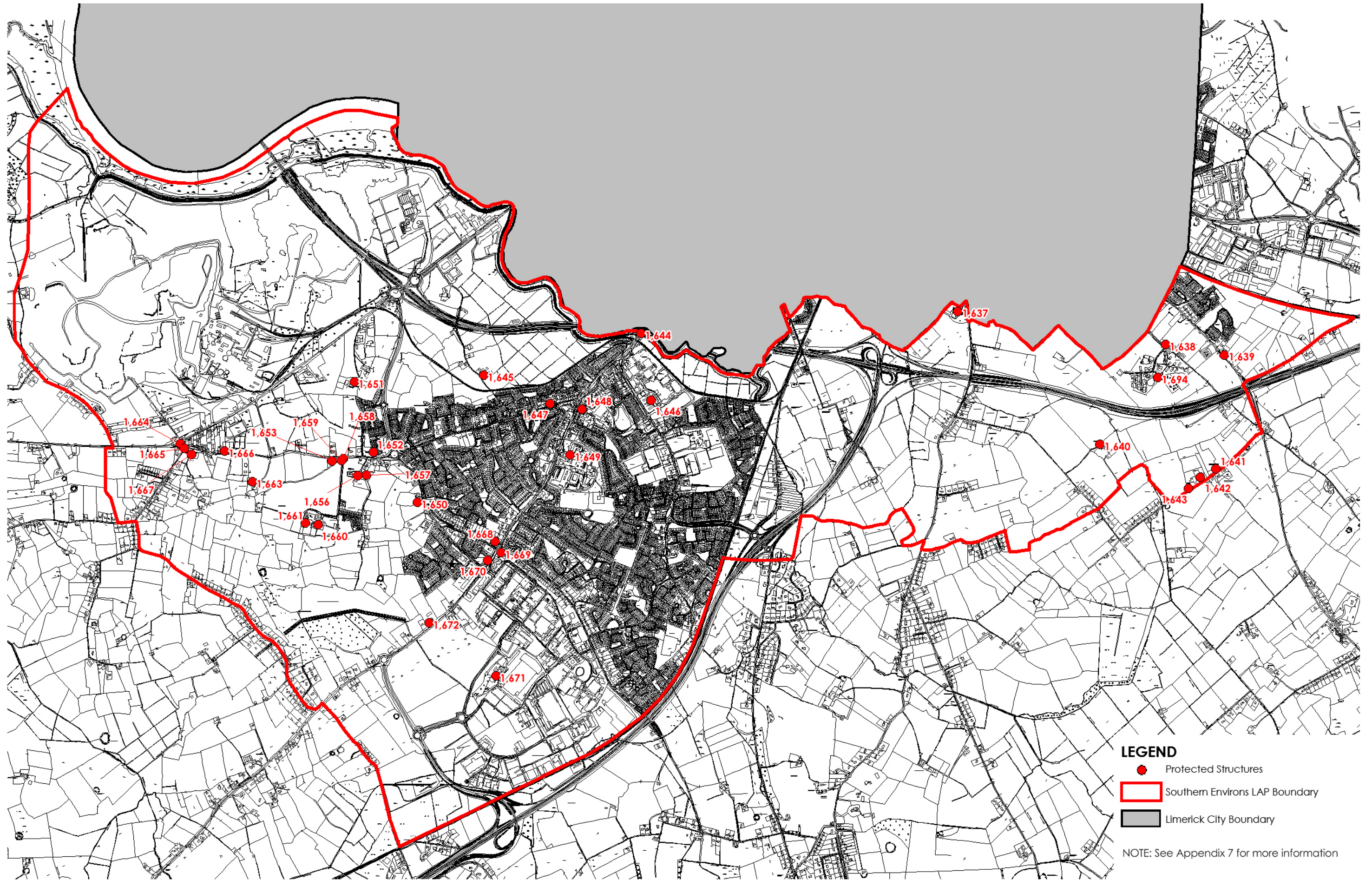


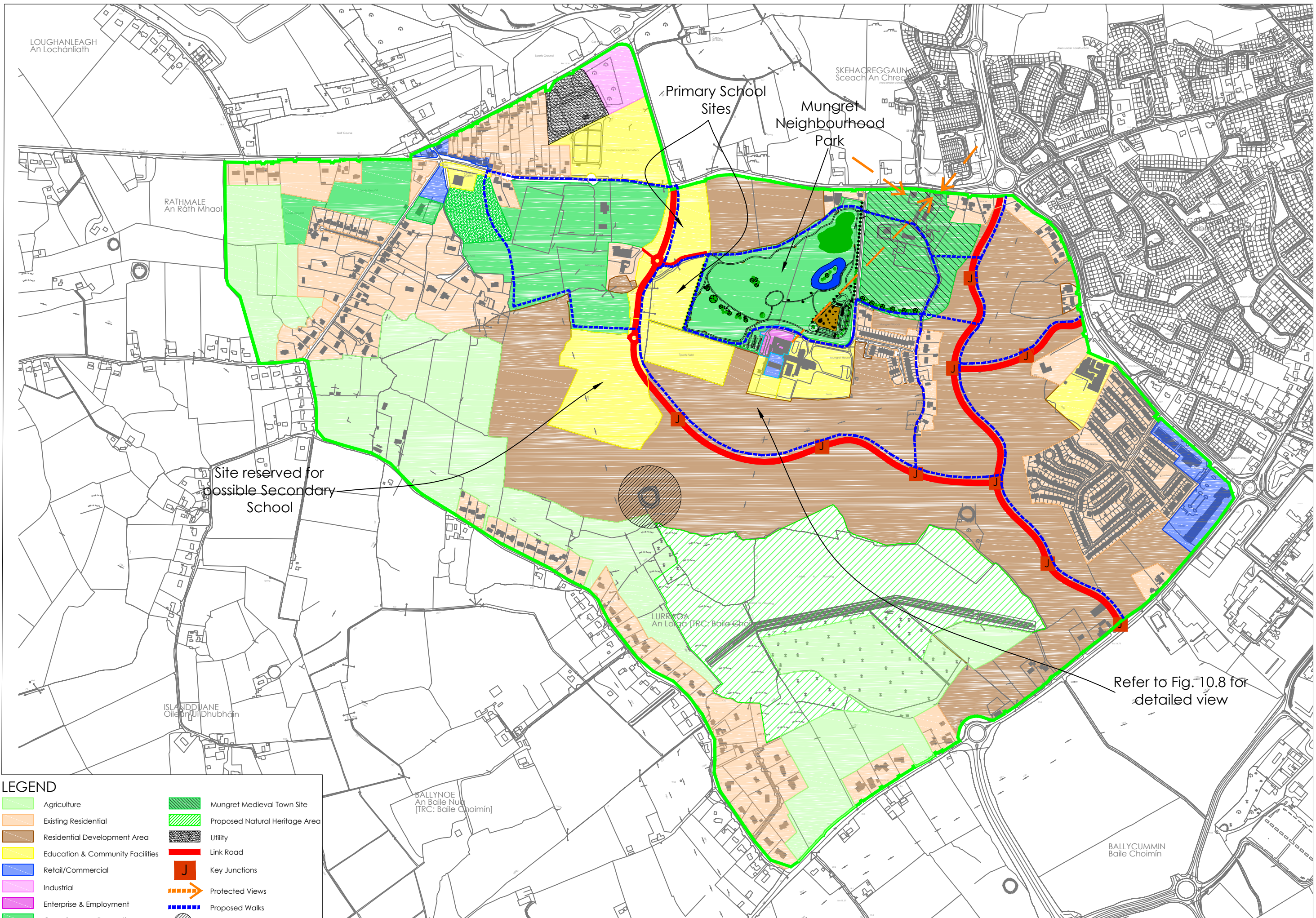


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- Recorded Monuments
- Southern Environs LAP Boundary
- Limerick City Boundary

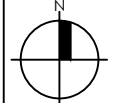
NOTE: See Appendix 6 for more details

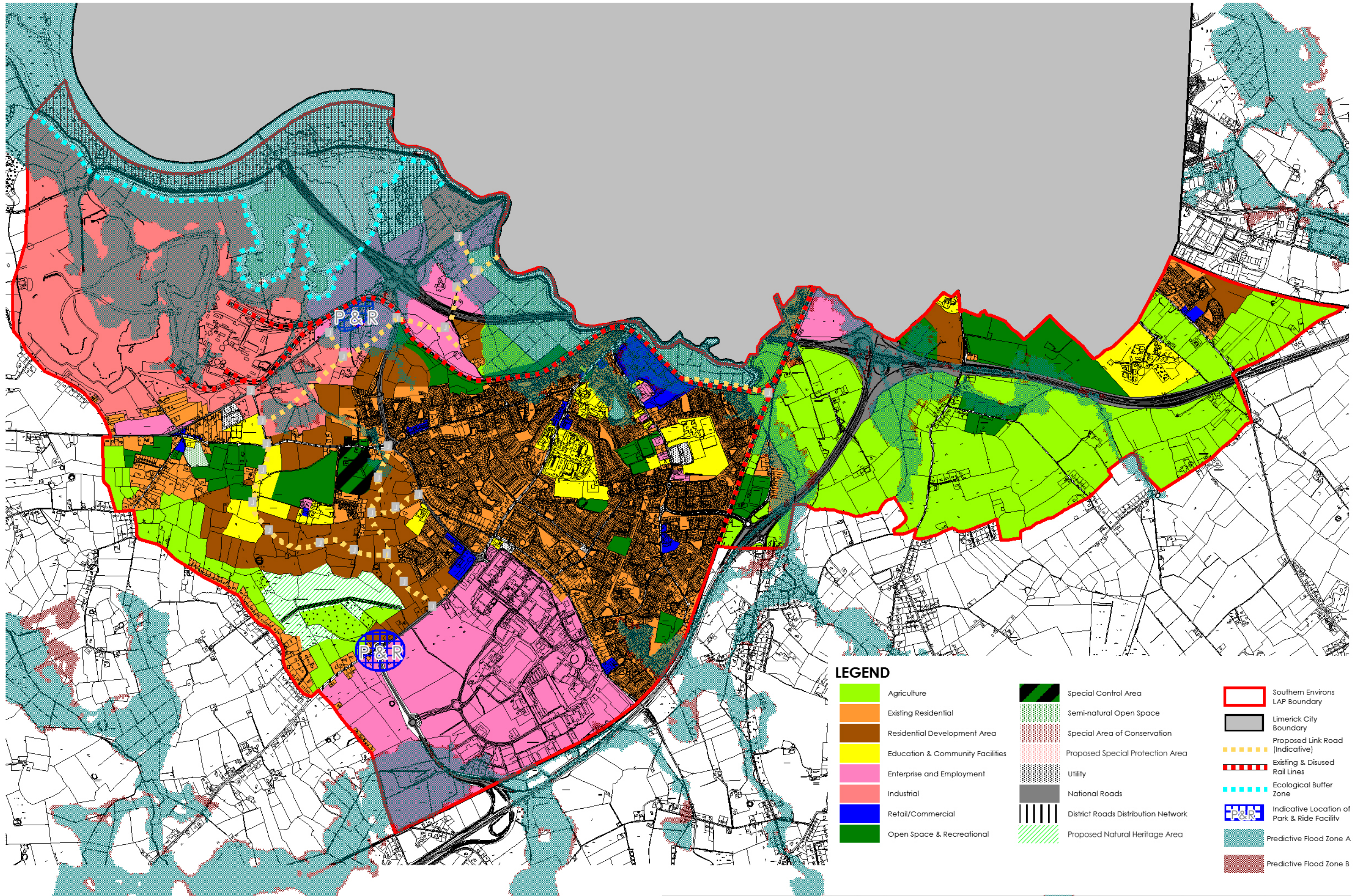




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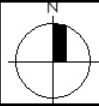
	Agriculture		Mungret Medieval Town Site
	Existing Residential		Proposed Natural Heritage Area
	Residential Development Area		Utility
	Education & Community Facilities		Link Road
	Retail/Commercial		Key Junctions
	Industrial		Protected Views
	Enterprise & Employment		Proposed Walks
	Open Space & Recreation		Archaeological Buffer
	Semi Natural Open Space		





LEGEND

- Agriculture
- Existing Residential
- Residential Development Area
- Education & Community Facilities
- Enterprise and Employment
- Industrial
- Retail/Commercial
- Open Space & Recreational
- Special Control Area
- Semi-natural Open Space
- Special Area of Conservation
- Proposed Special Protection Area
- Utility
- National Roads
- District Roads Distribution Network
- Proposed Natural Heritage Area
- Southern Environs LAP Boundary
- Limerick City Boundary
- Proposed Link Road (Indicative)
- Existing & Disused Rail Lines
- Ecological Buffer Zone
- Indicative Location of Park & Ride Facility
- Predictive Flood Zone A
- Predictive Flood Zone B



Appendix 3: Strategic Environmental Assessment Report, Appropriate Assessment & Flood Risk Assessment 2011

1.0 Contents and main objective of the plan and its relationship with other relevant plans

Introduction

In compliance with the Planning and Development Regulations (Strategic Environmental Assessment) 2004, a Strategic Environmental Assessment has been carried out for the Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2011 - 2017. What follows is the Environmental Report part of the SEA process. This should be read in association with the LAP for Southern Environs adopted May 2011. In this report the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan are identified, described and evaluated.

This Environmental Report should be read with the Appropriate Assessment document.

The purpose of the 2011 – 2017 Southern Environs LAP is to:

- (i) identify key development issues informed by statutory requirements, issues from the Council's perspective and community and stakeholder participation;
- (ii) develop policy objectives for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Southern Environs that are consistent as far as possible with National Plans, Strategies and Policies;
- (iii) provide a detailed and consistent framework for the use of land and the control and regulation of development that will guide planning decisions;
- (iv) provide a basis for co-ordinating public and private development throughout the area;
- (v) ensure public participation through the statutory process governing its preparation; and
- (vi) inform local communities on how their interests will be affected.

The plan and the contents of the environmental report are to be consistent with the contents of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) under which Limerick and its environs are designated as a Gateway. Next in the hierarchy of plans are the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 which provides a regional focus for the development of County Limerick and which sets out in more detail development objectives for the Mid West Region as a whole and Limerick County. Next in the tier of plans comes the Limerick County Development Plan 2010-2016 which directly informs the content of the Local Area Plan having itself taken into account the content of the RPGs. In many respects this is one of the most important documents in terms of plans which informs the LAP in that it gives clear guidance on specific planning and environmental issues which may not have been present to the same degree in higher tier documents such as the NSS and RPGs. In particular, the CDP

transposes the population targets laid down in the RPGs to county level which has clear implications for zoning activity within Local Area plans.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, and SEA process , operational since 2004 places additional responsibilities on the planning authority to ensure that all plans within the thresholds for SEA , follow clearly the requirements of both the SEA directive and the any accompanying guidance documents.

2.0 Relationship with other plans

Much of the policy background has been laid for the Southern Environs Plan by the County Development Plan (2010-2016) and the Regional Planning Guidelines (2010) providing the most immediate policy backdrop to the LAP. The National Spatial Strategy designates Limerick as one of a network of gateway centres which function as nodes of development to ensure balanced regional growth outside the eastern part of the country. This will have implications for the Southern Environs as part of the environs of Limerick City.

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

There are currently six tiers to the settlement hierarchy as outlined in the County Development Plan. The Southern Environs is part of the city environs. These are the built up environs of Limerick City that lie within the area of Limerick County Council. Limerick City itself is the responsibility of Limerick City Council which is a separate planning authority. This area, in addition to being an important residential area, accommodates a wide range of services and employment and retail outlets of county and regional importance. The Environs are the most urbanised parts of Limerick County. The environs form part of the Limerick/Ennis/Shannon Gateway in the NSS and in the Mid West Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG).

2.2 Description of the current State of the Environment and the Environmental Characteristics of the area likely to be affected and identification of any existing environmental problems

2.3 Description of the area

Southern Environs is located to the south of Limerick City, approximately 3 kilometres from Limerick City Centre.

The Southern Environs Local Area Plan covers approximately 21 square kilometres and falls mainly into two Electoral Divisions (EDs) namely Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural. It is located south of Limerick City and stretches east to Banemore, south to Ballycummin and west to Conigar in Mungret. It includes the areas of

Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2011-2017 as amended

Dooradoyle, Raheen, Mungret, Gouldavoher, and Rosbrien. Its natural boundaries include the Shannon Estuary and the Ballinacurra Creek along the City boundary. It is an area largely urban in nature that has experienced considerable population increase over the years. Its importance for the county and the region is reflected in the range and scale of land use in the area and the provision of important large-scale infrastructural development in the area.

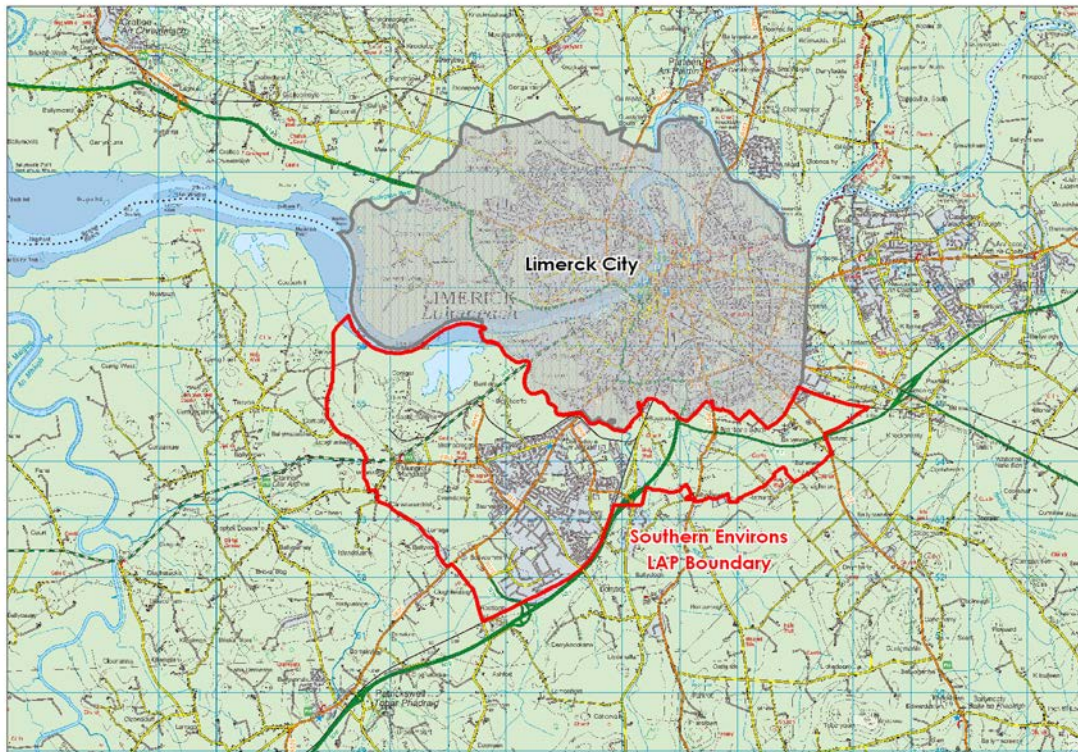


Figure 1: Southern Environs LAP area.

2.4 Population in Southern Environs

The population in the Southern Environs has shown continued increase over the last two decades or more. Reproduced below but also presented in the main body of the plan (chapter 2) are the population figures, both for the recent past and projected for the Southern Environs.

The Electoral Divisions of Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural have shown some of the highest growth rates in the county over the 1996-2006 period. Although all of the Ballycummin ED falls within the Plan area, it is estimated that approximately 50% of the population that reside within the Limerick South Rural ED fall within the Southern Environs Development Boundary. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 outline the population change in the area from 1981 - 2006.

Table 2.1: Past population trends in the Southern Environs

Year	Southern Environs	Population Increase	% Increase
1981	6211	-	-
1986	7643	1432	23.0
1991	8647	1004	13.1
1996	10283	1636	18.9
2002	13925	3643	35.4
2006	16000	2075	15

Source: Central Statistical Services, 1981-2006

Table 2.2: Population of the Ballycummin and Limerick South Rural Electoral Districts

Year	Bally-cummin	Pop. Increase	% Increase	Year	Limerick South Rural (total)	Pop. Increase	% Increase
1981	5934	-	-	1981	554	-	-
1986	7311	1377	23.2%	1986	663	109	19.7%
1991	8303	992	13.6%	1991	687	24	3.6%
1996	9907	1604	19.3%	1996	751	64	9.3%
2002	13435	3528	35.6%	2002	980	229	30.5%
2006	16335	2900	21.6%	2006	1424	444	45.3%

Source: Central Statistical Office

These figures show steady increases. The pace of population growth might possibly slow over the next few years but it is expected to continue to increase. The population target as per the Core Strategy in the 2010 Limerick CDP for the Southern Environs is 20,800.

2.5 Potential Environmental Problems

The presence of the Lower River Shannon SAC site consisting of the River Shannon to the North, and the Ballnaclough River/Ballinacurra Creek to the east are one of the important features to consider. The presence of turloughs though not designated, are also a feature of the drainage system of the area.

One issue that has come to the fore recently has been that of flooding. All the rivers within the plan area have had a history of flooding. In light of this history, and the concerns raised by the recent DEHLG Flood Guidance document, this is an issue that

requires particular attention. This has resulted in the following measures being incorporated into the plan:

1 Additional open space zoning has been put in place adjacent to the Ballynacloough River/Ballinacurra Creek which will function both as a buffer as a flood residence area.

2 A buffer zone has been put in place along undeveloped lengths of the Shannon.

3 Sustainable Urban Drainage Policies have been incorporated into the proposed plan.

4 The area of Monteen turlough adjacent to the Mungret Parish church has been re-zoned from residential to open space. Further details of flooding issues in the plan can be obtained from the Stage 1 Flood impact assessment produced as part of the plan making process.

Other environmental considerations include:

1. the growing need in the city environs to ensure the preservation of key features of the natural and built environment such as open space, trees and groups of trees and part of the parkland setting of Mungret college for example.
2. the need to ensure the development of public transport and sustainable transport initiatives, while maintaining smooth traffic flow on existing and proposed roadways.
3. the need to ensure that infrastructural facilities such as wastewater treatment centres keep pace with population growth. This is of particular importance given the proximity of the designated sites.

The potential pace of development often associated with location of the important Raheen Industrial Estate and Limerick status as a gateway centre in the National Spatial Strategy means that despite the pressure to ensure that such development takes place it should do so in a manner that ensures maximum use of brown field sites and should assist in consolidating the existing built form.

2.6: The “Do Nothing” Scenario

In terms of estimating how environmental conditions might change over time without implementation of the 2011 -2017 LAP, consideration of some of the headings outlined above are useful starting points. Alternatively, not considering the implications of flooding, and factoring in adequate buffer distances it is likely that the risk associated with flooding within the LAP area will increase. The DEHLG Development Plan Guidelines (2007) speak of the need to take a precautionary approach towards flooding issues while the more recent guidelines presented by the DEHLG offer more detailed advice. Not implementing the revised plan would mean

that the opportunity to take into account the updated guidance would not be availed off, with possibility of increasingly severe flood events in the future.

The Southern Environs has one of the fastest population growth rates of anywhere in the county. Despite the economic down turn it is likely that population growth will be higher than anywhere else in the county. Failure to implement the 2011 - 2017 LAP would mean that the additional zoning that would be required to cater for this growth would not take place. In addition the opportunity to incorporate the provisions of the new guidelines *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas* from May 2009 would be missed.

Environmental practices in relation to issues such as re-cycling and waste disposal have altered since the previous plan was put in place. Without the 2011 – 2017 LAP policies in relation to these issues could not be updated in order to reflect current best practice.

In addition, the environmental report should take into account the contents of other plans for the area as outlined in section 4.11 of the SEA guidelines. What is also central to the process of plan-making is the incorporation of the various guideline documents which are issued by the DEHLG to inform plan – making. Since the 2005 Southern Environs LAP guidelines have been issued in relation to flooding while central to the making of plans was the publication of the Development Plan Guidelines DEHLG June 2007. Proceeding with the plan as it stands i.e. do nothing scenario would mean that the opportunity to incorporate current best practice as detailed in these guidance documents would be missed. The incorporation of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DEHLG November 2009) is particularly important in this regard. Another guidance document that bears particular relevance to the Southern Environs is the Retail Strategy for the Midwest Region 2010-2016. The main thrust of this document stresses a regional wide approach to retail activities. In this regard it emphasises a centre out approach to the development of retail sites, with Limerick city centre taking the priority as the gateway centre over the Southern Environs. The detailed list of guidance documents that have been consulted are set out on page 9 of the draft plan.

Further development scenarios are outlined towards the end of this report.

2.7 Identification of potential environmental problems

The proximity of both the Ballinaclogh River and the Shannon, both part of the Lower River Shannon SAC site, are amongst the most important environmental sites that lie within the LAP area. Barr and Thomson (2004) identify key issues that could affect water quality in the Shannon basin. Those that might apply within the plan area are sewage, water abstraction, urban drainage and septic tanks, industry and leisure activities.

Without the consolidation of the LAP area brought about by the non-expansion of the plan boundaries, urban sprawl and associated under use of development land could otherwise result. The practice of over-zoning, has been avoided in this plan by basing the zoning patterns on what has been termed “a realistic assessment of need” (DEHLG, 2007 p.33). Sufficient land has been zoned to meet the requirements of population growth projected in the core strategy of the Limerick County Development Plan. The core strategy of the CDP is consistent with the contents of the Mid-west Regional Planning Guidelines.

While this approach is a rational, logical system of designating zoning it is important that it is adhered to and implemented through the 2011 LAP. To do otherwise may contribute to unsustainable zoning patterns, contrary to the accepted planning principles, and the stipulation of the SEA guidelines for higher densities of development in suitable locations (DEHLG, 2004 p.32). Bearing this in mind, emphasis has been placed in the 2010 LAP on higher density development in appropriate locations indicated as suitable by the higher level guidance documents the NSS and RPGs which designate Limerick a gateway city.

Environmental considerations have been integrated into the LAP through re-zoning which responds to flooding issues, and turloughs and ecological sites were re-zoned to reflect their sensitivities. Ecological buffer zones were introduced along the River Shannon. The de-zoning of residential land reflects updated population target population figures from the RPGs. The LAP also highlighted the issue of clean water diversions through the WWTP and the need to ensure that the disposal of surface water should be carried out in a planned fashion.

2.8 Environmental Protection Objectives Relevant to the LAP and Description of how those objectives and any Environmental Considerations have been taken into account in preparing the Plan

One of the key issues of the LAP is the protection of bio-diversity, flora and fauna arising within the LAP area and the protection of the designated SAC sites. The issues of nature conservation have been taken into account in objectives EH7- 9. The protection of trees, woodlands and natural areas are included as objective EH12. Bunlickey Lake has been re-designated in part as a proposed SPA and in part as semi-natural open space based on submission received on 12th June 2010 from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. This called for the re-designation of the site to that of Proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA), and the addition of a buffer zone around designated sites. This has resulted in the establishment of a 30m buffer zone along the Shannon and the industrial designation that was previously in place on the lake has been lifted.

An additional policy, which calls for the ecological assessment of planning applications over five housing units with reference to particular species, mentioned by the National Parks and Wildlife Service is intended to provide additional

safeguards for these species, especially where they might occur outside designated sites.

The re-zoning which followed the preparation of the flood impact assessment will also have positive implications for bio-diversity.

In terms of population, while the plan period lasts until 2017 the future for population is considered under the longer time period from 2011 until 2022. The population targets from the MWRPG and Limerick County Development Plan are taken into account and the land zoning for residential purposes has taken place on that basis. It has been estimated (S.2.4.2 of the LAP) that a population increase of 4800 will need to be accommodated within the plan area by 2022. This translated into a requirement for 87ha. The undeveloped residential land that remained in the plan area was 190ha (LAP, S.2.4.3). The LAP recommends a reduction of zoned residential land. Land in vulnerable areas has been de-zoned, i.e. in flood benefiting lands in Ballykeefe and in the Monteen turlough. There remains sufficient land zoned for residential purposes within the plan until 2022 (the time period of the MWRPG population targets) together with a reserve to allow for unexpected increases in demand.

The requirement for Social Housing has also been dealt with in Objective HO4 Social and Affordable Housing where 20% of all land zoned for residential uses is to be set aside for this purpose. (Section 3.3 Southern Environs LAP)

In terms of retail activity the new approach to retail that is put forward by the Retail Strategy for the Mid West Region 2010-2016 is echoed in the plan where it says *“the retail strategy responds to the effects of recent development by re-establishing the importance of Limerick City Centre at the top of the regional hierarchy, and just as importantly, the preferred location for new retail development in the Limerick Metropolitan Area. The intention is for Limerick City Centre to recapture trade it has lost to the Crescent Shopping Centre and to out of centre shopping facilities”* (section 4.5.1, section 4.5.2. Southern Environs LAP).

Human health has been addressed under a range of different headings such as objective H04 Social and Affordable Housing-see above. Regeneration, a key issue for Limerick City and its environs has been mentioned in Objective HO5 Limerick regeneration agencies where Limerick County Council indicated that it will support the initiatives of the Limerick Southside Regeneration Agency.

The issue of soil conservation is dealt with in the LAP by consolidating the existing development patterns, which prevents expansion on to green field sites. This has been the case in the LAP as there has been no expansion of the development boundaries of the plan. There has been de-zoning of residential land that for the most part has been reclassified as open space or agricultural. The promotion of the concept of a “compact district “in Objective HO2 Residential Density (Chapter 3) by encouraging appropriate densities, particularly higher densities within 500m of public transport routes further reinforces more intensive land use in urban areas in

accordance with the new *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines* (May 2009).

Water conservation and protection has been considered from a number of different aspects. The inclusion of additional protective zoning along the Shannon with protective buffer along as yet undeveloped areas along the Shannon and the Ballynaclough River prevent direct interference with these rivers, and provide a zone for the attenuation of pollutants. The inclusion of policies promoting Sustainable Urban Drainage (objective IN4) are also important in mitigating against the effects of floods. To ensure that waste water treatment plant (WWTP) capacity keeps pace with development Policy IN1B has been added. This states the following:

'It is an objective of the Council to ensure that waste water infrastructure will keep pace with development that takes place in the plan area to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters into which any discharges from such plants might take place.'

Air and Climatic factors have been taken into account by the inclusion of policies promoting the use of public transport in objective T7 but also in the promotion of renewable energy technologies that is present in objective IN11 that deals with renewable energy.

In the SEA guidelines it is suggested that one of the best ways to deal with the issue of material assets is to "maximise use of the existing built environment" (SEA Guidelines, 2004, p.31). What will be included is a policy similar to that in the Castletroy LAP which states that the "*the council will encourage the rehabilitation, restoration, reuse and change of use of existing older buildings and protected structures where appropriate*" within the architectural heritage section of the plan.

The cultural heritage of the area also has specific policies relating to it. Protection and conservation of the architectural heritage of the area of the Regional hospital (Objective EH6) is considered. The Monastic site at Mungret has been designated as a Special Control Area which reflects the Council's on-going concern with preserving this part of the History and archaeology of the area under objective EH 4. The settings of other archaeological monuments are also protected under objective EH3.

The list of protected structures in the plan area has been taken from the County Development Plan and updated during the County development plan review.

Landscape has been considered under a number of headings. Objectives relating to the aspects of the urban landscape such as Architectural Conservation Areas, ecological sites, trees and hedgerows have been included in the LAP. The protection of the settings of archaeological monuments, as outlined above, has positive implications for landscape. The buffer distance around the designated sites outlined in the Environment and Heritage chapter also reserves open areas close to sites of ecological sensitivity.

Objective C1 specifically sets out to protect lands that are designed for open space, including those for recreational purposes but also those that are important for semi-natural open space. A new departure for the Council has been (d) of objective C1 relating specifically to amenity open space that seeks to retain “visual landmarks throughout housing areas.”

The sensitive landscape area of Mungret-Loughmore is to be the subject of a master plan to ensure the coherent development of the area (Objective ZD04). The wider section on urban design (Chapter 10) is included to make it necessary that new development integrates with and enhances the urban landscape. Chapter 9, Land use zoning and design sets the basic framework for development within the LAP area in conformity with the guidance of higher level documents such as the County Development Plan.

Table 1 Scoping of Local Area Plan Policies

Issue	Criteria - Is there a policy or objective relating to the Topic?	Policy/Objective Ref / Absence	Comments
Non-Renewable Resources e.g. soils	Protection and conservation of productive land and prime agricultural land.	Promotion of compact settlement in S9.2.1	In line with SEA guidelines
	Protection and conservation of local woodlands, particularly those that have both amenity and ecological value	Objective C1 and Eh12 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows	Objective C2 that safeguards amenities also provides for the protection of trees and landscape features in housing areas.
	Protection and conservation of water sources and supply networks	Objective IN 1 to ensure that infrastructure keeps pace with development	Buffer zone included along the banks of the Shannon., Ballynaclough River / Ballinacurra Creek.

Issue	Criteria - Is there a policy or objective relating to the Topic?	Policy/Objective Ref / Absence	Comments
Biodiversity	Protection, conservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats within designated sites and other important habitats and networks	30m buffer zone indicated along the Shannon. Objectives EH6 to 9 cover creation of new habitats and ecological assessment	See Objectives EH 6-9. Also EH12 which will incorporate trees and hedgerows into developments.
	Protection and conservation of species of flora and fauna protected by law.	Referred to in the CDP that has precedence over the LAP.	Also included in Objectives EH6 to 9.
Environmental Quality, landscape. Built and natural environment. Including material assets, air and climatic factors.	Encouragement of reuse and adaptation of existing buildings and structures.	Objectives included encouraging reuse of existing buildings	Similar to objectives in the County Development Plan which encourages re-use of older buildings and protected structures.
	Encouragement of public transport use.	Policies M3 and M4.	M3 and M4 promote public transport and cycling and pedestrian accessibility.
	Promotion of renewable energy and Municipal Heating systems.	Policy IN11 Individual wind turbines.	While it encourages small scale wind energy it will be broadened to the wording that is in the current Castletroy plan <i>domestic scale renewable energy proposals will be encouraged where appropriate.</i> " P.65 of the Castletroy plan.

Issue	Criteria - Is there a policy or objective relating to the Topic?	Policy/Objective Ref / Absence	Comments
	Promotion of incentives to ensure efficient use of local resources.	The equivalent of policy E2 in the Castletroy LAP which seeks to protect soils habitats and historic features	Could be included in the Environment and Heritage chapter.
	Promotion of environmentally friendly design.	Section 9.4	9.4.1 in particular details elements of sustainable design. In addition 9.4.2 outlines requirements for design in the sensitive Mungret area.
	Preservation and Conservation of local character in built and natural environment, such landscape features.	Design briefs for different areas such as Mungret seek to preserve local character.	Objective C2 that safeguards amenities also provides for the protection of trees and landscape features in housing areas.
	Promotion of urban agriculture.	Objective C4	Promotes allotments and community gardens
Environmental Equity, population and human health.- see also previous heading.	Protection, management and improvement of access to resources to satisfy fundamental needs	Objective EH1	Preserves open spaces and amenity features.
	Establishing of implementation group to ensure that the plan policies are prepared in an integrated fashion.	No policy present but working group established in house to ensure more balanced policy coverage.	Review and monitoring section of SEA will indicate targets which will show how the plan policies are being implemented.

Issue	Criteria - Is there a policy or objective relating to the Topic?	Policy/Objective Ref / Absence	Comments
	Monitoring and review framework clearly articulated.	See table 8.2 in this document.	

Source: adapted from *Heritage Appraisal of Development Plans* and Table 4B SEA Guidelines

2.9 Likely Significant effects on the Environment

Likely significant effects of the LAP as presented were assessed using the 2005 LAP as a baseline. The principal mechanisms through which a LAP can have effects on the environment are through its zoning mechanism and the supporting policies. The 2005 zoning pattern was examined with the more up to date content of guidance issued since the adoption of the LAP in 2005. Development patterns were examined including the availability of unused zoned land within the plan boundaries. Based on this observation it was decided not to expand the LAP boundaries, thereby reducing the overall development footprint of the plan. Other issues had arisen since the previous LAP such as risk of encroachment of development on open space and semi-natural open space areas. The 2011 LAP contains responses both in terms of zoning, including the buffer zone along the Shannon and Objective C1 which seeks to preserve open space and semi-natural open space.

Given the relatively low lying nature of much of the Southern Environs the incorporation of the Flooding Guidelines (2009) was seen as an important step in addressing this issue. De-zoning of lands that were identified at risk of flooding are included and supported by policies concerning Sustainable Urban Drainage. In terms of AA, responsive policies of the 2011 LAP include the requirement of ecological surveying of potential development sites for species of particular conservation concern within the LAP area and updating policies as they applied to designated ecological sites.

Cross border effects were examined in terms of ensuring compatible zoning practices between the City and County plans. In addition, flood surveys for the Caherdavin area within the City to the north were examined to minimise any changes of development patterns in the plan area affecting flooding patterns elsewhere.

The assessment that follows is that of the preferred plan strategy i.e. that which has been presented in the chapters of the Local Area Plan.

The amount of land zoned for differing uses has been deduced by the use of the land budget technique accounting for: the amount of land already in use for specific zoning headings; the amount of land that remains undeveloped; projections for future needs based in part on past land use take up through the planning process; and through population growth. Consequently, it has been decided not to expand the Local Area Plan boundaries as sufficient undeveloped land remains within the 2005 LAP plan area to cater for all zoning needs within the projected lifetime of the Plan. As outlined above de-zoning of some residential land banks have taken place.

The key aspect of the 2011 LAP that minimises environmental impact is that the development boundary of the Local Plan remains the same as the previous plan, effectively consolidating the existing urban structure. It will ensure that “brown field land within the LAP boundaries will have a greater chance of re-use adhering to the principle of giving preference to the re-use of brown field lands, rather than developing green field lands” (SEA guidelines, 2004, p.30). It will minimise possible effects on designated sites such as the River Shannon SAC site, ensuring that no further stretches of the river come within the plan area, and which, therefore, might be subject to more sustained development pressure than would otherwise be the case.

In line with the principles of Sustainable Urban drainage (SUDS) a buffer zone has been established along the River Shannon (30m). In addition to acting as a flood residence area, this buffer zone will provide additional space for each river corridor, having ecological benefits, which is also positive from an amenity perspective. Additional land has been zoned as semi-natural open space around Bunlickey Lake.

Additional land has been zoned for industrial purposes within the LAP area. There have been changes from residential to enterprise zoning in the Dooradoyle area to reflect existing uses, i.e small pre-existing enterprises. The changes in zoning, are designed to respond to the changing needs of the city environs and allow a more flexible zoning response to changing needs over the lifetime of the plan.

2.10 Cumulative effects

As indicated above, the consolidation of the LAP boundaries coupled with a range of policies to deal with issues such as flooding, renewable energy, and resource use, and additional protective zoning for the Shannon should minimise the emergence of cumulative adverse effects. The incorporation of the new flooding guidance and the reduction of the amount of land zoned for residential use, particularly within flood benefiting lands, should help reduce the possibility of adverse cumulative effects. The monitoring framework put forward later in the report should enable effects to be detected in time for action to be taken if required.

3.0 Measures designed to prevent reduce and as fully as possible Offset any Significant Adverse Environmental effects

As discussed previously, the consolidation of the existing settlement by not expanding the LAP boundaries, is the key measure designed to minimise significant environmental effects. This will prevent undue urban sprawl and encroachment into green field sites currently outside the LAP boundaries. Thus, ensuring that additional lengths of the Lower River Shannon SAC site are not subject to concentrated development pressure which would have been the case had there been an expansion of the LAP boundaries.

The alteration of residentially zoned lands to open space is a change of zoning, and reduces the amount of lands available for housing within the city environs. In practical terms it does not mean that there will be a shortage of housing land as sufficient land remains in order to cater for demand.

The addition of buffer zones along the Ballynacloagh River and the Shannon affords additional protection to these sites. In addition, the Bunlickey Lake NHA site has been shown as a proposed Special Protection Area.

All of the above, and the inclusion of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) policies are designed to minimise the possible future effects of flooding.

Updating of policies in relation to the use of renewable energy, public transport and resource use as outlined in the previous sections are designed to minimise the environmental effects of the plan.

3.1 Trade offs between differing aspects of policies

In all forms of development there are some unavoidable losses whether of environmental stock, or indeed, of cultural and built heritage. Development cannot be pursued at the price of unacceptable environmental loss while simultaneously placing undue restrictions on development activity bringing economic and development activity to a halt. The question exists as to whether or not these losses are acceptable, or indeed prevent greater losses elsewhere within the functional area of the Local Authority. For instance, residential zoning may result in the loss of some semi-natural habitat such as improved grassland. However, concentration of settlement within the environs, within convenient travelling distance of employment and amenities would reduce commuting times and consumption of fossil fuels. The concentration of development would facilitate easier processing of waste from such areas, and would contribute to reducing the possibilities of piecemeal contamination of groundwater in the county by septic tank discharges.

The concentration of development would have the effect of reducing air quality in terms of exhaust emissions. This is a better alternative than dispersed patterns of development, while not resulting in local reduction in air quality from time to time, it

would be less sustainable in the long run due to greater consumption of fossil fuels. The encouragement of permeability within, and between developments in the LAP, will help to ensure, that long-term, should such corridors be availed of, will contribute to improving air quality.

It is considered that the policies adopted in the 2011 LAP is the best balance to ensure that sufficient land is zoned for residential and other purposes to facilitate continued growth; it reduces damage from piecemeal development which, in the absence of the updating of the LAP would be the likely alternative- see the “do” nothing scenario” above.

4.0 Outline of reasons for selecting alternatives and description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties

4.1 Section of Alternatives: Section 8.2.4 has already discussed one development alternative the “do-nothing scenario”. Presented below are three further alternatives:

Alternative 1: Proceed with the plan as presented but without the removal of residential zoning in areas shown as flood benefiting lands. As indicated earlier, such a course of action would not allow the LAP to be updated to include aspects of current best practice in relation to environmental and planning issues. This would apply, in particular, to the provisions of the new *The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines* (DEHLG November 2009). In addition, once a plan has been prepared the Planning and Development Act 2000 - 2010 indicates how long a local area plan will remain in force. This time period has come close to expiry. Consequently, a new plan would have to be prepared.

This is the second most preferred alternative for the planning authority.

Alternative 2: Proceed with plan as presented. The plan, as presented, consolidated development within existing plan boundary, and has incorporated supporting objectives reflecting the emergence of new guidance on planning and environmental matters. It also has enhanced measures for the protection of the designated sites within the plan boundaries

This is the most preferred alternative for the planning authority.

Alternative 3: Expand the development boundaries of the 2005 LAP. Such a course of action would run counter to current planning and environmental advice which focuses on consolidation of existing development patterns and zoning responsive to clearly identified need based on population projections. The Development Plan Guidelines (DEHLG June 2007) are particularly strong in this regard.

This is the least preferred alternative for the Planning Authority

4.2 Description of the assessment process and difficulties encountered

The assessment process was hampered by both the short timescale involved and gaps in the information required. A key difficulty was a lack of detailed knowledge of the hydrology of parts of the LAP area. Precise information on the Lower River Shannon SAC site is lacking, in particular, the lack of a management plan for the SAC which would prove useful informing polices to assist safeguarding the site. In the absence of such detailed guidance, more general measures were put in place based on sustainable urban drainage guidance produced by the Shannon Regional Fisheries Board, whose help is acknowledged in the preparation of this document.

5 Proposed monitoring measures

These are presented in tabular form below.

Table 8.2 Measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10 of the directive.

Environmental Category	Potential impact	Indicators	Comments
Bio diversity, flora and fauna	Fragmentation, loss of habitats, species.	Known losses, reports, surveys by relevant bodies, NPWS Fisheries	Requires cooperation and liaison with other bodies.
Population and Human Health	Ground surface/ water pollution. Traffic accidents. Noise.	Pollution incidents, Traffic reports	Could be obtained through Traffic impact assessments produced as part of planning applications.
Soil	Contamination	Reports/Surveys	Local contamination may occur as a result of pollution.
Water	Pollution of ground and surface waters, estuary waters. Excessive abstraction	Water pollution surveys, incidents as brought to light as a result of complaints, sampling	Cooperation with other bodies such as Fisheries NPWS and Health Board required.

Air and Climate factors	Local air pollution. Green house gas emissions	Traffic volumes. Comments in individual EISs submitted.	Contents of EIS submitted to the Planning Authority in the monitoring time frame may be indirect sources of data
Material assets	Use of brown field sites	Planning applications.	Nil
Cultural heritage.	Development in or close to protected sites, habitats or structures.	Known loss of sites or structures.	Increased liaison with other bodies required.

Explanatory note: Much information of relevance may be available in Environmental Impact Statements or reports produced as part of planning applications. The first step towards collating this information would be the establishment of a library of such documents. It is proposed to increase contacts with other statutory agencies who might have relevant information which hitherto has not been readily available to the Local Authority.

In terms of accessing adequate baseline information against which any changes positive or negative will be assessed, the Planning Authority will compile relevant information from all EIS's that have been submitted within, and adjacent to the LAP area since 2005, and will update these as more information becomes available. The frequency of monitoring will be dictated by the mid term review of the CDP which will have informed much of the content of the LAP. This will be the responsibility of the Forward Planning section within the Council.

Non-Technical Summary

6.1 Background

As part of the SEA process a non technical summary is prepared to accompany the Environmental Report. This is a summary in non technical language of the "findings of the Environmental Report" (SEA guidelines 2004, p. 38).

The Southern Environs LAP will be the planning policy document which will inform development activities in the area for the next six years. In terms of content, the LAP's policies cover the key issues of housing, economic development, transport, infrastructure, environment and heritage, community and recreation. Additional chapters outline general development strategy, land use zoning and urban design.

The main objectives of the plan are to ensure that balanced development takes place within the plan area, while protecting the natural and built environment. As outlined in the introductory chapter this plan operates within the policy context set out by

the National Spatial Strategy, the Regional Planning Guidelines and the Limerick County Development Plan 2010. This hierarchy of plans is set out in Chapter 1 (Section 1.7) of the Local Area Plan. Regard was also had to the contents of the Limerick City_Development plan, the plan drawn up by the neighbouring planning authority Limerick City Council.

The SEA process is a series of techniques that allows appraisal of the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing a plan. All Local Area Plans with a population of 10,000 and over are subject to this process.

The main purpose of the assessment is to identify the likely effects of development policy and to suggest mitigation measures where these effects are judged detrimental to the environment.

6.2 Relevant aspects of the Environment.

Many parts of the Southern Environs are low-lying and have a limestone geology. The River Shannon and the Ballinacurra Creek are located on the northern and eastern boundaries respectively. The River Shannon is a Special Area of Conservation. Two of the most important environmental considerations are the presence of designated sites, and the possibilities of flooding from both rivers. Closely related to this is the provision of adequate infrastructure ensuring that any discharges from waste water treatment plants do not cause any decline in water quality. Another aspect for consideration, is ensuring that zoning patterns are consistent with population targets laid down by the Regional Planning Guidelines, and are not zoned in excess of anticipated demand. The protection of species of conservation concern is also an environmental issue which is relevant in the plan area.

In the absence of the updated plan, the opportunity to ensure that more informed environmental guidance would be incorporated into the plan would be lost. This is important in relation to flooding, protection of designated sites and species, and ensuring that the zoning patterns in the plan conform to needs and are not excessive. Without updating the 2005 LAP the opportunity to incorporate updated environmental and planning guidance will be missed and the opportunity to respond to the content of new guidance documents in terms of modification of the existing zoning patterns will be lost.

6.3 Characteristics of areas likely to be affected and any existing environmental problems

The Lower River Shannon SAC site and Bunlickey lake have been identified as being of conservation concern by the NPWS. Both are of particular importance for wildfowl. Bunlickey Lake in particular is important for breeding cormorants. Low-

lying areas in Mungret and Ballykeefe areas have been shown as vulnerable to flooding. The zoning patterns in this area required alteration to take this into account.

The review of the zoning patterns of the 2005 LAP has been referred to above. Re-zoning has been carried out and, as indicated in the new zoning map, excess residential land has been zoned for other uses, in particular to semi-natural open space. The encroachment of development uses and zonings on lands designated for open space has been identified as a problem in the 2005 LAP. The policy content of the plan has been updated to protect areas of semi-natural open space.

6.4 Environmental Protection Objectives relevant to the plan or programme and likely significant effects on the environment.

Environmental protection objectives such as those established by the Habitats Directive have been incorporated into the plan. The County Development Plan which informs the LAP has a detailed list of the environmental protection legislation and guidance which inform the contents of planning policy documents. These include the contents of EU directives such as the Water Framework Directive, but also legislation and guidance relating to environmental and planning issues. It is these guidance documents that inform the policy content of the plan.

Likely significant effects of the draft plan as presented were assessed using the existing plan (2005) as a baseline. The principal mechanisms through which a LAP can have effects on the environment are through its zoning mechanism and the supporting policies. The existing zoning pattern was examined with the more up to date content of guidance issued since the adoption of the last plan in 2005. Development patterns were examined including the availability of unused zoned land within the plan boundaries and based on this it was decided not to expand the plan boundaries thereby reducing the overall development footprint of the plan. Other issues had arisen since the previous plan. For example, the encroachment on open space and semi-natural open space areas was seen as an issue and the 2011 LAP contains responses to both in terms of zoning - the buffer zone along the Shannon and Objective C1 which seek to preserve open space and semi-natural open space were a response to this.

6.5 Measures designed to prevent reduce or offset any significant effects on the environment.

Given the relatively low lying nature of much of the Southern Environs the incorporation of the Flooding Guidelines(2009) is an important step to address this issue. De-zoning of lands that were at risk of flooding ensued, as did policies in relation to Sustainable Urban Drainage. In terms of AA, responsive policies requiring the ecological surveying of potential development sites for species of particular

conservation importance in the LAP area, and updating policies as they applied to designated ecological sites are included.

Cross border effects were examined in terms of ensuring compatible zoning practices between the City and County plans. In addition, flood surveys for the Caherdavin area within the City to the north were examined to minimise any changes of development patterns in the plan area affecting flooding patterns elsewhere.

6.6 Outline of reason for selecting the alternatives

This involves the examination of differing development alternatives for the 2011 LAP and the selection of the one which proves to be the best compromise to permit development at least environmental cost.

The four development alternatives examined were as follows:

1 Retaining the existing plan: This was rejected as it would not allow the plan to adapt to changing circumstances, updated legislation and guidance documents. The Midwest Regional Planning Guidelines and the Limerick County Development Plan were updated in 2010. Both place an additional importance on the updating of the 2005 LAP to take new policy guidance into account.

2 The plan as put forward, but with the retention of the residential zoning in flood benefiting lands. This was not selected as it runs counter to the provisions of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines produced in November 2009.

3 Allowing expansion of the development boundaries. This was rejected as it did not mark a sustainable land use framework. This is contrary to the principle of compact settlements as detailed in the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2009) document.

4 The plan as put forward, which allows further environmental protection and development within the existing development plan boundaries. This was the alternative selected as it did not result in any expansion of development boundaries whilst rationalising the zoning patterns of the 2005 LAP. This option complies with the updated Midwest Regional Planning Guidelines and the County Development Plan.

Having taken into account the differing development scenarios, it is considered that the plan as presented is the most sustainable development alternative for the following reasons:

1. The policies of the 2011 LAP ensure that infrastructural development keeps pace with land use development.

2. Plan boundaries have not been expanded, and within the boundaries de-zoning of residential land has taken place to comply with population targets laid down by the Regional Planning Guidance.
3. The most recent DEHLG flooding guidance has been incorporated into the 2011 LAP. In practical terms, this has meant that de-zoning of residentially zoned land has taken place. Such lands have been re-designated as semi-natural open space. New policies outlining the need for Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) have been introduced
4. Zoning and buffer zones reflecting the concerns expressed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service regarding designated sites and species of conservation have been incorporated in the 2011 LAP. The policy content of the plan has been updated to reflect ecological concerns.
5. Updated guidance documents e.g. Sustainable Residential Density in Urban Areas (DEHLG 2009), Appropriate Assessment Guidance (2009) and The Planning System and Flood Risk Management (2009) have informed the content of the plan.
6. The 2011 LAP has been prepared to comply with the two most important planning documents at county and regional level which themselves have been recently updated i.e. the County development plan 2010-2016 and the Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 – 2022.

Conclusions

While at the outset of the local area plan period it is difficult to estimate the effects of the policies of the plan, the preparation of this assessment ensures that at least the policies follow good environmental practice. One of the first steps is to ascertain whether or not the policies are in accordance with national and EU legislation. This approach has been consistent throughout the LAP. Policies seek to take into account national and EU guidelines and legislation.

The rationale behind the policies is that the cumulative effect of the development, or other plan proposals in the area, should maintain the balance of, or improve the overall environmental stock of the area. Some losses to the natural environment may be inevitable but these are outweighed by such factors as concentration of development which is more easily serviced. In short, the plan has created a backdrop for the coherent development of the Southern Environs area for next six years.

Appropriate Assessment (AA)

1.0 Introduction, nature of the plan

The Local Area Plan for the Southern Environs 2011 – 2017 includes the areas of Raheen, Dooradoyle, Mungret, and extends as far as the Tipperary Road. This AA should be read in conjunction with the LAP and the associated Environmental Report, in particular the Environment and Heritage sections and zoning maps.

The Plan will be in operation from June 20th 2011 until 2017.

Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive require an Appropriate Assessment be undertaken on proposed plans, or projects which are not necessary for the management of designated sites, but which are likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either individually or accumulatively with other plans or projects. It is considered that given the proximity of both the Lower River Shannon Special Area of Conservation site (2165) and River Shannon Special Protection Area (4077) that the AA process should be carried out. Though not Natura 2000 sites, formerly designated NHAs such as Loughmore Commons and other non-designated turlough sites also lie within the LAP area. The eastern part of Bunlickey Lake has also been notified as part of the proposed River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (4077). Given the limestone base of much of the area, and the interconnected nature of hydrology, environmental effects associated with the LAP, could be transmitted to the designated sites as forementioned. This adds to the sensitivity of this plan area from an ecological perspective. This possibility of ex-situ effects is another factor in helping to determine that an AA is necessary.

Indirect and cumulative effects can affect the ecology of water-based habitats. The Department of the Environment Heritage and Local Government has raised this as an issue in correspondence in relation to the County Development Plan 2010 -2016 (17th February 2010) mentioning the “need to protect aquifers, Natura 2000 sites etc”.

2.0 Information gathering and consultation

When carrying out Appropriate Assessment on plans or policies or on specific developments that are the subject of planning applications, the Planning Authority is constrained by the time limits imposed by the statutory plan preparation or development management process. This places limits on the quantity of information that can be gathered.

Information was gathered from NPWS site synopsis, consultation with NPWS personnel and also from material held in the planning section such as environmental reports and EIS.

2.1 Deficiencies in Information gathered: as indicated above constraints were placed in terms of time by the plan preparation process which places strict deadlines on the completion of the AA and other support studies for the Draft Local Area Plan.

3.0 Site Description and general area description

The LAP area lies to the south and west of Limerick city. The River Shannon forms part of the northern boundary of the LAP area, and the Limerick to Tipperary Junction Railway line lies to the east. The Ballynacloough River/Ballinacurra Creek provide a barrier between the City and Southern Environs.

The major Natura 2000 site in question is the Lower River Shannon (002165) SAC site which within the LAP area has as its tributary Ballinacurra Creek. This site has been designated for a variety of habitats and species, ranging from mudflats to salmonids and lamprey. It is an important feeding and breeding ground for wildfowl and along with other wetland areas (Ballylickey Lake, Loughmore Turlough and Monteen Turlough for example), and is important for wintering wildfowl. Good water quality is critical to the maintenance of the conservation interest of the site.

The River Fergus SPA is designated because of its importance for waterfowl. It is the “most important coastal wetland site in the country” and supports internationally important concentrations of wildfowl. The eastern part of Bunlickey Lake has been notified as part of the proposed River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (4077). Bunlickey lake, an artificially constructed lake, is an important roosting area for wildfowl, and has a colony of cormorant which is one of the distinguishing features of the bird life of the lake. The concentration of cormorants is of national importance.

Table 1 Natura 2000 sites

Code	Name	SPA	SAC	Comments
2165	Lower River Shannon SAC site		X	Part of Shannon catchments, Ballinacurra Creek is the main tributary in the plan area
004077	River Shannon and River Fergus SPA	X		

4.0 Assessing the Impacts

These sites depend on good water quality and are important for bird life. Thus, the issue of encroachment on the sites with consequent disturbance is an important one. Listed below are the main factors that would threaten the sites:

1 Encroachment on the sites, either directly through the site areas themselves being zoned or unsympathetic neighbouring zoning.

2 Alterations in local hydrology altering flooding patterns having upstream or downstream effects on water levels. This would be caused by development in flood plains or perhaps in flood benefiting areas.

3 For listed species in the plan area outside designated sites there is a risk that development proposals would be unaware of their existence.

4 Removal of non-designated habitats such as trees of interest or hedgerows. Much debate centres on the issue of wildlife corridors between habitats and their utility. However, regardless of their utility they can provide sheltered conditions for bat species to forage and can provide seeds and berries for birds and smaller mammals.

5 Decline in water quality due to the inadequacy of waste water infrastructure.

The Lower River Shannon SAC site is the most extensive of the sites in the LAP area and is most likely to be affected. While the estuary itself has been described as being a robust ecosystem and its trophic status generally satisfactory (EPA, 2001), the status of some of its tributaries is not as good. The assimilative capacity of rivers has been a source of concern to the DEHLG and this has been reflected in a series of submissions to planning documents since 2005. In this regard the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), operated by Limerick City Council, at Bunlickey is of crucial importance.

Over the last ten years the plant has been substantially upgraded. Large diameter interceptor sewers have been installed. The WWTP comprises preliminary (screening and grit removal), primary (settlement and biological aeration tanks), and secondary treatment (settlements and clarifiers). The WWTP has a storm water capacity of 7500m³ that allows it, during periods of heavy rainfall, to retain the excess effluent and pump it back for treatment when conditions allow. The Plant has a design capacity of 130,000 and is currently serving the needs of an area with a population of 110, 000 people (EPA, 13th August 2010). Based on the above and the population increase envisaged by the LAP by 2017 of 3500, it is considered that sufficient spare capacity remains in the plant to cater for population increases in the Southern Environs and the other areas served by the plant. The Plant has recently (13th August 2010) been granted a discharge licence by the EPA.

One issue that is important to the successful functioning of the WWTP is the avoidance of hydraulic over loading which is a current concern for the operation of the plant. Due to clean and foul water mixing in the sewerage system, the plant is currently dealing with volumes for which it was not designed. In short, while the plant has sufficient capacity to deal with the population of the city and environs including projected population increases, this is dependent on ensuring that clean water is not routed through the plant which would compromise its functioning. It is important that during the lifetime of the LAP that this situation is resolved, and that clean water is provided with an adequate outlet to avoid the need to route it through the foul sewer systems.

The limestone geology of the area means that surface drainage features such as turloughs are present. The closely connected nature of water-based sites, particularly with a limestone base means that it can be difficult to assess the effects of development on the sites. Local sources inform us that both Loughmore Commons turlough and Monteen turlough are connected. Apart from the implications for the area's flood regimes, they are valuable semi-natural open space areas. This is important from an ecological perspective as at least one in the area, Loughmore Commons plays host to wintering wildfowl including some relatively exotic species such as little egrets. It is important that zoning close to turloughs such as Loughmore Commons, and that to the rear of Mungret Church at Moneteen protects them from inappropriate development.

The DEHLG indicates the importance of water based sites in the plan area by stating, in a submission in June 2010, the importance of Bunlickey lake. The eastern part of Bunlickey Lake has also been notified as part of the proposed River Shannon and River Fergus Estuaries Special Protection Area (4077). Bunlickey has been proposed as a destination for clean surface water run-off from part of the Southern Environs LAP area. It is estimated that this will result in fluctuations in water levels in the lake of up to 300mm. This may have implications for the designation of the site as wide variations in water levels may have effects both on the shoreline in terms of possible erosion, but also on possible use by waders of the shallower portions of the lake.

Areas of the Southern Environs, both in the Irish Cement lands and, to the west of the traffic interchange, although subject to flood risk have been zoned industrial. Though national flood guidelines demand that flood mitigation measures be implemented, in these cases it is impossible to currently assess the effects of the run-off on flow rates in the Shannon. As outlined above, levels in Bunlickey lake, when used as flood receptor, could vary by up to 3m. This is unlikely to have any effects on the breeding cormorant population that use the lake as their nests are located in trees on islands in the lake. It may increase water turbidity in the lake which would hinder fishing by them but this is a natural factor which they would also encounter in the Shannon. However, in terms of scouring action and increase in flow to the Lower River Shannon SAC site, it is considered that flood mitigation and attenuation measures would be required as part of any such planning application to reduce adverse effects on the river. This is based on the existence of Bunlickey lake, the

distance from the zoned sites to the river and the incorporation of mitigation measures at design stage.

Considering the flooding guidelines it is of particular importance that the functioning of these natural drainage features would not be impeded.

Undeveloped parts of the LAP area often contain low lying wet grassland bisected by regular drainage channels. This is true of areas lying along the Ballinacurra creek but also parts of the industrially zoned lands in Raheen. The low lying wet grasslands close to Bunlickey lake are important for the ecological status of the lake as they provide feeding for wintering wild fowl.

The grasslands can provide a valuable flood control function, in particular close to the watercourses, but they also increase the amount of land in the LAP area that is capable, to some degree, of absorbing rainfall rather than contributing to run-off as concrete surfaces might. Given that the amount of residentially zoned land within the Southern Environs is in excess of the anticipated demands that exist within the time frame of this plan, an opportunity to use these lands exists both as means of retaining open space within the LAP area, but also to ensure that they can function as permeable land surfaces which contribute to the attenuation of run-off.

Table 2 Known Turloughs in the Plan Area

Turlough	Location	Comments
Loughmore Commons	Loughmore Townsland,	Formerly an NHA
Moneteen	To rear of Mungret Church	Floods in conjunction with Lough more Commons Turlough as they may be interconnected.

4.1 Direct Impacts

The nature of the impacts differ depending on the differing nature of the designated sites. In the case of Bunlickey lake, it had been assumed that the passage of the Limerick by-pass would have an effect on the cormorant population. While the site has been bisected by the roadway, the bird population appear to have become used to the disturbance effects of the traffic. The implications of varying water levels should the lake be used as receptor for clean water run off has already been referred to above.

In the 2005-2011 LAP Monteen Turlough was zoned residential which would have had direct impact on the functioning of the turlough. In the current LAP 2011 - 2017 it has been re-zoned as semi-natural open space-see mitigation measures below. It

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is linked with Loughmore Commons. Consequently, it is important to ensure that Loughmore Commons is retained as agricultural land. This is reflected in the zoning in the 2011 LAP.

The industrial zoning that existed around Bunlickey lake in the 2005 LAP and immediately adjacent to the Ballinacurra had the potential to create both isolation and direct disturbance effects on the both the pSPA and the Lower River Shannon SAC site. This is true also of the industrial zoning extending to the Shannon that forms the northern part of the plan area.

4.2 Indirect Impacts

The development of areas that would have previously been flood resident would have an effect in terms of flood displacement that in turn could increase flow rates, volume and velocity downstream. These could ultimately affect the flood regime of the area and that of the Shannon.

The release of contaminants and/or nutrients that ultimately escape to ground or surface water. This risk is lessened by the creation of buffer areas.

Disturbance effect through inadequately sited lighting and traffic close to sensitive sites.

4.3 Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impacts would be the effects of all of the above. These would be encroachment on sites, run off, alteration of local hydrology through development, and disturbance of designated sites and species. Discharges from the Limerick City wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) are also present.

4.4 In-combination effects

The effects on the Natura 2000 sites must be viewed in association with the effect of other plans or policies. These are the Limerick City Development Plan 2010-2016 and the Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017. The landscape type that lies north of the Shannon, north of the Southern Environs has been described as a working landscape. The Clare CDP mentions that the area contains “ground and surface waters that are sensitive to the risk of pollution” and stresses the need for the highest standards in terms of site selection, design and management of all “installations for the interception, storage and treatment of all effluents”.

The Limerick City Development Plan, whose boundary extends as far as Ballinacurra Creek shows the area on the Southern Environs boundary to be zoned south of the Dock road as being public open space, and where the dog track is located, as sports

ground. The city plan mentions that portions of the Ballincurra creek are part of the major wetlands of the city. This zoning designation could be regarded as sympathetic to the zoning within the Southern Environs LAP area that shows it adjoining area as being agricultural or open space. To the north of the Dock road the situation is different as the zoning is indicated as being mixed use in the City Development Plan. In the case of the Southern Environs LAP 2011 the Council has zoned undeveloped areas i.e. those outside established industrial and utility as being semi-natural open space.

5.0 Mitigation measures

Some infrastructural projects are proposed in the 2011 LAP. Amongst these are the distributor road network close to Loughmore Commons, and the distributor road network to the north running parallel to the dock road which will require a river crossing of the Ballinacura creek which is designated as a part of the Lower River Shannon SAC site. At this stage the location is indicative only, and no information is available on the design or dimensions of the roadway. The bridge is required as an essential component of completing a new road network. Bearing in mind the designated site at project level the following should be ensured:

- 1 That the roadway will have no effects on channel dimensions, or result in constriction of the river channel.
- 2 That during the construction phase, particularly during construction of abutments,` that mitigation measures to prevent soil spillage, concrete spillage or spillage of contaminants are in place. Measures to ensure bank integrity to be in place and that through the use of soil mats, silt fences and protection of exposed spoil heaps that the effects of sediment on the water course are reduced to a minimum.
- 3 Bankside vegetation to be retained or re-established.
- 4 That arches or culverts and tunnels should be as wide and as high as possible in order to allow maximum amounts of natural light and minimise temperature changes.
- 5 That the above be dealt with at EIA or AA at project level in order to minimise any ecological effects of the bridge.

To avoid direct impacts on the Lower River Shannon and Fergus SPA/SAC a buffer area of 30m as been designated in the 2011 LAP to prevent encroachment on this ecologically site. This responds to the DEHLG suggestion of June 2010 which of the establishment of such a buffer. These areas contain important flood defences and regular works are needed to maintain their integrity. In such situations it will be necessary for such works to proceed subject to mitigation measures and assessment for each project.

The area around Bunlickey lake has had the previous industrial designation removed by the 2011 LAP. The updated LAP indicates part of Bunlickey Lake as a proposed Special Protection Area, and as semi-natural open space. The importance of the lake as possible source for clean water run-off from parts of the environs has been mentioned above. Should this proceed this will have an effect on lake levels but the significance of these for the designation is unknown.

To deal with possible disturbance and encroachment on sensitive sites a 50m buffer has been put in place to the west of the lake. This is additional to the 30m buffer along the creek and the Lower River Shannon SAC site in undeveloped areas of the plan. Additional semi-natural open space has been zoned in the Ballykeefe area and the semi-natural open space has been retained adjacent to the Crescent Shopping Centre. These measures are designed to provide a buffer by designated sites, and to ensure that the hydrology of the area is disturbed as little as possible.

In terms of overall zoning, there has been re-zoning of areas that were formerly residential. Some of these are now open space. This has had the effect of having more green space within the 2011 LAP area that will help to absorb rainfall within the built up area. This has occurred in the Ballykeefe area, and in Monteen in Mungret where the site of the turlough that before was zoned residential is now zoned semi-natural open space.

To cater for any of the listed species that were mentioned in the DEHLG submission of June 2010, Objective EH09 has been included which says:

'All developments over 5 housing units, industrial/commercial developments over 1000sqm or developments below this threshold where there are species of conservation concern will be required to submit an ecological assessment of the effects of the development on the site and nearby designated sites, suggesting appropriate mitigation measures and establishing in particular the presence or absence of the following species, the otter, badger, bats, lamprey and protected plant species such as the Triangular Club rush, Opposite Leaved Pond Weed.'

Any developments that are over 5 housing units, on a previously undeveloped site will be required to submit an ecological assessment of its effects on designated sites and species within the environs. This assessment can be submitted as part of the sustainability appraisal required in Section 10.3 of the Limerick County Development Plan 2010 - 2016.

Loughmore Commons, though no longer designated as a Natural Heritage Area has been designated as agricultural land use. This reflects the existing land use of the site and does not mark any intensification of use in this sensitive area. This avoids compromising the important ecological role of the turlough and helps avoid alterations to the hydrology of this part of the Southern Environs.

Monteen Turlough, formerly zoned residential, has been zoned semi-natural open space to enhance the open space allocation in this part of the LAP area and to prevent the disturbance of this important drainage feature.

The area to the east of the Crescent Shopping centre is retained as a semi-natural open space.

The area to the north of the Dock road close to Bunlickey lake is, apart from existing industrial and utilities zonings (i.e. the waste water treatment plants) is zoned as semi-natural open space.

Policy IN1B has been added to deal with the issue of wastewater infrastructure keeping pace with development. This states the following:

‘It is an objective of the council to ensure that waste water infrastructure will keep pace with development that takes place in the plan area to avoid any deterioration in the receiving waters into which any discharges from such plants might take place.’

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The proximity of two riverine Natura 2000 sites i.e. the Lower River Shannon and River Fergus means that within the LAP area policies and zoning patterns must reflect the sensitivity of the site. This has been implemented through re-zoning and the putting in place of buffer zones.

The A A guidelines issued by the DEHLG (2010 p. 33) indicate that a *“precautionary approach is fundamental and in cases of uncertainty it should be assumed that the effects could be significant”*. In the case of the Southern Environs, with low-lying areas subject to flooding, the presence of limestone drainage features such as turloughs, it is considered that the re-designation of areas previously zoned for development purposes – given that the land is not currently required to achieve population targets assigned by the Mid West Regional Planning Authority – is a suitable approach to take, minimising the amount of land that might generate run-off and providing a buffer for designated sites. Such buffers were not part of the measures in the 2005 LAP. Additional lands have been zoned as semi-natural open space. It is considered that the 2011 LAP ensures these measures result in further ecological protection in this area.

The policy inserted in the Environment and Heritage Chapter requiring an ecological assessment of the development for all developments over five housing units on undeveloped lands addresses the issues raised by the DEHLG who are concerned with individual species such as the otter, badger, bats, lamprey and protected plant species such as the Triangular Club rush, Opposite Leaved Pond Weed. The presence or absence of these species and the possible effects of the development on their conservation status should form part of the assessment.

Another policy has been inserted in order to avoid the possible displacement of species that can co-exist with development

Objective EH8 says the following:

'It is an objective of the Council to require the provision of alternate roosting or settlement facilities for species such as bird or bat boxes, artificial holts or other artificially created habitats in developments, where considered appropriate.'

7.0 Imperative reason of overriding public interest:

This does not apply as the 2011 Southern Environs LAP is necessary for the orderly development of the this area as required by the Planning and Development Act 2000 - 2010 and are not put forward as projects of overriding public interest.

Bibliography

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- 3 Kiely G (1998) Environmental Engineering. McGraw Hill London.

Flood Risk Assessment

1.0 Introduction: Flood risk and the LAP process

This is the stage 1 flood risk identification for the review of the Southern Environs Local Area Plan and should be read in conjunction with the SEA Screening Report.

The Southern Environs is at particular risk from tidal flooding. The underlying limestone geology results in the presence of natural drainage features including turloughs which also have to be considered in the possible flood regime of the area. With the issue of tidal flooding, which may cause tributaries of the Shannon to back up, and the underlying geology the issue of potential flooding risk in the Southern Environs is a complex one.

This process is designed to identify areas at risk of tidal or fluvial flooding or where surface water might need to be managed.

AP2.0 Stage 1: Flood Risk Identification

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

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

1. OPW preliminary flood risk assessment indicative fluvial flood maps

These maps are not yet available for the Southern Environs Area.

2. National Coastal Protection Strategy Study flood and coastal maps

Maps for this study are not available in sufficient detail to inform the Southern Environs Plan.

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

These maps were consulted, and together with discussions with local OPW engineering staff, areas that are more likely to flood were identified. Benefiting lands i.e. lands that would benefit from drainage works, can be co-related to river flood plains. These occur along Ballinacurra Creek running northwards to the Shannon including areas zoned residential in Ballykeefe townland in the 2005 Local Area Plan.

4. Predictive flood maps produced under CFRAM studies

Not yet available.

5. River Basin Management Plan and reports

Insufficient detail available to inform responses at LAP level.

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

Existing areas of flood risk are the Dock road area, the Ballynaclogh Bridge and Rossbrien, recurring, Dooradoyle recurring.

7. Previous flood risk assessments

The flood risk assessment for the nearby Caherdavin area of Limerick city provides insights into wider flood regime of the area. It identifies four major historical flood events that also affected the Southern Environs:

December 1954 a fluvial flood event .

September 1961: coastal surge event which reached 4.2m AOD.

December 1999: Coastal surge and high fluvial event which reached 4.1 m AOD.

February 2002: high fluvial event measuring 4.27m AOD.

Predictive flood maps:

Flood risk assessments carried out by JBA consultants during January 2010 outlining Flood Zones A , B and C as detailed in p.15 of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (November 2009) have been commissioned by Limerick County Council. The JBA flood Maps are Predictive Flood mapping based on a hydraulic model, for a statistical return period of 100 year for fluvial and 200 year for tidal/coastal. Zone B shows a 1000 year statistical return.

Flood zone A is the area “where the probability of flooding from rivers and the sea is greatest (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1 in 200 for coastal flooding.” The guidelines are quite specific in relation to what types of development are acceptable in this zone. The zoning changes that took place following the preparation of these predictive maps are outlined in the conclusions section of this report.

The JBA flood maps are a screening tool for planning authorities. Accuracy of the flood mapping is directly correlated to the Digital Terrain Model (DTM), and individual structures, such as bridges, culverts, weirs and sluices, are not explicitly modelled. The maps are therefore, not a substitute for detailed hydraulic modelling, as may be required to assess the level of flood risk for a specific development. The purpose of the flood maps is to guide decision making when determining whether a detailed Flood Risk Assessment is required for any given site. The Predictive Flood Zones Map is intended for guidance, and cannot provide details for individual properties.

8. OPW advice

The OPW have indicated that combined fluvial and tidal flooding will have to be taken into account. The vulnerability of sluices will also have to be considered. The flood defences, earthen embankments, are intended to protect agricultural land and have no rock armouring or internal reinforcement.

The existing earth embankments are complemented by the land drainage systems. Some of this drainage system has some storage capacity one example being those in the vicinity of the Crescent Shopping Centre. This storage capacity is dependant on the tide. These drains require the tide to be out to empty, via sluices, to the creek.

The earthen embankments in some places have settled by up to 1m over the years. This is a reduction from the maximum design height which is 5.6m AOD. In some locations, due to reinforcements work, the embankments exceed this height. Some of the flood defences are in private and not OPW ownership, which is the case in Irish Cement lands.

Ballinaclough bridge has been described as a possible weak point in the flood defences as it is at a lower level than the embankments and could provide access for flood waters.

9. Internal consultations with Council personnel

Discussions regarding drainage and flooding issues took place with Water services engineers

10. Topographical maps LiDAR

A LiDAR survey was carried out which indicates the limit of the maximum high tide level at 4.27m. This, with additional material on flooding data, enables more informed decisions to be made on flood responses.

11. Information on flood defences and condition

see 8 above.

12. Alluvial deposition maps

Alluvial soils are those deposited by rivers. Their extent helps to indicate the extent of historic flood events. These allied to benefiting areas in addition to historic maps (first and later editions of the six inch maps) showing areas prone to flooding and areas with regular drainage patterns indicate areas with higher risk of flooding.

13. Liable to flood markings on old 6 inch maps

Areas liable to flood are shown on the older first edition 6 inch maps and the editions dating from 1938. This area is immediately to the north east of the Crescent Shopping Centre.

14. Local libraries and reports

Flooding reports from the OPW website were consulted in the preparation of this assessment, these gave further details on the flood incidents outlined in 7 above.

15. Local consultation

Discussions with local groups indicated that flooding takes place in the Monteen turlough to the rear of Mungret church. This was further supported with photographs which indicate the extent and timings of some of the flood events, in particular in 2009 and 2002. These discussions indicate that both Monteen turlough and Loughmore Commons turlough, may be linked as they both flood at the same time.

16. Walkover surveys

Walk over surveys were an important part of the groundwork associated with the 2011 LAP. These informed the decisions taken in relation to the Monteen turlough and the Loughmore Commons turlough, the area liable to flood to the north east of the Crescent Shopping Centre, and the area of Ballykeefe that had previously been zoned residential in the 2005 LAP. Such surveys helped to indicate the extent of vegetation associated with wetter ground conditions such as yellow flag iris, juncos spp. and creeping buttercup. Surveys also gave indications of surface ponding of water.

17. National, regional and local spatial plans

Insufficient detail was present in other plans or strategies to inform the current survey. However, as indicated above information on the nearby Caherdavin area flood study was useful in order to place flooding issues in the southern environs in a

wider context. That survey also contained information on the previous tidal flood events.

18. Previous planning applications

In relation to previous planning permissions one application in the area for housing, commercial units, crèche and associated site works (planning reference 99/1301) in Ballykeefe, was refused by An Bord Pleanála in June 2007 (13.131608) because of “the potential of the development being affected by flooding in the future”. The reason for refusal further cited location on the floodplain and inadequate consideration of climate change.

2.1 Justification test in determining the zoning pattern to be employed;

1 Limerick is one of the Gateway Cities under the NSS and as such is one of the urban settlements “targeted for growth under the National Spatial Strategy” (Flood guidelines p.37). This is the backdrop to the zoning pattern presented in the 2011 LAP.

2 The zoning pattern is designed to facilitate regeneration and in the case of the Bunlickey WWTP comprises “significant previously developed” lands (Flooding guidelines p. 37 Justification Test for Development Plans). This area has been zoned utility to reflect current usage. The WWTP is also “essential in achieving sustainable urban growth” in that it provides the treatment capacity for sewage for the City and its environs. In terms of suitable alternative lands for the location of the WWTP choice is constrained by: a) its existence in this location, b) the need to ensure that it is separated from residential developments and c) the need to ensure adequate outflow for treated emissions – in this case the Shannon.

3 In the case of “existing undeveloped zoned areas at risk of flooding” (Flooding guidelines p. 40) such as the previously proposed residential area at Ballykeefe, due to the vulnerability of residential development in flood prone areas it was decided to amend the zoning to agriculture. In the case of previously developed industrial zoning in Mungret, “limiting factors” – flood defences- (Guidelines Technical Appendices p.13) assist in preventing water from reaching the development and it was judged that subject to adequate flood impact assessment at project level that this zoning would remain unaltered. In terms of vulnerability such uses have been described as being “less vulnerable development” and “will be subject to flood risk assessment to the appropriate level of detail to demonstrate that flood risk to and from the development can or will be adequately managed” (Flooding guidelines, pp 24- 25).

One of the main mitigation factors considered in this location is the existence of the Bunlickey lake as a flood water receptor.

2.2 Conclusions

To minimise the risk of flooding in the sensitive area within the Southern Environs the following steps have been taken:

1 The undeveloped lands at Ballykeefe, the subject of the refusal by an Bord Pleanala mentioned above, has been re-zoned as open space or agriculture. In addition to the Bord decision, the fact that the lands for the most part have been shown to be benefiting lands, or have been subject to flooding in the past further supports this decision. The original purpose of the flood defences in the area was to protect agricultural land and this is obvious by the current nature of the flood defences which are un-reinforced earth banks with no armouring. Therefore, the flood defences are inadequate to protect lands that may be intended for development purposes other than agricultural. The *Planning System and Flood Risk Management* (2009) Guidelines indicate that the presence of flood defences should be disregarded when assessing likely zoning patterns.

2 The undeveloped lands to the north east of the of Crescent Shopping Centre have been retained as open space as they are identified as benefiting lands and because they were indicated as liable to flood, both on first and later editions of six inch maps. Here too, the nature of the flood defences are intended to protect agricultural land and not more sensitive development proposals.

3 The lands at Monteen have been re-zoned as semi-natural open space from residential, as this is a turlough which floods seasonally. This has been supported by consultation with local people, but also corroborated by photographic evidence. Also it appears that this turlough is linked with the Loughmore Commons turlough, due to underlying karst geology. It is considered that since both flood in tandem that it would be best to ensure that there would be no development which would interfere with their functioning which might have unforeseen consequences. The Monteen turlough area, adjacent to Mungret Church has been zoned as semi-natural open space, while the Loughmore turlough, formerly an NHA, has been retained as for the most part as agricultural zoning which does not mark an intensification of use.

4 A pond, which is an estate feature in Dooradoyle townland and located in Coisluachra housing estate, has been indicated as being semi-natural open space. This is in accordance with its function as an ecological feature in the wider developed area but is also a practical reflection of the fact that this has had a history of flooding and would be unsuitable to be zoned for development purposes.

5 Ballinacurra Creek and Bunlickey Lake

The undeveloped areas towards the mouth of the Ballinacurra creek outside of those that had been previously zoned utility i.e. the Bunlickey waste water treatment plant, are shown as semi-natural open space and as proposed Special Protection Area. These are flood benefiting lands and have been the subject of works in the past. The first edition OS 6" map indicates that the area had been used to excavate

material for bricks. In addition the *Planning System and Flood Risk Management* (2009) Guidelines p.38) mentions that the “preservation of riparian strips” alongside river channels is an objective that planning authorities should consider for inclusion in their development plans.

Appendix 4

Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Statement of Proposed Amendment to the Southern Environs Local Area Plan: 2011 – 2017 (May 2016)

- Incorporation of the amendment concerning Mungret/ Loughmore Opportunity site.

1.1 Introduction

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment Statement (SEA Statement) of the Southern Environs Local Area Plan 2011-2017 (as amended).

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

1.2 Legislative Context

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 June 2001, on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including, in this case statutory land use plans. The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument Number (SI No. 435 of 2004) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004). Both sets of Regulations became operational on 21 July 2004. The Regulations have been amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011) and the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 201 of 2011). Article 7 of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004) as amended requires that Strategic Environmental Assessment is undertaken for the preparation of certain Development Plans. Since the population threshold of the Southern Environs Plan is over the 5000 person threshold which is the statutory threshold for Strategic Environmental Assessment, the amendment to the Mungret-Loughmore Area was subjected to the SEA process. As part of this process a statement outlining how environmental considerations were taken into account in the preparation of the plan must be prepared. This is done as part of the final stages of the SEA process. This Statement is referred to as an SEA Statement (DEHLG, 2004 pp. 47-48).

1.3 Content of the SEA Statement

The SEA Statement is required to include information summarising:

- a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;
- b) How submissions were taken into account during the preparation of the plan. For more information in this regard please see Chief Executives Report dated 7th April 2016. This has brief comments on the environmental implications of the submission.

These were dealt with in further detail in the SEA screening document dated April 2016 and February 2016.

c) reasons for choosing the plan as adopted, in light of other development alternatives considered.

d) Monitoring measures.

1.4 Implications of SEA for the Plan.

SEA has been undertaken and the findings of the SEA are expressed in an Environmental Report, the first published version of which accompanied the Draft Plan on public display. The Environmental Report and subsequent screening reports were prepared and updated in order to take account of submissions from the Public and Statutory agencies subsequent changes to the draft plan.

During the preparation of the amendment consideration was given to the sensitivities of Mungret college and its environs, this is reflected in the content of chapter 10 which outlines clear principles for its development In the final text of the plan.

The issue of ex-situ effects on Natura 2000 sites and the issue of the need for appropriate assessment screening had been raised in internal discussions during the preparation of the amendment. Appropriate Assessment was not deemed necessary as buffer zones were incorporated into the plan along the undeveloped sections of the river banks in the plan area, while the ex-situ effects were not regarded as significant due to the updating of the Bunlickey Waste Water treatment Plant. An objective within the plan was present to ensure that infrastructure kept pace with development. Objective Eh 1(b) was present in this regard. It should also be noted that the piped sewerage scheme has been extended to Mungret Village. This has reduced the dependence on one off treatment systems in the area and will ensure that the sewage system in the village will be inter-connected, subject to regular checks by the Water Services Dept/Irish Water and operate to higher standards than was the case previously.

The need to ensure that the settings of the College and the archaeological complex to the north is both protected and enhanced reflected in the zoning patterns of the amended plan. The zoning as presented in the plan seeks to protect these aspects of the built heritage ensuring that future development in terms of location and scale contribute to this end, while the designation of mixed use zoning in the college area allows for the development for varied uses with an emphasis on community usage. Commercial usage is limited in terms of areas ensuring that community usage is not overshadowed.

While not directly part of the SEA statement individual bat and tree surveys have been carried out over two year period prior to the amendment to inform any subsequent works such as the park development but also to establish an ecological

baseline which would be useful for future surveys for possible future works to the Mungret college building complex.

1.5 Summary of how the Environmental Report and submissions received from Statutory Authorities following scoping were taken into account

The main submissions from the NPWS and the Department of the Environment centred on the issue of Lough more common and the necessity for ensuring a buffer around this PNHA site. As outlined in the SEA screening and CEOs report, also part of the plan documentation, the PNHA site has been formally recognised as such. This was not the case in the last plan. While the formal buffer that was in the last published draft was removed in practical terms this is not judged to have an effect on the conservation of the PNHA.

The removal of the buffer will not mark a change in land use. Information submitted during the public display period (from a court appeal against the previous SAC designation) has indicated that there has been no changes in land usage. The removal of the buffer will not result in the intensification of land use as the land immediately adjacent will remain agricultural which will not result in change in run off rates.

The residential land will be subjected to design elements which following on from the 2009 Flood risk guidance which calls for the implementation of SUDS measures. Discussions with engineering staff indicate that with the implantation of such measures run off from any developed areas will be reduced to that from Greenfield sites i.e. run off at agricultural rates. This would mean that the run of rates to Loughmore Common would remain unaltered both in terms of overall amount and timing. It should also be noted that these measures would also include sediment and hydro carbon traps to avoid any pollutants entering local surface or ground water. All of these measures will avoid the release of pollutants to the designated site. The design element will also indicate a buffer within such residentially zoned land which will form part of the open space component of the plan area as a whole.

Table 1 Possible environmental effects of the variation.

Alterations	Environmental effects.	Comments
Clarification of zoning close to PNHA site	Beneficial in that it will confer additional protection to the turlough	In response to NPWS request.
Text changes stressing commitment to monitoring and to zoning definition	None.	Commitment to monitoring ties in with plan review policies by LCCC.
Alteration of zoning from residential to community and mixed use .	Ensures that additional open space will be provided and that sufficient area is zoned for school provision.	Allows zoning wit community and environmental benefits. This is beneficial in facilitating the development of the park which is a welcome output for the development of green infrastructure, an important aspect of population and human health (DEHLG 2004, p.30)
Deletion of proposed roadways- revert to original pattern on the outside of the plan.	A large number of submissions received on this aspect of the plan.	Following receipt of submissions it was considered best to remove the proposed alteration of roadways. Environmental effects are judged to be neutral.

The Council acknowledged that there was an inconsistency between the Masterplan Map (map no 6 in the plan and the Land Use zoning map (Map 1B) in respect of the zoning of the 1.7 hectare site referred to. The overall effect of this is expected to be beneficial as it adds clarity to the zoning around the sensitive Loughmore Common and also ensures that the agricultural land serves as a buffer between the common and other more intensive land uses.

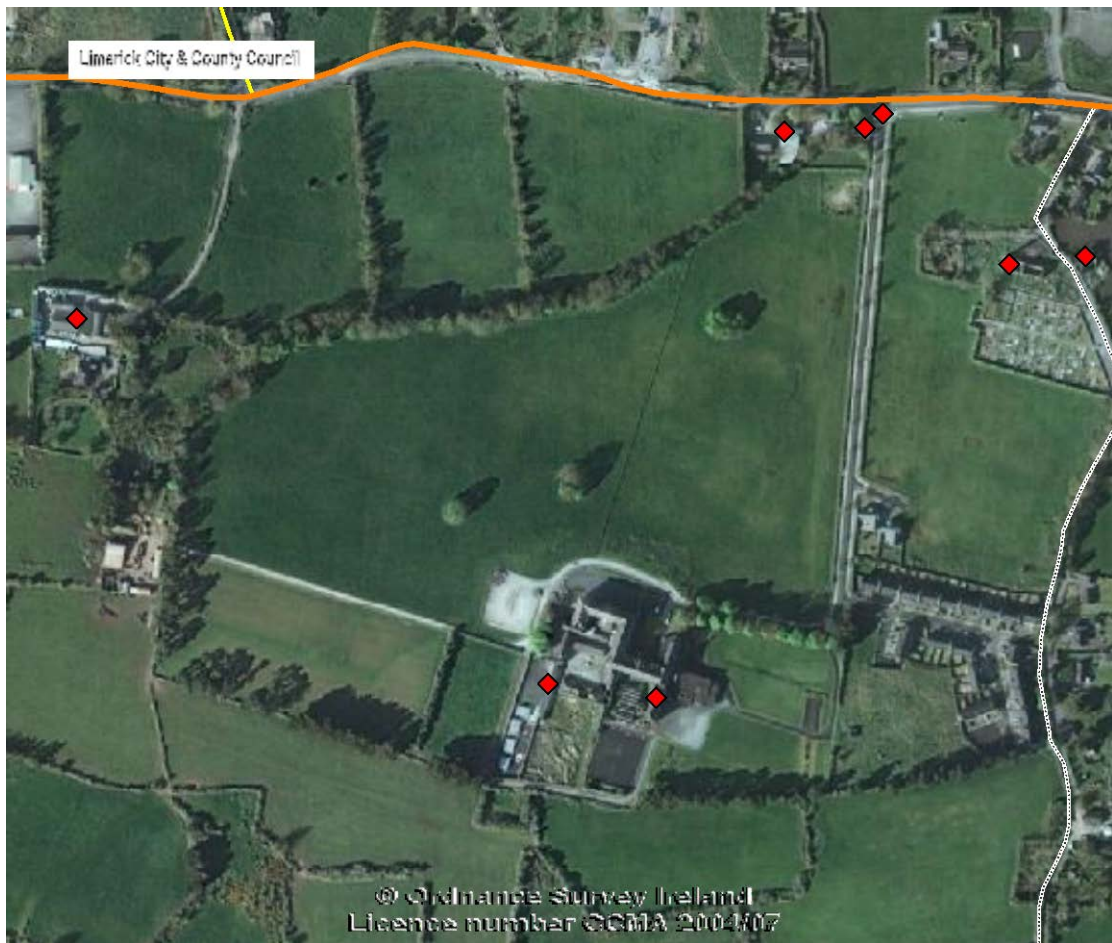


Figure 1; taken from the Environmental report this shows the Mungret College complex and the red lozenges showing protected structures indicating the sensitivity of this landscape. The area to the north of the college is to be developed as a park which will maintain the current parkland setting and allow it to be used for the wellbeing of the wider population.

The college and its grounds is an important local land mark in the area and is currently used by a number of organisations such as Educate Together which has accommodation in the college grounds. The main building is currently unused. In the north east corner of the above picture Mungret Church and its associated graveyard are visible. This archaeological complex is listed on the record of protected structures and also on the record of monuments and places.

The designations of the Protected Structures was continued through the amendment process, while the Special Control Area which lies around the Mungret Church and graveyard complex was also retained in order to continue to protect these areas and their environs.

As part of the back ground work for the amendment an Architectural assessment of the Mungret college complex was carried out. This has identified the nature of the works that will stabilise the structure and the manner in which they are to be carried out bearing in mind its designation as a Protected Structure. It has identified the key

elements of the building that contribute to its special character and by doing so will ensure that any works carried out will respect the building and its settings. Similar to the ecology studies referred to above it establishes an baseline which will inform any future works.

1.6 Reasons for choosing the proposed amendment in the light of other reasonable alternatives considered.

This is indicated by indicating the options that were considered below:

Alternative Strategy Option 1- Continue with the existing 2011 Southern Environs Local Area Plan without the amendment:

One of the greatest needs for the population of the southern environs area was the provision of facilities for a youthful population with young families. This placed a premium on amenity and educational facilities. The purchase of the college complex afforded the opportunity to realise these objectives. This meant that the alternative of not altering the plan to take these changed circumstances into account would have meant that the any efforts at Development Management level would not have been adequately reflected in the plan contents.

The continuation of the plan would not have facilitated these developments, which would benefit the local community. The plan content required updating to reflect this which meant that continuation of the existing plan polices would not have been a suitable plan led option.

Alternative Strategy Option 2 Reliance on the Limerick Economic and Spatial Plan 2030 to help develop the SELAP area:

The outcome of earlier plans such as the Limerick Economic and Spatial Plan 2030 had indicated the potential of actions in selected parts of the city and while this has clearly articulated aims, it was considered that it's focus on the older city area would not have contributed to the development of the Mungret Loughmore area. As outlined above the specific circumstances of the Mungret Loughmore area- i.e. the growing population of the southern environs area meant that the Mungret Loughmore area had the potential to provide the necessary lands for the provision of a park- a community oriented building complex (the college itself) and the provision of sites for new school buildings, all necessary parts of the social infrastructure of the plan area.

This is the advantage of the amendment, in conjunction with the 2030 Plan, in that with its range of targeted measures, it will be a better vehicle for guidance of resources to the Mungret Loughmore area.

The provision of community facilities and improved infrastructure such as road improvements coupled with altered zoning for residential and landscape protection is expected to benefit the entire metropolitan area adding as it does to the range of amenities and infrastructure that is located within the new metropolitan area as whole. For this reason it was considered that reliance on the 2030 plan would not have been sufficient to ensure the adequate development of community facilities in particular and this option was not selected.

Alternative Strategy Option 3- reliance on non- planning led initiatives to secure the development of the Mungret Loughmore area.

While the initiatives of parts of the council such as the Roads Section are welcomed, this would address only part of the issue of infrastructure and density provision in the area. It would also mean that any efforts to address such provision would be on a piecemeal basis and would not be plan led.

While non- local authority organisations such as Educate Together have provided essential services in the area, to ensure that adequate zoned land and resources were made available for the growing school going population it was decided to include this in the SELAP.

To ensure balanced provision of services with appropriate policy support it was decided to proceed with the amendment.

Alternative Strategy Option 4: the amendment as adopted. As noted above the examination of the policy background indicated that the provision of amenity and educational facilities and the zoning required would be best served by updating the SELAP. The existing plan had stated that these lands “merit a strategic approach” and Objective MLO3 had called for the preparation of a masterplan for this area. The acquisition of the Mungret College complex by the Local Authority reinforced the need for master plan for the development of these lands and the updating of the policy content of the SELAP. The changes in zoning required to provide the amenity and recreational facilities and recognition of the Loughmore Commons pNHA require the updating of plan policy and zoning maps. This led to need for the amendment.

Changes have also been to the residential zoning to reflect the fact that residential zoning had been lost to community uses. The end result of the zoning change means that residential zoning is still in compliance with core strategy figures, while additional zoning has been given to community and amenity uses in order to ensure that these will be provided for in the revised policy content of the amended plan.

2.1 Monitoring:

As part of the SEA process, measures envisaged for monitoring the likely significant effects of implementing the amendment to the Plan must be included in the Environmental Report. Monitoring is often based on indicators, which measure changes in the environment, especially changes which are critical in terms of environmental quality. The Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government SEA Guidelines state that indicators that can be easily and realistically measured should be used. “Environmental indicators are key statistics, which describe an environmental issue. Their purpose is to communicate information on environmental issues in a simplified manner and over time to create a benchmark against which future progress towards sustainable development can be measured. To be effective they should be representative of the issue and be based on

scientifically valid information. In this manner they can support policy development and reflect the interrelationship between society, the economy and the environment.”

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

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

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

Where new or improved monitoring measures come to light during the course of the updating or addition of Section 28 guidelines they will inform monitoring for SEA, to ensure that monitoring of effects during the course of implementing the guidelines can be meaningful and effective.

As the current plan was subject to SEA there is an Environmental Report to inform the current SEA process.

The following measures are proposed as part of this SEA process, to monitor the effects on the environment of implementing the amendment presented in terms of the achievement of the environmental protection objectives and the impact on the environmental factors that the SEA legislation requires to be considered. Measures include targets and thresholds that determine where remedial action may be required in order to achieve that target and fulfil the environmental protection objective.

Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna

Environmental Objectives and Objectives in the Plan	Indicators	Responsible Authority	Frequency of Monitoring	Targets	Remedial Action.
<p>B1: Protect, conserve and enhance habitats, species and areas of national and local importance, including aquatic habitats and species and promote the sustainable management of ecological networks.</p> <p>Policies in the plan: Objectives EH 8-13</p>	<p>Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.</p>	<p>NPWS LCCC through planning applications and LAPs IFI</p>	<p>Development Plan Review following preparation of new Regional Planning Guidelines.</p>	<p>Maintenance of favourable conservation status² for all habitats and species protected under national and international legislation.</p> <p>Identification of sites of local biodiversity and ecological corridors</p>	<p>Loss of favourable conservation status of protected habitats and species. Altered zoning putting buffers in place for the Natura 2000 site has taken place in this variation.</p> <p>Enforcement action may also be required.</p>
<p>B2: Preservation of the character of the historic built fabric</p> <p>Policies in the plan: Objective EH 6 and S 7.3.2</p>	<p>Piecemeal decline in quality</p>	<p>Area Offices. City and County Council Planning Section</p>	<p>Development Plan Review following preparation of new Regional Planning Guidelines.</p>	<p>Preservation of current Protected Structures in the area.</p>	<p>Monitoring of planning applications to ensure that none run counter to this aim. Review of objectives if they need to be strengthened.</p>

Population and Human Health

Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Authority	Frequency of Monitoring	Targets	Remedial action
<p>P1:Facilitate a good standard of quality of life for the population through ensuring high quality residential, recreational and working environments.</p> <p>Policies in Plan:</p> <p>Policy ZD 1 and series of masterplans in Chapter 10 Urban Design.</p>	<p>Increase in educational opportunities, services within the area.</p> <p>Increase in the population.</p>	LCCC	Review of plan following preparation of new RPGs.	Increase in employment opportunities, services and public services in the Docklands.	Consultation with SFPC and interested parties in order to progress suitable development opportunities for the area.

Water

Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Authority	Frequency	Targets	Remedial Action
<p>W1: Achieve and maintain required water quality standards and reduce discharges of pollutants or contaminants to waters.</p> <p>Policies in the plan:</p> <p>IN 1 (b) IN 4</p>	<p>Water quality monitoring results by the EPA and by LCCC</p> <p>EPA data under <i>Urban Waste Water Discharges in Ireland Population Equivalents Greater than 500 persons - Reports for the Years 2008 and 2009 and 2010-2011.</i></p> <p>Performance of WWTP in relation to conditions of licence of discharge licence.</p>	LCCC.	Annual	<p>Protect and Restore areas identified in the River Basin District Management Plan required to achieve “good” status, i.e. 4+ for water quality by 2021 in line with the Water Framework Directive objectives.</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Works to update the capacity of the Bunlickey WWTP have taken place in 2015. .</p> <p>On going monitoring of discharge licences by staff from the Environment sections.</p>

				deterioration in levels of compliance with drinking water quality standards and maintenance of national average compliance rate.	
Soils					
Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Authority	Frequency	Targets	Remedial action
<p>S1:Protect the quality of soils in the interests of avoiding environmental degradation in water quality and biodiversity.</p> <p>Objectives in Plan:</p> <p>EH 6.</p>	<p>Amounts of green field development.</p> <p>EH6 6 promote reuse of structures which is the most basic tenet of spoil conservation in urban areas.</p>	LCCC	Annual	<p>Concentrate development in the selected zoned areas and encourage re-use of existing sites.</p>	<p>Enforcement, where necessary. The measures in the CDP encourage the development of brown field sites or existing buildings. These are also contained on s28 guidelines which encourage the re-use of older buildings.</p>

Air and Climate					
Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Body	Frequency	Targets	Remedial Action
<p>AC1: to increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy efficiency generated from renewable sources.</p> <p>Policies in Plan: Objective IN11 and S6.7</p>	<p>Numbers of buildings being upgraded and insulated.</p>	LCCC	Ongoing	<p>Increase in upgrades sources of energy production from renewable sources</p>	<p>Non-attainment of targets set out in LCEA energy audit.</p>
Cultural Heritage					
<p>C1: Protect and conserve features of archaeological heritage and their settings.</p> <p>Objectives In Plan:</p> <p>Objectives EH 1 to 5.</p>	<p>Number of Monuments in the RMP and areas of archaeological potential which have been recorded or subject to exploration as a result of development.</p> <p>Number of archaeological monuments and their settings damaged due to development.</p>	<p>LCCC</p> <p>National Monuments Service</p>	Ongoing	<p>To maintain and increase the number of archaeological features recorded and protected.</p> <p>No damage occurring to structures or monuments and their settings due to development.</p>	<p>Damage to or loss of area of recorded monuments or their setting would result in enforcement actions being taken.</p>
<p>C2 Protect and conserve and promote the sustainable reuse of architectural heritage.</p> <p>Policies in the Plan:</p> <p>Objective EH6.</p>	<p>Number and conservation status of structures in RPS</p> <p>Number of buildings conserved and re-used</p>	<p>LCCC</p> <p>DAHG</p> <p>NIAH</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To increase the number and maintain the conservation status of Protected Structures</p>	<p>Damage to or loss of Protected Structures, to be dealt with by enforcement.</p>

	for new development				
	Number of protected structures damaged due to development.				
Landscape					
Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Responsible Body	Frequency	Targets	Remedial Action
L1: Protect and conserve the quality, character and distinctiveness of the landscape and minimise negative visual impacts. Policies in Plan; see master plan content in Chapter 10.	Quality of urban environment and halt in dereliction. Building height and design.	LCCC	Ongoing	Increase in quality of individual application.	Enforcement through planning legislation and Derelict Sites Act.
Material Assets					
MA1: Maintain the quality of and access to assets such as open spaces, water resources and all other physical and social infrastructure. Polices in the plan: Objectives C2 to C5.	Access to public amenities and facilities.	LCCC area office.	Ongoing	Increase in area of amenity space within the plan area Increased usage of River as a public amenity. Increased visitor numbers to cultural heritage sites.	Enforcement where necessary and modification of objectives s if they are not judged strong enough.

Appendix 5: Archaeological Sites

Archaeological Sites

Archaeological sites entered in the Record of Monuments and Places under the provisions of Section 12(1) of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994

Reference	Townland	Irish Grid Ref.	Classification
LI004-021	Tervoe	151975/155241	Enclosure
LI004-022	Tervoe	152040/155797	Enclosure
LI005-075	Bunlicky	154470/155115	Enclosure
LI005-106	Conigar	153440/155700	Kiln-brick
LI012-123	Conigar	152179/155023	Standing Stone
LI012-124	Tervoe	151996/154670	Possible Enclosure
LI013-001	Castlemungret	153061/154672	Enclosure
LI013-002	Rathmale	152815/153954	Enclosure
LI013-003	Moneteen	153246/153864	Enclosure
LI013-005	Caheranardrish	153395/153534	Enclosure
LI013-006	Castlemungret	153770/154347	Castle
LI013-007	Dromdarrig	153639/153142	Enclosure
LI013-008	Dromdarrig	153743/153215	Enclosure
LI013-009	Baunacloka/Dromdarrig	154310/153848	Deserted Settlement
LI013-009001	Baunacloka	154375/153929	Church
LI013-009002	Baunacloka	154354/153822	Church
LI013-009003	Baunacloka	154354/153818	Graveyard
LI013-09004	Dromdarrig	154280/153823	Graveyard
LI013-009005	Dromdarrig	154303/153815	Church
LI013-009006	Skehacreggaun	154401/153990	Holy Well
LI013-009007	Skehagreggaun	154445/153966	Excavation -miscellaneous
LI013-010	Ballykeeffe	154381/154394	Enclosure
LI013-011	Baunacloka	154454/153098	Enclosure
LI013-012	Ballinacurra/Dooradoyle	156288/154841	Bridge
LI013-013	Dooradoyle	156048/153987	Enclosure
LI013-014	Dooradoyle	156164/153674	Enclosure
LI013-016	Rossbrien	157265/154292	Possible Souterrain
LI013-017001	Rossbrien	157340/154443	Church
LI013-017002	Rossbrien	157351/154442	Graveyard
LI013-018	Rossbrien	157318/154265	Holy Well
LI013-019	Rossbrien	157706/154589	Enclosure
LI013-020	Rathbane South	159001/154434	Barrow
LI013-023	Rathurd	159469/154043	Castle- tower house
LI013-024001	Rathurd	159857/153699	Holy Well
LI013-024002	Rathurd	159857/153699	Possible Church
LI013-025	Crossagalla	160771/154952	Enclosure
LI013-036	Ballycummin	154564/152141	Enclosure
LI013-037	Sluggary	155484/153267	Enclosure
LI013-038	Sluggary	155904/153547	Ringfort - Rath

Reference	Townland	Irish Grid Ref.	Classification
LI013-039001	Ballycummin	155805/152467	Possible Enclosure
LI013-039002	Ballycummin	155848/152451	Enclosure
LI013-040	Sluggary	156277/152922	Enclosure
LI013-041	Sluggary	156311/152862	Enclosure
LI013-042	Sluggary	156685/152838	Enclosure
LI013-116	Dooradoyle	156239/153969	Mill
LI013-121	Dooradoyle	157279/153552	Enclosure
LI013-122	Ballysheedy East	158379/153414	Enclosure
LI013-123	Ballysheedy East	158556/153616	Enclosure
LI013-124	Ballysheedy East	158591/154011	Enclosure
LI013-130	Ballysheedy East	158280/153911	Possible Enclosure
LI013-131	Gouldavoher	154680/153575	Possible Enclosure
LI013-132	Gouldavoher	154742/153616	Possible Enclosure
LI013-133	Baunacloka	154444/153205	Possible Enclosure
LI013-134	Loughmore Common	154436/152826	Possible Enclosure
LI013-146	Ballycummin	154049/152561	Possible Ringfort - Rath
LI013-147	Castlemungret	153634/154271	Standing Stone
LI013-148	Moneteen	153420/153795	Standing Stone
LI013-149	Rossbrien	157836/154250	Possible Cairn
LI013-151	Ballycummin	154863/152163	Possible Road/Trackway
LI013-166	Ballycummin	154600/152100	Excavation – miscellaneous
LI013-167	Ballycummin	154679/152046	Country House
LI013-168	Rossbrien	157880/154360	Possible Fulacht Fia
LI013-169001	Rossbrien	157499/153559	Fulacht Fia
LI013-169002	Rossbrien	157516/153474	Fulacht Fia
LI013-170	Rossbrien	157342/154661	Burnt Mound
LI013-171	Rathbane South	158570/154480	Possible Fulacht Fia
LI013-172	Rathbane South	158580/154420	Fulacht Fia
LI013-173	Rathbane South	158570/154480	Fulacht Fia
LI013-174	Rathbane South	159000/154500	Barrow
LI013-175	Rathbane South	159225/154403	Fulacht Fia
LI013-176	Banemore	159514/154339	Excavation – miscellaneous
LI013-179001	Dooradoyle	157270/153570	Fulacht Fia
LI013-179002	Dooradoyle	157260/153560	Fulacht Fia
LI013-180	Dooradoyle	157300/153600	Fulacht Fia
LI013-184	Caheanardrish	152991/153436	Possible Enclosure
LI013-185	Castlemungret	153767/154007	Possible Enclosure
LI013-215	Rossbrien	157680/153920	Fulacht Fia
LI013-216	Rathbane South	158826/154459	Cremation Pit
LI013-217	Rathbane South	158839/154461	Kiln - Corn-drying
LI013-218	Rathbane South	158752/154465	Excavation- miscellaneous
LI013-219	Caheanardrish	153170/153310	Cremation Pits
LI013-221	Caheanardrish	153310/153530	Possible Fulacht Fia
LI013-222	Castlemungret	153790/154030	Fulacht Fia
LI013-223	Castlemungret	153900/154250	Fulacht Fia

Reference	Townland	Irish Grid Ref.	Classification
LI013-224	Skehacreggaun	154342/154547	Country House
LI013-225	Skehacreggaun	154433/154235	Kiln – Corn-drying
LI013-226	Skehacreggaun	154415/154217	Excavation - miscellaneous
LI013-227	Ballinacurra/Ballykeeffe	156212/154817	Riverine revetment
LI013-228	Ballykeeffe	154650/155035	Fulacht Fia
LI013-229	Ballycummin	155008/152154	Fulacht Fia
LI013-230	Ballycummin	155022/152161	Fulacht Fia
LI013-231	Ballycummin	154665/152500	Fulacht Fia
LI013-232	Ballycummin	154638/152451	Fulacht Fia
LI013-233	Ballycummin	155213/152121	Fulacht Fia
LI013-234	Ballycummin	155013/152355	Fulacht Fia
LI013-235	Ballycummin	154590/152217	Excavation - miscellaneous
LI013-237001	Rossbrien	157402/153572	Fulacht Fia
LI013-237002	Rossbrien	157397/153550	Fulacht Fia
LI013-238	Rossbrien	157437/153651	Fulacht Fia

Section 12(3) of the Act states “When the owner or occupier...of a monument or place which has been recorded under subsection (1) or any person proposes to carry out, or to cause or permit the carrying out of, any work at or in relation to such monument or place, he shall give notice in writing of his proposal to carry out the work to the [Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government] and shall not, except in the case of urgent necessity and with the consent of the [Minister] commence the work for a period of two months after having given the notice.”

Section 16 of the Act prohibits the use or possession of detection devices “in, or at the site of, a monument recorded under Section 12.”

Appendix 6: Protected Structures

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Part IV (Architectural Heritage) of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 - 2010 sets out a system of protection for our built heritage under its provisions. In the first instance there is the Protected Structure. Secondly, there is the Architectural Conservation Area.

Protecting the built heritage under the provisions of Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000 – 2002 has positive benefits for the structures concerned in that they become eligible for consideration under the provisions of the Conservation Grant Scheme operated by Limerick County Council. At the time of writing over €1.6 million has been awarded to the owners and occupiers of Protected Structures during the first four years of the scheme's operation.

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

Record of Protected Structures

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

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

- (i) the interior of the structure,
- (ii) the land lying within the curtilage of the structure,
- (iii) any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, and

- (iv) all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in *subparagraph (i) or (iii)*”.

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

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

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





The County Development Plan & the Record of Protected Structures






The list of buildings, structures and features contained in this section of the Local Area Plan for the Southern Environs is an abstract from the Record of Protected Structures (R.P.S.) which is a statutory document maintained by Limerick County Council on foot of the provisions of Part IV [Architectural Heritage] of the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2010. The R.P.S. is a constituent part of the County Development Plan and will henceforth be issued as one of the volumes published as part of the Development Plan preparation process.






You are advised that Part IV of the Act allows a planning authority to make additions to, or deletions from, the R.P.S. as and when such actions are necessary. Therefore, you are advised to consult the most recent edition of Volume III of the County Development Plan to ensure that you are in possession of the most up to date information in respect of structures that are protected. This is available in the Council's offices and branch libraries and Limerick County Councils Website.






If you are in any doubt as to a structure's status, you should contact the Conservation Officer, Planning and Environmental Services, County Hall, Dooradoyle, Co. Limerick who will best be able to assist you.






The following is the list of the Protected Structures in the Southern Environs.



LAP Ref.	Development Plan Refs	Building Name /Title	Location	Description	Picture
1	1637	South Hill	Rathbane South	Country House This is a good multi-period house located on the outskirts of Limerick City. Unique features include murals in the principal reception rooms in the house and a cast and wrought iron hothouse designed by the ironsmith Richard Turner. Turner worked at the Hammond Lane Foundry in Dublin and designed and built greenhouses for the Botanic Gardens at Kew, Belfast and Dublin.	
2	1638	'Nolan's'	Bohereen (E.D. Limerick South)	Thatched House The Nolan family farmhouse is characterised by its length. This hip-roofed thatched dwelling is aligned north-west – south-east and demonstrates the manner in which builders in the past sought to maximise solar gain for the houses that they constructed. The main front door is sheltered by a porch which is a later addition.	
3	1639	'Hurley's House'	Crossagalla	Vernacular Farmhouse Associated complex of outbuildings includes the original farmhouse on the site, which was a thatched building now roofed with galvanised corrugated iron	
4	1645	'Lahiff's'	Ballykeeffe	Thatched House The Lahiff family farmhouse is a gabled building and is aligned north-east – south-west and demonstrates the manner and which builders in the past sought to maximise solar gain for the houses that they constructed, while minimising exposure to prevailing winds.	





5	1646	County Hall	Dooradoyle	Civic Building	
<p>This is a civic building of unrepentant contemporary design. It is aligned north-west – south east with the formal entrance and principal façades facing south-westwards. At the time of its construction it was claimed to be the largest office complex constructed in Ireland designed to be operated without the use of air-conditioning.</p>					
6	1647	“Dunmore House”	Ballykeefe (on north side of Fr. Russell Road)	Dwelling	
<p>This is a symmetric building set forward on its plot. There is a return to the rear on the western side of the building- a lean to garage is also located on this side. The building’s interior is lit by coupled sash windows with a one-over-one glazing pattern.</p>					
7	1648	“St. Paul’s”	Dooradoyle	Roman Catholic Parish Church	
<p>Pyramidal roof with glazed toplight, internal design reflects post Vatican II layout for liturgical practice, stained and etched glass windows</p>					
8	1640	Castle	Rathurd	Medieval-Castle	
<p>Uncommon circular tower with good house constructed in the late 19th century immediately to its south west</p>					
9	1641	Donaghmore R.C. Church	Bohereen (E.D. Roxborough)	Catholic Church	
<p>This is a simple L-shaped church set within its own grounds close to a early medieval church site of the same name which lies on the other side of the public road behind some modern housing. The roofing is emphasised as a feature of the building through the use of squared Killaloe slates and scallop patterning in Blue Bangor slating.</p>					

10	1642	Parochial House	Bohereen (E.D. Roxborough)	Country House	
	Late Victorian / Edwardian period house which presents a symmetrical façade to the streetscape. The principal elevation is elaborated through the use of gables framing the roof, hood-mouldings, in stucco, over the first floor windows and bay windows at ground floor level framing the main entrance. There is a range of good outbuildings on the rear of the plot.				
11	1643	Donaghmore School	Bohereen (E.D. Roxborough)	Institutional Building	
	This listing applies to the original school building at this site which is a T-shaped two-classroom structure.				
12	1664	'Eddie Shanahan's Pub'	Rathmale	Commercial premises	
	This is a simple three – bay two – storey gabled building located on the southern side of the N69 road in Mungret village. Natural slate roof, metal rainwater goods, and rise and fall sash windows add to the authentic charm of a traditional public house.				
13	1665	Not named	Rathmale	Water Pump	
	This traditional cast – iron pump located at a cross roads in the village of Mungret, was added to the Record of Protected Structures at the request of members of the local community.				
14	1666	'O'Donoghue's'	Castlemungret	Bungalow Dwelling	
	Good symmetrical building with a centrally placed door located in a breakfront. It was constructed in the 1940's by a local tradesman as a dwelling for his wife and himself.				

15	1667	'St. Oliver Plunkett's'	Moneteen	Roman Catholic Parish Church	
	Modern church- roofing of corrugated material rising up from the walls to form a mansard before curving over to crown the worship area with a shallow pyramid.				
16	1652	Toberpatrick	Skehacreggaun	Medieval-Holy Well	
	This site carries an archaeological constraint as it is entered in the Record of Monuments and Places- Li-013-009006. Toberpatrick was conserved and restored and presented as a holy well during the course of building works in its vicinity as a condition that was attached to a grant of planning permission.				
17	1653	School	Dromdarrig	Institutional Building	
	The former boys' / girls' school now, having been used as a dwelling for a period of time, has been extended and is now in use as a kindergarden / playschool.				
18	1657	Church (in Ruins)	Dromdarrig	Medieval-Church	
	This site is in State Ownership and is a National Monument, Ref. No. 85. It is entered in the Record of Monuments and Places- Li-013-009002 and 009003.				
19	1656	Mungret Abbey (in Ruins)	Dromdarrig	Medieval-Church	
	This site carries an archaeological constraint as it is entered in the Record of Monuments and Places- Li-013-009004 and 009005.				

20	1663	Mount Mungret	Moneteen	Country House	
<p>This building served as the Rectory for the Church of Ireland parish in the past.</p>					
21a	1658	Mungret College	Dromdarrig	Institutional Building	
<p>Founded originally as a Model Agricultural School and endowed by Lord Emly, whose principle seat was at Tervoe to the north-west of Mungret village. Subsequently it was acquired by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) who ran it as a boarding school. This main block was raised in height to facilitate this use. The entrance porch was brought here from Tervoe House when it was demolished. Gate Lodge, Follies, Seismic Station and Grotto included as elements of significance.</p>					
21b	1660	Mungret College	Dromdarrig	Institutional Building	
<p>Gothic wing of the college added by the Jesuits in the late 19th century. Includes the Boys' Chapel. Stained glass from this structure is displayed in Bewley's, Westmoreland Street, Dublin.</p>					
21c	1661	Mungret College	Dromdarrig	Institutional Building	
<p>Stables and Outbuildings.</p>					
22	1650	'O'Grady's'	Baunacloka	Thatched House	
<p>O'Grady's thatched house is a typical three bay lobby entry class building. The main entrance is sheltered by a later porch. The door gives access to a small lobby to the left of which is the 'parlour' while to its right is the kitchen off which the bedrooms open.</p>					

23	1649	'Hospital Chapel'	Dooradoyle	Institutional Building	
<p>This building, like the hospital itself, was designed by the architectural practice of Sheahan & Clery - Patrick J. Sheahan, M.R.I.A.I., being consultant architect to the Limerick Board of Health. Sheahan was a noted designer of churches and was the first Irish architect to be made a Chevalier of the Order of Saint Sylvester for his work as an ecclesiastic architect.</p>					
24	1668	'Willowdale'	Gouldavoher	Suburban Structure - Dwelling	
<p>The former Roman Catholic Presbytery for the parish of Mungret / Crecora / Donoghmore which was purpose built for this purpose in the mid-20th century. It superseded the building now known as Loughmore House (see below)</p>					
25	1669	Raheen Church	Ballycummin	Roman Catholic Parish Church	
<p>Identified as 'Mungret Catholic Church' on mapping of the 1920's, this is a limestone built structure which had aisles added in the 1980's.</p>					
26	1670	'Barry's'	Gouldavoher	Thatched House	
<p>This former dwelling with a shop to the front in a corrugated iron clad annexe, is now in use as a florist's shop. It is a gabled three bay thatched house which would appear to have been modified to allow for it to be used as a commercial premises.</p>					
27	1672	Loughmore House / Dun n'Gaedeal	Baunacloka	Vernacular House & Farmyard	
<p>Served as the residence of the Roman Catholic Parish Priest at one time when it was leased from a Church of Ireland clergyman.</p>					

28	1671	Roche Castle	Ballycummin	Country House	
<p>This is a castellated structure dating to the Victorian period. A two-storey gabled house in cut stone is brought into the realms of fantasy by a three storey octagonal tower in cut limestone. The tower's walls are pierced by single-light, coupled, and mullioned windows of various designs. Blind gun / arrow-loops decorate the tower's elevations. The tower carries a battlemented parapet supported on corbelled machicolations. The merlons are of single cop design but are topped by capstones with a roll motif. The tower is surmounted by a turret, which is also treated in the same fashion.</p>					
29	1651	Templemungret House	Skehacreggaun	Country House	
<p>Six bay, two storey, detached house, built c.1880, original decorated bargeboards, timber sliding windows. Entered into National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, Reg. No 21901310. Further details www.buildingsofireland.ie, Dept of Environment, Community and Local Government</p>					
30	1694	Bawnmore Church	Bawnmore	Roman Catholic Church	
<p>Modern church with elliptical floor plan, hidden roofs and wall lines rising in the shape of a ships prow or stern</p>					
31	1644	Ballinacurra Bridge	Ballykeeffe/Dooradoyle	Country House	
<p>Possible mediaeval Bridge, and Victorian period marker indicating the Limerick City boundary. Single arched structure over Ballinacurra Creek. List in Record of Monuments and Places, Ref .No. LI013-012</p>					

APPENDIX 7: Glossary & Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Details
AA	Appropriate Assessment
ACA	Architectural Conservation Area
BATNEEC	Best Available Technology Not Exceeding Unreasonable Cost
CDP	County Development Plan
CFRAM	Catchment Flood Risk and Management Studies
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DEHLG	Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government
ED	Electoral Division
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
DED	District Electoral Division
HSE	Health Service Executive
HS	Housing Strategy
LAP	Local Area Plan
LCEA	Limerick Clare Energy Agency
MWASP	Mid-West Area Strategic Plan
MRPG	Midwest Regional Planning Guidelines
NATURA 2000	European Network of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas
NDA	National Disability Authority
NDP	National Development Plan
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSS	National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020, People Places and Potential
OPW	Office of Public Works
PLC	Post-Leaving Cert Courses
POWCAR	Place of Work. Census of Anonymised Records
P +R	Park and Ride
QBC	Quality Bus Corridor
RPS	Record of Protected Structures
RS	Retail Strategy
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
VEC	Vocational Educational Committee
WWTP	Waste water treatment plan